

I have poured out my soul before the Lord. 1 Sam. 1: 15

Hannah's soul was full of complaint and grief, which flowed over into her face and made it sorrowful. But when she had poured out her soul before the Lord, emptying out all its bitterness, the peace of God took the place of her soul-anguish, she went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad. What a glad exchange! How great the contrast! How much the better for herself, and for her home!

Is your face darkened by the bitterness of your soul? Perhaps the enemy has been vexing you sorely; or there is an unrealized hope, an unfulfilled purpose in your life; or, perchance, the Lord seems to have forgotten you. Poor sufferer, there is nothing for it but to pour out your soul before the Lord. Empty out its contents in confession and prayer. God knows it all; ye tell Him, as if He knew nothing. "Ye people, pour out your hearts before Him. God is a refuge for us." "In everything, by prayer and supplication make your requests known unto God."

As we pour out our bitterness, God pours in his peace. Weeping goes out of one door whilst joy enters at another. We transmit the cup of tears to the Man of Sorrows, and He hands it back to us filled with the blessings of the new covenant. Some day you will come to the spot where you wept and prayed, bringing your offering of praise and thanks-giving.

我... 在耶和華面前傾心吐意。 撒上一15

哈拿心中充滿悲痛苦情，流露在她的臉上顯出愁容。然而當她在耶和華面前傾心吐意，將她的苦情完全倒出來，神的平安就代替她心裡的痛苦，她就起來吃飯，並且面上不再帶愁容了。何等令人歡喜的交換！何等大的對比！對她和她的家有多麼好啊！

你因心中的痛苦而臉色陰沉嗎？也許仇敵劇烈地激怒你；或者是在你人生中有尚未實現的期望、尚未完成的目標；或許神似乎已經忘記你了。可憐受苦的人啊，你除了在主面前傾心吐意，再沒有什麼出路。在白白的祈禱中，將你心裡的一切全倒空。雖然神知道你心裡的一切，但仍然要告訴祂，好像祂全然不知道。「你們眾民當... 在祂面前傾心吐意。神是我們的避難所。（詩六十二8）」「凡事藉著禱告祈求...，將你們所要的告訴神。（腓四6）」

當我們將我們的苦情傾倒出來，神也將祂的平安傾倒下來。哭泣從這扇門離開，而喜樂就從另一扇門進來。我們把淚水的杯傳遞給那憂患之子（賽五十三3），而祂遞回給我們的杯充滿新約的祝福。將來我們來到我們哭泣禱告的那地方，獻上讚美感恩的祭。

His mother made him a little coat. 1 Sam. 2: 19

What happy work it was! Those nimble fingers flew along the seams, because love inspired them. All her woman's art and wit were put into the garment, her one idea and ambition being to make something which should not be only useful, but becoming. Not mothers only, but fathers, are always making little coats for their children, which they wear long years after a material fabric would have become worn out. How many men and women are wearing to-day the coats which their parents cut out and made for them long years ago!

Habits are the vesture of the soul. The Apostle bade his converts put off the old man, "which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts," and to put on the new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"; to put off anger, wrath, and malice, whilst they put on mercy, humility, and meekness. What words could better establish the fact that habits are (as the name indicates) the clothing of the inner life? Where and how are habits formed? Not in the mid-passage of life, but at its dawn; not in great crises, but in daily circumstances; not in life's arena, but in the home, amid the surroundings of earliest childhood. Oh that the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness may ever be exhibited before those with whom we daily come in contact!

By their behaviour to each other and to their children; by the ordering of the home-life; by their actions, more than by their words; by the way in which they speak, and spend their leisure hours, and pray--men and women are making the little coats which, for better or worse, their children wear ever after, and perhaps pass down to after generations.

他母親... 為他作一件小外袍。 撒上二19

這是多麼喜樂的工作啊！那些靈巧的手指頭飛快縫製衣服，乃是出於愛的感動。她將自己一切婦人的智慧本事全放在這件衣服上，只有一個意念雄心，就是為撒母耳做一件有用且合身的衣服。不只作母親的，作父親的也是，都不斷地在為他們的孩子們縫製小外衣，讓他們可以穿很多年，直到衣料穿壞了。現今有多少男人、女人穿著他們的母親多年前為他們縫製的衣服！

「習慣」就是一個人心靈的衣服。使徒保羅吩咐他所引領歸信基督的人要脫去舊人，他說，「這舊人是因私慾的迷惑漸漸變壞的。(弗四22)」並且要穿上新人，「這新人是照著神造的，有真理的仁義和聖潔。(弗四24)」脫去怒氣、忿怒、惡毒，穿上憐憫、謙卑、溫柔。有什麼話語更能建立這個事實，就是「習慣」是一個人內在生命的衣服？(英文 *habit* [習慣] 這個字也是指僧侶的長服、婦女的騎馬裝。)習慣是在何處形成，是怎樣形成的呢？不是在人生的中年，而是在人生的幼年；不是在重大危機時，而是在日常的環境裡；不是在人生的競技場，而是在家裡，在最早期童年的環境中。哦，但願基督無斑點的義袍，可以從我們身上，展現在我們每天所接觸的人面前！

藉著夫妻彼此相待的態度，和對待孩子的態度；藉著家庭生活的秩序；藉著他們的行動，多過他們的言語；藉著說話的方式、消遣的方式、禱告的方式，我們作父母的人都正在為自己的孩子縫製小外袍，使他們以後一直穿著，變得更好或更糟，而且可能傳給以後的子子孫孫。

And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel! 1 Sam. 3: 10

See the urgency of God! Four times He came and stood, and called. Mark how He stands at the door to knock. At first He was content to call the lad once by name; but after three unsuccessful attempts to attract him to Himself, He uttered the name twice, with strong urgency in the appeal, Samuel! Samuel! This has been called God's double knock. There are seven or eight of these double knocks in Scripture: Simon, Simon; Saul, Saul; Abraham, Abraham.

How may we be sure of a divine call?

WE MAY KNOW GOD'S CALL WHEN IT GROWS IN INTENSITY. If an impression comes into your soul, and you are not quite sure of its origin, pray over it; above all, act on it so far as possible, follow in the direction in which it leads--and as you lift up your soul before God, it will wax or wane. If it wanes at all, abandon it. If it waxes follow it, though all hell attempt to stay you.

WE MAY TEST GOD'S CALL BY THE ASSISTANCE OF GODLY FRIENDS. The aged Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child, and gave him good advice as to the manner in which he should respond to it. Our special gifts and the drift of our circumstances will also assuredly concur in one of God's calls.

WE MAY TEST GOD'S CALL BY ITS EFFECT ON us. Does it lead to self-denial? Does it induce us to leave the comfortable bed and step into the cold? Does it drive us forth to minister to others? Does it make us more unselfish, loving, tender, modest, humble? Whatever is to the humbling of our pride, and the glory of God, may be truly deemed God's call. Be quick to respond, and fearlessly deliver the message the Lord has given you.

耶和華又來站著，像前三次呼喚說，撒母耳啊！撒母耳啊！ 撒三10

請看神何等迫切！祂四次來站著並呼喚。請注意祂是如何站在外面叩門。首先祂只呼喚童子的名字一次；但經過三次的努力，沒有把童子吸引到祂面前，第四次祂的呼喚帶著強烈的緊迫性，祂叫了童子的名字兩次，撒母耳啊！撒母耳啊！這就被稱作「神兩次的叩門」。在聖經裡有七、八處這樣「兩次的叩門」：西門，西門；掃羅，掃羅；亞伯拉罕，亞伯拉罕。（路廿二31，徒九4，創廿二11）。

我們如何確定是神的呼喚呢？

當它的強度加深時，我們會知道是神的呼喚。如果一個意念浮在你的心頭，而你不確定它的源頭，你就為這個意念來禱告；最重要的是，盡可能的採取行動，跟隨它引導的方向，並且在神面前仰望，這意念會加強或減弱。若是這意念全然減弱了，就放棄。若是這意念加強，就跟隨它，即使陰間盡力阻止你。

藉著敬虔朋友的幫助，我們可以驗證神的呼喚。年老的以利看出耶和華呼喚這個孩子（撒母耳），就給他很好的建議，當用怎樣的態度回應神的呼喚。我們特別的恩賜和我們周圍環境的趨勢，也會確實與神的呼喚相吻合。

我們可以藉著神的呼喚對我們的影響，得到驗證。神的呼喚引導我們捨己嗎？神的呼喚使我們離開舒服的床鋪，而走入寒冷嗎？神的呼喚驅使我們去服事他人嗎？神的呼喚使我們更無私心，更有愛心，更溫柔，更謹慎，更謙遜嗎？無論什麼叫我們謙卑放下驕傲，為著榮耀神，都可看作真正是神的呼喚。要快快的回應，毫無懼怕的將耶和華給你的信息傳達出來。

Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord. 1 Sam. 4: 3

Israel had been defeated with great loss. Their only hope of being able to hold their own against the Philistines and the people of the land was in the protection and help vouchsafed to them by God. They knew this, and thought that they would be secured, if only the Ark of the covenant were on the field. They forgot that it was only the material symbol of a spiritual relationship; that it was useless unless that relationship was in living force; and that the bending forms of the cherubim, emblematic of the divine protection, would not avail if their fellowship with the God of the cherubim had been ruptured by backsliding.

There is a sense in which we are always sending for the Ark. The reliance on outward rites, such as Baptism and the Lord's Supper, on the part of those who are alienated from the life of God; the maintenance of the forms of prayer and Scripture-reading which no longer express the passionate love of the soul; the habit of church-going, which so many practise, not because they love God, but because they think that it will in some way secure his alliance in life's battle--all these are forms in which we still fetch the Ark of the covenant, whilst our hearts are wrong with the God of the covenant.

It should never be forgotten that nothing can afford to us protection and succour but vital union with Christ. We must hide in his secret place if we would abide under his shadow. We must dwell in the most holy place if we would be shadowed by the wings of the Shekinah. There must be nothing between us and God, if we are to walk together, and enjoy fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

我們 ... 將耶和華的約櫃 ... 抬 ... 來。 撒母耳四3

以色列人被打敗，損失重大。他們唯一能抓住的希望，來對抗非利士人和那地的人的，就是神所賜予的幫助和保護。他們知道這點，並且以為只要約櫃在戰場上，他們就可以得到神的幫助。以色列人忘了約櫃只是物質的記號，象徵一種屬靈的關係；約櫃不會提供什麼益處，除非他們與神的關係是活潑有力的；扭曲的運用象徵神護佑的基路伯，不會有果效，如果他們與坐在基路伯之上的神的交通，已經因為墮落而破裂了。

在某種意義上來說，我們總是想要抬約櫃過來。那些與神生命疏遠的人，依賴外在的儀文，像浸禮及聖餐；只維持祈禱、讀聖經的形式，而失去內心對神的熱愛；很多人上教堂的習慣不是因為他們愛神，而是想在某一方式這樣作，就會在人生的戰場上得到祂的同盟。所有這一切的情況都顯示，我們依然要把約櫃抬過來，但我們的心在立約的神面前卻是錯的。

永遠不可忘記，除了與基督有生命的聯合之外，沒有什麼能夠給我們保護和援助。我們必須藏身在祂的隱密處，若是我們要住在祂的蔭下(詩九十一1)。我們必須住在至聖所，若是想要神同在翅膀的庇蔭。若是我們要與神同行，並享受與父並祂兒子耶穌基督的交通，在神與我們之間必須沒有阻隔。

Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the Ark of the Lord. 1 Sam. 5: 3

The idols of the heathen represent demons who are their accepted gods, just as the Ark was the symbol of the presence of Jehovah. In the one case there was a material representation of the demon; but in the case of the Ark there was only a throne, the Mercy Seat; and no attempt was made to represent the appearance of the God of Israel. When placed in the Holy of Holies, the Shekinah shone between the cherubim; this alone spoke of the divine Spirit who filled the apparently vacant throne. When the effigy of the fish-god was confronted by the Sacred Ark, it was as though the demon spirit and the divine Spirit had come into contact, with the inevitable result that the inferiority of the one ensured the crash of its effigy to the ground.

What a lesson this must have been to the Philistines--similar to that given Pharaoh in the plagues of Egypt, and with the same object of leading them to see the superior greatness of Jehovah! How great the encouragement to Israel--to know that God could defend his superiority! And how striking the prognostication for the future, when all the Dagon of the world shall be broken before the symbol of divine power and love!

Bring the Ark of God into your life. Set it down in your heart, and forthwith the Dagon which have held sway for so long will one after another succumb. "The idols He will utterly abolish." Let Christ in--that is the one need of the soul; and let Him take full possession of you. Then He will do his own work. Darkness cannot abide light; nor the defilement of the Augean stable the turning in of the water of the river.

大衮仆倒在耶和華的約櫃前，臉伏於地。 撒下五 3

異教的偶像代表他們所接納為神的鬼魔，正如約櫃是耶和華同在的記號。在這個場合裡大衮的像代表鬼魔；而約櫃只是一個寶座，就是施恩座，並不用來代表以色列之神的顯現。當約櫃放在至聖所裡，神的榮耀顯在二基路伯中間；這只說明神的靈充滿那空著的寶座。當魚神大衮的肖像面對神聖的約櫃時，就好像鬼魔的靈遇到神的靈，不能避免的結果是，那個較低級的偶像必然摔碎在地上。

對於非利士人，這真是一個何等的教訓，類似在埃及對法老王所降的災，都帶有同一目的，要引導他們看見耶和華超越的偉大！這對以色列人是何等大的鼓勵，認識神能夠護衛祂的超越！對於將來是何等驚人的預告：所有世界大衮的像，都要在神的能力與愛的標記之前被打碎！

要將神的約櫃接進你的生命中。安置在你的心內，那長久轄制人的大衮，將立刻一個接一個屈服下來。「祂將全然廢棄偶像。(賽二 18)」讓基督進來，這是人的需要；讓祂完全得著你。然後祂就作祂自己的工。黑暗不能停留在光中；奧吉斯國王之牛棚的污穢，也不能停留在引進來清洗牛棚的河水裡。[註]

[註] 希臘神話故事。奧吉斯 Augeas 國王的牛棚有 30 年沒清洗，後由大力士 Hercules 使 Alpheas 及 Peneus 兩條河流改道，引河水過來清洗牛棚的污穢。

And the kine went along the highway, lowing as they went. 1 Sam. 6: 12

That two milch kine which had never borne the yoke should move quietly along the high road, turning neither to the right nor to the left, and lowing for the calves they had left behind, clearly indicated that they were possessed and guided by some mysterious power, which we know to have been God's. And if He were able thus to overpower the instincts of their nature, and to compel them to do his will, may we not infer that all circumstances, and all men, however unwittingly, and against their natural instinct, are subserving the purposes of his will, and bearing on the Ark? The fish yields the tribute money; the colt of the ass waits where two ways meet to bear the Redeemer; the man with the waterpot leads to the upper room; the Roman soldiers enable Paul to fulfil the mission of his life, in preaching the Gospel without hindrance in the very heart of Rome.

As we go forth into the world, let us believe that the movement of all things is towards the accomplishment of God's purpose. Herein is a fulfilment of the Psalmist's prediction about man, which can only be perfectly fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the second Adam--that all things are under his feet, all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field. Everything serves Christ, and those who serve Christ. In a true sense all things are ours; they minister to us, even as Christ to God.

And against our natural inclinations let us always regard the claims of God as paramount; and dare to go his way, though our heart pines for those we leave behind. "He that loveth father or mother, son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me."

牛直行大道，... 一面走一面叫。 撒六12

兩隻未曾負軛有乳的母牛，必定是安靜的沿著大道前行不偏左右，卻是哞哞的叫著牠們所離開的小牛犢，很清楚的顯示牠們是受到某種神祕的力量所控制並引導，我們知道這就是神的權能。如果祂能夠如此的勝過母牛天生的本能，迫使牠們完成祂的旨意，難道我們不可以推斷所有的環境、所有的人，無論多麼無心且違反他們天生的本能，正在促進祂旨意的完成，正在背負神的約櫃嗎？那條給出稅銀的魚(太十七24-27)；那隻驢駒等候在叉路口，為要背載救贖主(太廿一1-9)；那個帶著水罐子的人，引領門徒到一間樓房(可十四12-16)；那些羅馬的兵丁，使保羅能夠毫無攔阻到達羅馬城的中心，去宣講福音而完成他人生的使命。(徒廿三23 ..., 廿八14 ..., 31)。

當我們出去進入世界時，讓我們相信一切事物的運作，是朝著神旨意的完成。在這點上詩人論及關於人的預言，只能完全應驗在耶穌基督的身上，祂是第二個人(林前十五47)。所有的牛羊、田野的走獸，萬物都服在祂的腳下(詩八4-8, 來二5-9)。萬有都服事基督以及事奉基督的人。的確萬有都是我們的；並且服事我們正像基督服事神一樣。

讓我們一直將神的要求看為最重要的事，即使違反我們天然的傾向；並且勇敢行在祂的道路上，即使我們的心還思念所離開的事物。「愛父母過於愛我的，愛兒女過於愛我的，配不上我。(太十37直譯)」

Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God. 1 Sam. 7: 8

Samuel was famous for his prayers. They are repeatedly referred to in the brief record of his life. In the Psalms he is spoken of as the one "who called upon God's name." Indeed, he fought and won Israel's battles by his strong intercessions. Mary of Scots said that she dreaded the prayers of John Knox more than the battalions of the King of France. So his people were accustomed to think that if the prophet's hands were held out in importunate prayer, their foes must be restrained.

In the Life of Mr. Reginald Radcliffe, one who contributes a reminiscence interjects a remark which deserves to be carefully pondered: "The great secret of the blessing which came from God to the awakening of whole districts, the quickening of Christians, and the salvation of multitudes, was prayer, continued, fervent, believing, expectant. There was never anything striking in the addresses; but through communion with the living Christ, the word came forth with living and life-giving power. Often would the forenoon be spent in continuous prayer." This may well convict some of us of the cause of our failure. We have expected the Lord to thunder and discomfort our Philistines, and with a great deliverance; but we have ceased to cry unto the Lord.

Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, cease not to cry unto Him. If the judge avenged the unfortunate widow, shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night? It is recorded of our Lord that He prayed early and late, and all night. He prayed when He was about to be transfigured; for his disciples; in the Garden of Gethsemane; and for his murderers. How much more do we need to "pray without ceasing"!

願你不住的... 呼求耶和華我們的神。 撒上七8

撒母耳以他的祈禱聞名。在他一生簡短的記載裡，一再提到他的祈禱。詩篇說到他是「求告祂名的人中」的一個(詩九十九6)。撒母耳的確藉著堅強的代禱，為以色列人贏得爭戰的勝利。蘇格蘭女王瑪麗 [註1] 說過，她害怕諾克斯 [註2] 的祈禱，多過害怕法國國王的大軍。所以神的子民習慣於認為，若是先知的手舉起來迫切的祈禱，他們的仇敵就必被制止。

在拉德克里福 [註3] 的一生中，一位追憶他的人突然插進一段值得仔細思想的短評：「從神而來的祝福，喚醒整個地區，使基督徒覺醒，群眾得著救恩，其中偉大的祕訣，就是祈禱，不間斷、火熱、有信心、帶著期望的禱告。在演說中沒有什麼驚人的東西，但藉著與活的基督連結，話語就帶著活潑、賜人生命的能力。經常是整個上午都用在不住的祈禱上。」這就足以使我們有些人為著失敗的原因定罪自己。我們期待耶和華打雷驚亂非利士人，並大施拯救；但是我們已停止向主的呼求。

你們作為提醒主的人，不要停止向祂呼求。如果那個不義的官，都為不幸的寡婦伸冤；神的選民晝夜呼求，祂豈不為他們伸冤嗎？(路十八1-8)。根據記載，我們的主是清早禱告、夜晚禱告、甚至徹夜禱告。在祂改變形像時祂禱告；祂為門徒禱告；祂在客西馬尼園禱告；甚且為殺害祂的人禱告。我們更是何等需要「不住的禱告」！

[註1] 蘇格蘭女王瑪麗，1542-1587。

[註2] 諾克斯，John Knox，1514-1572，蘇格蘭宗教改革時期重要的神學家。

[註3] 拉德克里福，Reginald Radcliffe，1825-1895，英國1859年教會大復興時的中心人物，善於祈禱、露天佈道。

But the thing displeased Samuel, . . . And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. 1 Sam. 8: 6

A little further down in the chapter we learn that Samuel rehearsed the words of the people unto the Lord. His prayer, to a large extent, was a rehearsal of all the strong and unkind things that the people had said to him; and in this way he passed them off his mind, and found relief. There is a suggestion of close communion with God in the expression, "He rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord." It had been the habit of his life to be on intimate terms with his God.

Things do not always turn out as we had hoped, and we get displeased for our own sakes and God's. We had planned in one direction, but events have issued in another; and the results have threatened to become disastrous. There is but one resource. If we allow vexations to eat into our heart, they will corrode and injure it. We must rehearse them to God--spreading the letter before Him, as Hezekiah did; making request like Paul; crying like Samuel.

Surely it is the mistake of our life, that we carry our burdens instead of handing them over; that we worry instead of trusting; that we pray so little. The grass grows thick on the pathway to our oratory; the cobwebs hang across the doorway. The time we spend in prayer is perhaps better spent than in any other way. It was whilst Samuel prayed thus, that he saw the divine programme for Israel:

*And he who at the sixth hour sought
The lone house-top to pray,
There gained a sight beyond his thought--
The dawn of Gentile day.
Then reckon not, when perils lour,
The time of prayer mis-spent;
Nor meanest chance, nor place, nor hour,
Without its heavenward bent.*

撒母耳不喜悅他們，... 他就禱告耶和華。 撒母耳八6

在這一章經文裡，從第6節更進一步讀下去，我們就知道，撒母耳將百姓的話向耶和華複述。他禱告的大部分，是在複述百姓對他所講，強烈不友善的話，用這種方式，撒母耳將這些話傳遞給神，不留在自己心上，因而得到疏緩。「他將這話陳明在耶和華面前。(21節)」這一句話暗示，撒母耳與神親密的交通，已經是他一生的習慣。

事情的演變不總是照著我們所期望的，這樣我們就會為自己、為神的緣故而不喜悅。我們的計畫是朝著一個方向，而結果卻是往另一個方向走；並且有造成災害的威脅。如果我們允許焦慮腐蝕我們的心，這些焦慮就會使我們的心傷痛。只有一條出路。我們必須將這些事陳明在神面前，像希西家王一樣，將亞述王西拿基立的信展開在神面前(王下十九9-19)；像使徒保羅那樣祈求；像撒母耳那樣呼求。

我們自己背負重擔不交託、我們憂慮不信靠、我們很少禱告，這確實都是我們人生中的錯誤。通往我們私禱室的路徑長滿了草；門口橫掛蜘蛛網。我們花在禱告的時間，可能比花在別的任何方面更有益處。當撒母耳禱告，他就看見神為以色列人所訂的計畫：

那在午正尋求
單獨在房頂祈禱的人，
得見一個超過他思想的異象 —
就是外邦人時代的開始。 (徒十9-十一18)
當危險怒目相向時，他必不會以為，
他白費了祈禱的時光；
沒有最惡劣的機遇，沒有任何地點，任何時間，
其中沒有天上的旨意。

Behold, there is in this city a man of God. 1 Sam. 9: 6

There is a street in London, near St. Paul's, which I never traverse without very peculiar feelings. It is Godliman Street. Evidently the name is a corruption of godly man. Did some saint of God once live here, whose life was so holy as to give a sweet savour to the very street in which he dwelt ? Were the neighbours who knew him best, the most sure of his godliness? Would that our piety might leave its mark on our neighbourhoods, and the memory linger long after we have passed away!

A generation or two ago in the Highlands, there were earnest and holy men who were known by the significant title of "the men". No great religious gathering was deemed complete without them. Their prayers and exhortations were accompanied by an especial unction.

In such manner Samuel's godliness was recognized far and wide. The fragrance of his character could not be concealed. And this gave men confidence in him. They said, "He is an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass." How much credit redounds to godliness, when it is combined with trustworthiness and high credit amongst our fellows!

Let us seek to be God's men and women. Let us live not only soberly and righteously, but godly, in this present world. Let us remember that God hath set apart the godly for Himself. The godly are the godlike. They become so by cultivating the fellowship and friendship of God. Their faces become enlightened with his beauty; their words are weighty with his truth. After being for a little in their company, you detect the gravity, serenity, gentleness, beauty of holiness, which are the court manners of heaven.

看哪這城裡有一位神人。 撒上九6

在倫敦靠近聖保羅大教堂有一條街，我每一次穿越這街道，從來沒有不帶著奇怪的感覺。這街名叫「敬虔人街」。很顯然這街名是濫用「敬虔人」一詞。是否曾經有某位神的聖徒住在此地，他的生命是如此的聖潔，而帶給他所住的這條街道甜美的香氣呢？鄰居非常認識他，確知他的敬虔嗎？我們的虔誠會給鄰居留下印象，這記憶在我們過世之後仍長久存留在我們鄰居中間嗎？

約一兩代人以前，在蘇格蘭高地曾有許多熱心又聖潔的人住在那裡，他們有個意味深長的雅號「正牌的人」。沒有一個重要的宗教集會缺了他們還可以算作完整的。他們的祈禱和勸誡都帶著特別的膏油。

同樣，撒母耳的敬虔被廣泛公認。他的品格芳香不能隱藏。這使百姓信任他。他們說，「他是一位眾人尊敬的人，凡他所說的全都應驗。(6節)」在同輩的人當中可靠加上好名聲時，名聲對於敬虔有何等的幫助啊！

但願我們無論男女都尋求作屬神的人。但願我們在現今的世界中，不只謹慎、公義度日，並且敬虔生活。讓我們牢記，神已經分別虔誠人歸祂自己(詩四3)。虔誠人就是像神的人。他們虔誠是藉著培養與神的交通和友誼。他們的臉綻放神美麗的光輝；他們的言語有神真理的分量。只要稍微與他們在一起，你就發現神聖的莊重、安詳、溫柔、美麗，這些特點乃是天庭的風範。

Thou shalt do as occasion serve thee. 1 Sam. 10:7

This is an example of how God demands of us the use of our sanctified common sense. Samuel sketches to Saul the course of events during the next few days; showing how clearly our lives lie naked and open to the eyes of God, and how easily He can reveal them when necessary. But whilst the various incidents are told, the prophet does not feel it incumbent to tell this goodly young man how he should behave in any given instance. "When these signs are come upon thee, thou shalt do as occasion serve thee."

We are reminded of a parallel in the life of Peter. The angel of God unbarred the prison-doors, and led him forth, because nothing short of divine power would avail. He led the dazed Apostle through one street, because he was too bewildered to realize what had happened. But, as soon as the night-air had brought him to his senses, the angel left him "to consider the matter"--to use his own judgment. The result of which was, that he went to the house of Mary.

One of the divinest of our faculties is the judgment, before which the reasons for and against a certain course of action must be adduced, but with which the ultimate decision lies. It is a tendency with some to depreciate the use of this wonderful power, by looking for signs and visions to point their path. This is a profound mistake. God will give these when there are complications in which the exercise of judgment might be at fault; but not where it is sufficient. Where no sign is given, carefully divest yourself of selfish considerations, weigh the pros and cons, ask for guidance, dare to act; and having acted in faith, never look back or doubt.

你就可以趁時而作。 撒母耳上十7 [趁時而作或譯：見機行事。]

這是個實例，表明神要求我們運用聖別的常識。撒母耳對掃羅概略的描述要來的幾天裡會發生之事的過程；清晰顯示我們的生命是何等赤露敞開在神眼前，有必要時祂能夠何等輕易把我們的生命揭露出來。雖然陳述了將要遇見的各個事件，先知卻不覺得有責任去告訴這位英俊的年輕人，在這些既定的境遇下該如何行事，只說「這兆頭臨到你，你就可以趁時而作。」

我們想起彼得生命中一件類似的事。神的使者開了監牢的門，領他出來，因為這完全是神能力的幫助。天使領著這位困惑的使徒穿過一條街，因為他太困惑，還沒領會所發生的事。然而當夜晚的空氣使他醒悟過來，天使就離開他，讓他去「想了一想」，去運用他自己的判斷。結果他就往馬利亞家去(徒十二7-12)。

我們最非凡的本能之一就是判斷的能力，在判斷之先必須列舉關於行動之確定過程的正反理由，而根據比較正反理由而作出最後的決定。某些人傾向輕看運用這奇妙的能力，而尋求兆頭、異象來指引他們的道路。這是一個嚴重的錯誤。當有複雜糾葛發生，使得判斷可能失誤時，神會賜下兆頭或異象；然而在運用判斷就足夠時，祂就不這樣做。沒有兆頭時，你要留心拋棄自私的考慮，權衡正反的理由，尋求引導，勇敢行動；憑著信心而行，不要回頭或疑惑。

Come, let us go to Gilgal, and renew the Kingdom there. 1 Sam. 11 : 14

It is good to have days and occasions for renewing the kingdom. Already Saul had been anointed king. It was a recognized matter that he should inaugurate the days of the kings, as distinguished from those of the judges. But his great victory at Jabesh-Gilead seems to have wrought the enthusiasm of the people to the highest pitch, and to have presented a great opportunity for renewing the kingdom. They went to Gilgal to do this, because there, on the first entrance into Canaan, Israel had rolled away the reproach of uncircumcision, which symbolized their lack of separation.

Jesus is our King. The Father hath anointed Him, and set Him on his holy hill; and we have gladly assented to the appointment, and made Him King. But sometimes our sense of loyalty and devotion wanes. Insensibly we drift from our strenuous endeavour to act always as his devoted subjects. Therefore we need, from time to time, to renew the kingdom, and reverently make Him King before the Lord.

Go over the old solemn form of dedication; turn to the yellow leaves of the diary; bring under his sceptre any new provinces of influence that have been acquired; tell Him how glad and thankful you are to live only for Him. Let this be done at Gilgal, the place of circumcision and separation, with the Jordan of death flowing behind, and the Land of Promise beckoning in front. There is a sense in which we can consecrate ourselves only once; but we can renew our vows often.

*Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The prisoner leaps to burst his chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.*

我們要往吉甲去，在那裡重新立國。 撒十一14 直譯

有時間、有機會來更新國度是好的。掃羅已經受膏為王。大家都公認掃羅開啟的君王時代，有別於士師時代。然而他在基列雅比的大勝，似乎將百姓的熱誠推到最高點，並且提供大好的機會來更新以色列國。他們往吉甲去做這事，是因為以色列剛進迦南地時，就在這裡滾去他們未受割禮的羞恥(書五2-9)，未受割禮表徵他們與世界沒有分別。

耶穌是我們的君王。父神已經膏了祂，在聖山上立祂為王；我們歡喜贊同父神的任命，並擁戴祂為王。可是我們忠心愛戴有時衰減。不知不覺就漂離始終作祂忠誠百姓的努力。因此我們偶爾需要更新國度，並在主面前立祂為王。

溫習以前莊重的奉獻：去翻開發黃的日記；將任何受到影響的新領域帶來歸祂王權管轄；告訴祂你是何等歡喜並感恩要單為祂而活。但願這事在吉甲完成，吉甲就是行割禮與世界分別的地方，在那裡，表明死的約但河在背後流，而應許之地在前面呼喚。就著某種意義來說，我們只能一次分別自己歸神為聖[過約但河所代表的]；然而我們可以常常更新我們的誓言[在吉甲所代表的]。

在祂掌權之處充滿祝福；
被囚的人跳著脫離枷鎖；
疲倦的人找到永遠安息，
一切缺乏之子都蒙福氣。

The Lord will not forsake his people for his great Name's sake. 1 Sam. 12: 22

The certainty of our salvation rests on the character of God. Moses, years before, had pleaded that God could not afford to destroy or forsake Israel, lest the Egyptians and others should have some ground for saying that He was not able to carry out his purpose, or that He was fickle and changeable. "What wilt Thou do for thy great Name?" Samuel uses the same argument. We also may avail ourselves of it for our great comfort.

God knew what we should be--how weak and frail and changeable--before He arrested us and brought us to Himself. Speaking after the manner of men, we might say He counted the cost. He computed whether his resources were sufficient to secure us from our foes, keep us from falling, and present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. He foreknew how much forbearance, pity, consolation, and tenderness, we should require. And yet it pleased Him to make us his people. He cannot, therefore, now run back from his purpose; otherwise it would seem that difficulties had arisen which either He had not anticipated, or was not so well able to combat as He had thought. What an absurd suggestion! In the former case there would be a slur on his omniscience; on the other, upon his omnipotence.

"What if God should cast you into hell?" was asked of an old Scotswoman. "Well," she answered, "If He do, all I can say is, He will lose mair than I will."

The gracious promise given to Joshua may be appropriated by every trembling saint of God: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." To the poor and needy He says, "I the God of Israel will not forsake them."

耶和華... 必因祂的大名不撇棄祂的子民。 撒十二22 (直譯)

我們救恩的把握是根據神的品格。在多年前摩西曾祈求神不撇棄或滅絕以色列，免得埃及人和其餘的外邦人有理由說，祂不能完成祂的旨意，或說祂善變無常(民十四11-20；申九25-29)。「你為你的大名要怎樣行呢(書七9)？」撒母耳用同樣的理由。我們也可運用這個理由，作為我們極大的安慰。

在神吸引我們、領我們歸祂自己之前，祂就已知道我們會如何——乃是極其無力、脆弱、善變。照著人的作法來說，祂是計算了代價。祂估計祂的資源是否足夠保衛我們脫離仇敵，保守我們不致跌倒，並且將我們無瑕疵、歡歡喜喜地引到祂的榮耀面前。祂預先知道我們需要何等多的寬容、憐憫、安慰、溫柔。祂依然喜悅使我們成為祂的子民。所以祂不能背離祂的旨意；否則就好像祂沒有預期到那些困難，或是祂不能照祂所想的去戰鬥。這是何等荒謬的想法！說祂沒有預期到困難，就詆譭祂的全知；說祂不能去戰鬥，則詆譭祂的全能。

有一位年老的蘇格蘭婦人被問道：「若是神將妳扔到陰間，那該怎麼辦呢？」她回答說：「若是祂這樣作，我只能說，祂的損失將比我的損失更大。」

所賜給約書亞那親切的應許，可以讓每一個害怕的聖徒來取用：「我必不撇下你，也不丟棄你。(書一5)」祂對困苦窮乏人說，「我以色列的神，必不離棄他們。(賽四十一17)」

I forced myself, therefore, and offered a burnt-offering. 1 Sam. 13: 12

This was wholly outside Saul's province. Samuel had engaged to arrive within the seven days: they had nearly expired, and still there were no signs of the prophet; and Saul, yielding to the promptings of his impetuous nature, took the matter into his own hand, and rashly assumed an office to which he had no right. He protested that he had been very unwilling to add the function of priest to that of king. But this was notoriously contrary to the truth. For some time he had chafed against Samuel's prerogative, and now sought to supersede the divine order.

It seemed but a small act, and, to superficial judgment, not enough to warrant the loss of his kingdom; but it was symptomatic of a great moral deficiency. He had not learned to obey the commandment of the Lord: how could he rule? He could not control the hasty suggestions of his own nature, in favour of the deliberate movements of the divine order: how could he be God's chosen agent? He acted on the showings of expediency, rather than of faith: how could he be a man after God's own heart? The restlessness and haste which characterize the present age must not be allowed to affect our service for God; for thereby the progress of the Gospel will be hindered rather than helped.

We must learn to wait for God. He may not come till the allotted time has almost passed; but He will come. He waits for the exact moment in which He can best succour you. Not till patience has been exercised, but before it has given out. In the meanwhile, be sure that your safety is secured; He will see to it that the Philistines shall not come down to overwhelm you.

我就勉強獻上燔祭。 撒母耳十三12

獻祭這件事完全在掃羅作王的職權範圍之外。撒母耳已經答應在七天之內到達；七天已經快要結束了，但卻見不到先知的身影；於是掃羅屈服於他急躁性情的驅使，將獻祭這件事抓在自己手中，輕率承擔他無權過問的職責。他抗議說他很不情願在君王職責之上再加上祭司的職責。但眾人皆知這不是實情。他甚惱怒撒母耳的權柄已經有一段時間了，而如今竟試圖更換神的秩序。

按著表面判斷，這只是一個小的舉動，不足以構成他失去王位的理由；其實這是重大道德缺陷的徵兆。他沒有學會遵守神的命令，如何能治理國家呢？他不能為了神聖秩序的審慎運作，而控制自己天性輕率的提議，怎麼能夠成為神揀選的代理人呢？他行事照著自己的得失，而非照著信心，怎能成為一個合神心意的人呢？我們不能允許這世代典型的焦躁和匆忙，來影響我們對神的事奉；這些焦躁和匆忙將阻礙，而非促進福音的進展。

我們必須學習等候神。也許要到預定的時間快要過去，祂才會來到，但祂必定來到。祂等待那個恰當的時刻，祂可以最有效的援助你。不是等到你已經有忍耐了，而是等到你的忍耐用盡之前，祂就必出現。在這同時，你要確信你的安全是有保障的；祂會確保非利士人在這期間不會下來打倒你。

His eyes were enlightened. 1 Sam. 14: 27

The Philistines were in full flight. The Israelites followed hard at their heels through the wood. It was there that the honey dropped in rich abundance on the ground, and there Jonathan tasted a little, dipping the end of his rod into it. It made all the difference to him, warding off the excessive exhaustion which paralysed the rest of the army.

THE WORD OF GOD IS SWEETER THAN THE HONEYCOMB. Luscious to the sanctified taste; enlightening to the dimming eyes; strength-giving to the weary. It drops in abundance to the ground, as though inviting the hand of the Christian warrior or wayfarer to take it freely. If there is no taste for the written Word, it may be assumed that the living Word has not been enthroned in the heart; for where He reigns supreme, there is a longing for the food which alone can fit us for the Christian life.

WHERE WE CANNOT TAKE MUCH, LET US TAKE SOME. There was not time for Jonathan to sit down and take his fill. He could only catch up some as he hastily passed through the forest-glade; but that little made all the difference to him. So, in the early morning, or at mid-day, if we cannot fill our hearts with Scripture, we may catch up a morsel, which will minister untold refreshment, and clear our spiritual vision.

WE SPECIALLY NEED TO DO THIS WHEN FLUSHED WITH SUCCESS. TOO often, when we have had success in the battles of the Lord--a good time in preaching or teaching--we are apt to congratulate ourselves, and suppose that we can live on the emotions excited. But, probably, there is no time when we need more absolutely to turn to the Word of God. In victory, as in defeat, we must be fed and nourished.

眼睛就明亮了。 撒上十四27

非利士人全都逃跑。以色列人緊跟著他們經過樹林。就在樹林裡有許多的蜂蜜滴落到地上。在那裡約拿單用杖頭蘸了蜂蜜嘗了一點，而消除極度的疲乏，使他與軍隊中其餘的人完全不同，軍隊中其餘的人因為極度的疲乏而無力。

神的話比蜂房下滴的蜜甘甜 (詩十九10)。對於有聖潔品味的人，神的話語是甘甜的；神的話語明亮他們逐漸模糊的眼睛，加力給疲乏的人。神的話語大量滴落到地上，好像在吸引基督徒戰士或旅人來隨意取用。如果有人覺得聖經無味，我們可以推測「永活的道」[耶穌]尚未在他心中掌權作王，因為在祂掌王權之處，必然渴慕那唯一適合基督徒生命的糧食。

當我們不能大快朵頤時，讓我們淺嘗些許。約拿單沒有時間坐下來吃到飽。當他匆忙穿過林間的空地，他只能淺嘗些許，但那一點點已使他大大不同。因此，在早晨、在中午，也許我們沒時間用經文填滿我們的心，我們至少可以匆匆淺嘗一點，那會使我們身心有說不出的舒暢，並使我們屬靈視野清晰。

當我們充滿成功的喜悅興奮時，我們尤其需要來享用神的話。當我們在為主爭戰中得勝時 — 講道或教導都一帆風順的時候 — 我們常常容易沾沾自喜，認為我們可以靠著這種興奮的感覺來生活。但是，我們也許沒有比這時刻更需要徹底轉向神的話。即使在勝利中，如同在失敗時一樣，我們必須得飽足、得滋養。

To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 1 Sam. 15: 22

This is a great principle, which is repeatedly enforced throughout the Bible. Men have always been apt to divorce religion and morality, and to suppose that a certain tribute of sacrifice to God will be sufficient compensation for notorious evil-doing. But in every age God's servants have protested against the notion, and have insisted, as Samuel did with Saul, that it were better to obey, although there should be no spoil from which to select victims for sacrifice. This was Christ's perpetual protest against the Pharisees.

LET THE RITUALIST BEWARE. There is a grave fear lest extreme attention to the outward rite may be accompanied by carelessness to the inward temper. Where the outward observance is the expression of the attitude of the soul, it is to be respected even by those of us who feel that excessive symbolism is hostile to the devout life; but where the rite takes the place of the soul's devotion, or condones a lax morality, it cannot be too sternly deprecated. Though all the Levitical rites should be observed without flaw, they could not compensate for the persistent neglect of the least item of the decalogue. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

LET US ALL BEWARE. We are apt to make sacrifices of time and money and energy for God, and to comfort ourselves with the reflection that such as we are may be excused if in small lapses of temper, or disposition, we come short of the divine standard. No; it cannot pass muster. One sin mastered, one temptation resisted, one duty performed, is dearer to God than the most costly sacrifices that were ever piled upon the altar.

聽命勝於獻祭，順從勝於公羊的脂油。 撒母耳上十五22

這是一個重要的原則，在整本聖經裡一再被強調。人總是容易將信仰和道德分開來，以為向神獻上某種祭物就足以補償臭名昭彰的惡行。但在每一個時代裡，神的僕人都反對這個觀念，正如撒母耳責備掃羅一樣，神的僕人堅決認為「聽命」是更緊要的，即使沒有掠物可以從中挑出來作祭物。這一直是基督對法利賽人的抗議(太廿三23)。

只注重儀式的人要小心。有一項令人嚴重擔憂的事，恐怕過度注重外在的禮儀，會帶來疏忽人內在的性情。當外在的儀式表達內心的態度時，那儀式就該被尊重，即使我們覺得過度注重形式不利於敬虔生活。但當儀式取代了內心的虔誠，或是外在儀式容讓道德鬆懈，那麼怎麼嚴厲譴責都不為過。即使毫無瑕疵地遵守利未人所有的儀式，也無法彌補對十誡中最小一條的長久忽視。「神是個靈，所以拜祂的，必須用心靈和誠實拜祂。(約四24)」

我們每一個人都要小心。我們往往傾向於將時間、金錢和精力奉獻給神，而用這個思想安慰自己說：我們的性情脾氣許多小過失，以致未達神的標準，也會被原諒。不，這不可能通過檢閱。一項罪惡被制伏，一種試探被抵擋，一項本分被完成，比堆積在祭壇上最昂貴的祭物更令神喜愛。

The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. 1 Sam. 16: 13

What may not a day bring forth! Here was a shepherd lad, summoned hastily from his sheep, and anointed king. But an even greater blessing came into his life that day, for he was mightily endued with the Holy Spirit. Without doubt, during his early years the Spirit of God had dwelt within him, moulding his character, inditing his songs; but, henceforth, the Spirit was to abide on him, as a divine unction.

Why should not this day witness a similar transformation for you; not in the change of earthly position, but in your reception of the "power from on high" through a renewed enduement? Why should not the Spirit of the Lord come mightily upon you from this holy hour, even as your eyes glance down this page? Though it is quite possible that you have been empowered once, there is no finality in God's bestowals; the apostles were filled and filled again (Acts 2 and 4).

The age of Pentecost in which we live is distinctly one of divine anointing. It awaits all who will separate themselves to God, and receive it for his glory. The characteristic preposition of this age is on. If you have not received power, seek it; he that seeketh findeth; nay, receive it--to ask is to get. If the Master, though begotten of the Holy Spirit, forbore to preach the Gospel, and bind up broken hearts, till He had been anointed as the Christ by the Spirit, who descended on Him at his baptism; how foolish it is for us, who were born in sin, to attempt similar work, apart from similar enduement! The promise to each child of God is: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me" (Acts 1 : 8).

從這日起，耶和華的靈就大大感動大衛。 撒下十六13

有什麼是一天中不可能發生的事呢？一個牧羊的少年，方才急急地從羊群被召喚回家，即被膏為王。但在那一天，有一個更大的福分進入他的生命中，就是大大得著賜給他的聖靈。毫無疑問，在他早年的時候，神的靈已經居住在他裡面，塑造他的品格，感動他寫詩歌；但從這日起，作為神聖膏油的聖靈，停留在他身上。

為什麼這一天不能為你見證類似的轉變呢？不是地上職位的變化，而是藉著更新的賜予，你得著「從上頭來的能力。(路廿四49)」為什麼耶和華的靈不能從這神聖的時刻起大大地感動你，就在你的眼睛匆匆掃過這篇文章的時候？儘管很可能你曾經一度蒙聖靈加力，但神的賜予是沒有止境的；使徒們曾一次又一次地被聖靈充滿(徒二, 四章)。

我們現今生活在五旬節的時代，很明顯是神聖膏抹的時代(約壹二27)。聖靈等待著膏抹每一個將自己分別為聖歸給神，並為神的榮耀而活的人。這個時代的特點就是聖靈要作工在人身上[註]。如果你還沒有得著能力，就要尋找；尋找的，就尋見；並且得著——因為凡祈求的，就得著(太七7-8)。儘管我們的主是從聖靈成孕而生，祂都約束自己沒有去傳播福音，醫治受傷的心靈，直等到祂在受洗時聖靈降在祂身上膏祂為基督；而我們這些生在罪中的人，在沒有領受同樣恩賜的情況下，就試圖作同樣的事工，是多麼的愚蠢啊！對於每個神兒女的應許是：「聖靈降臨在你們身上，你們就必得著能力，並作我的見證人。(徒一8)」

[註] 聖靈的工作有兩大方面。一面是在人裡面的工作(in)，如使人重生、作印記、引導等；另一面是在人身上的工作(upon)，如充滿、賜能力等。本篇信息著重聖靈在人身上的工作。

The armies of the living God. 1 Sam. 17: 26, 36

This made all the difference between David and the rest of the camp. To Saul and his soldiers God was an absentee--a name, but little else. They believed that He had done great things for his people in the past, and that at some future time, in the days of the Messiah, He might be expected to do great things again; but no one thought of Him as present. Keenly sensitive to the defiance of the Philistine, and grieved by the apathy of his people, David, on the other hand, felt that God was alive. He had lived alone with Him in the solitude of the hills, till God had become one of the greatest and most real facts of his young existence; and as the lad went to and fro among the armed warriors, he was sublimely conscious of the presence of the living God amid the clang of the camp.

This is what we need. To live so much with God, that when we come amongst men, whether in the bazaars of India or the market-place of an English town, we may be more aware of his overshadowing presence than of the presence or absence of any one. Lo, God is here! This place is hallowed ground! But none can realize this by the act of the will. We can only find God everywhere when we carry Him everywhere. The miner sees by the candle he carries on his forehead.

Each of us is opposed by difficulties, privations, and trials of different sorts. But the one answer to them all is faith's vision of the Living God. We can face the mightiest foe in his name. If our faith can but make Him a passage, along which He shall come, there is no Goliath He will not quell; no question He will not answer; no need He will not meet.

永生神的軍隊。 撒十七26, 36

這個認識使大衛和軍隊裡其餘的人截然不同。對於掃羅和他的士兵而言，神是缺席的，只是一個名字而已。他們相信神在過去曾為他的子民行過大事，在未來某個時間，當彌賽亞來到的時候，祂可能還會再行大事；但沒有人認為神此刻在這裡。大衛敏銳感受到非利士人的蔑視挑戰，並為以色列人的冷漠感到難過，在另一方面，大衛卻覺得神是活著的。他曾在荒山中單獨活在神面前，直到神成為他年輕生命裡最偉大、最真實的事實；而當這個年輕人來往於武裝的戰士之間，他很嚴肅地意識到神的同在就在充滿鏗鏘的軍營中。

這是我們所欠缺的。非常親密地活在神面前，以至在我們進入人群中的時候，無論是在印度的市集，還是英國一個小鎮的市場，我們都可以意識到神的同在超越過任何人的出現或缺席。看哪，神就在這裡！這裡就是聖地！然而沒有任何人能靠著意志行動來認識到這一點。只有當我們到每一個地方去，都帶著神同行，我們才能在每一個地方找到神。礦工能看見，是藉著帶在額上的蠟燭。

我們每一個人都面臨各種困難、艱辛和試練。但唯一的解答就是憑藉信心看見永生神。靠祂的名，我們就能面對最強大的敵人。如果我們的信心能為祂打開一條通道，神就必定沿著這條通道來臨。那麼就沒有祂不能打倒的巨人；沒有祂不能解答的疑問；沒有祂不能應付的缺乏。

David behaved himself wisely. 1 Sam. 18: 5,14, 15, 30.

There must be some strong reason for the fourfold repetition of this phrase in so short a space. It is as though the Holy Ghost would lay very distinct stress on the divine prudence and circumspection, which must characterize the man whose life is hid in God. Let us walk with God, abiding in Him, subjecting our thoughts and plans to his, communing about all things with Him, talking over our lives with Him, before we go out to live them in the presence of our fellows. Then we too shall have this gracious wisdom, which is more moral than intellectual--the product of the grace of God rather than of human culture.

OUR LIFE SHALL COMMEND ITSELF TO MEN (5). David's was good in the sight of all the people, and more wonderful still, in the sight of Saul's servants, who might have been jealous. A life lived in God disarms jealousy and envy. He who, as a boy, did his Father's business, increased in wisdom, and in favour with God and men.

OUR LIFE SHALL REBUKE AND AWE OUR FOES (15). Saul stood in awe of him. When traps and snares are laid for us we shall be enabled to thread our way through them all, as Jesus did when they tried to entangle Him in his talk. We shall have a wisdom which all our foes together shall not be able to gainsay or resist.

OUR NAMES WILL BE PRECIOUS (30). People loved to dwell on the name of David; it was much set by; they noticed and were impressed with the beauty and nobility of his character. We must always view our lives, amusements, and undertakings, in the light of the result which will accrue to Him whose name it is our privilege to bear.

大衛作事精明。 撒十八5, 14, 15, 30

這句話在短短的篇幅裡被重複了四次，一定有很重要的原因。就好像聖靈要特別強調從神而來謹慎周詳的考慮，這必定是那隱藏在神裡面之人生命的特點。但願我們與神同行，住在祂裡面，我們的想法和計畫服在祂的想法和計畫之下，所有的事情都與祂溝通。在我們出去，在人前實現我們這些想法和計畫之前，先和神談一談我們的生活。這樣我們也將擁有這種美好的智慧，這智慧更多重在品德，而非知識 — 是從神恩典產生的結果，而非人類文化的產物。

我們的生命必會給人好印象 (5節)。大衛在所有人的眼中都蒙喜悅，更了不起的是，本來可能會嫉妒他的掃羅的臣僕們，居然也喜悅他 (5節)。活在神裡面的生命能消除一切嫉妒。孩童時期經營他父親事業的大衛，智慧並神和人喜愛他的心都一齊增長 (路二52)。

我們的生命必會斥責我們的仇敵，使他們懼怕 (15節)。掃羅懼怕他。當他人設下陷阱和網羅要陷害我們，我們必能從中平安穿過，好像耶穌從容答覆那些要從祂的話找把柄陷害祂的人 (太廿二15-22)。我們必有智慧，是我們所有的仇敵不能反駁抵擋的。

我們的名字將會被人尊重 (30節)。人們喜愛思念大衛的名字，這個名字被特意分別出來；他們看到他品格的美麗和高貴，並且留下深刻的印象。鑑於我們生活的結果將使神得名聲，而擁有神的名又是我們的特權；我們應該時時檢視自己的生活、消遣、和行事。

And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan. 1 Sam. 19: 6

It was a noble act of Jonathan. He might have withdrawn from his friendship with David when it threatened his relations with his father; but, instead, he stepped into the breach, and pleaded for his friend, endeavouring to eradicate the false and ungenerous conceptions of which Saul had become possessed. It is an example we do well to study and copy. For his love's sake, as well as for his father's, he was extremely eager to effect a reconciliation between him to whom he owed allegiance of son and subject, and this fair shepherd-minstrel-warrior, who had so recently cast a sunny gleam upon his life.

Men often misconceive of one another. Jealousy and envy distort behaviour and actions which are in themselves as beautiful as possible. Misrepresentation will blind us to the true excellences of one another's characters. Wrong constructions are often put on the most innocent incidents. We cannot help these things they are part of the sad heritage of the Fall; but we may often take up the cause of a misunderstood man, and at the risk of losing our own reputation, and diverting to ourselves some of the odium which attaches to him, we may stand as his sponsors.

Even if we dislike another, as Saul did David, let us give scope to the good Spirit to plead his cause at the bar of our hearts, as Jonathan did for his friend. Let us consider all the kind and loving things that may be said of him; let us put ourselves in his position; let us be willing to believe and hope all things. Let us plead for others, since this is a work in which Christ's followers most closely approximate to Him who ever liveth to intercede.

掃羅聽了約拿單的話。 撒下十九6

約拿單的舉動是高貴的。當他與大衛的友誼威脅到他與自己父親的關係時，他可以從這友誼中抽身；然而，他卻踏進這個不和之中，並為他的朋友求情，努力來根除掃羅所執迷的錯誤且度量狹小的想法。這一個例子值得我們學習並效法。約拿單為了他所愛的人，也為了他父親的緣故，極其渴望在這兩人之間達成和解：一面是他作為兒臣所該效忠的父王，另一面則是最近才在他生命中帶來一束陽光的這位英俊的 — 牧羊人-詩人-勇士。

人常彼此誤解。嫉妒眼紅扭曲了行動與作為，這些行為本身原是再美不過的。不正確的陳述會蒙蔽我們的眼目，讓我們無法看到他人品格的傑出。最單純的事往往被人加以曲解。對於這樣的事，我們無能為力，因為這是人類墮落可悲遺傳的一部分；但我們可以常為著一個被誤解的人申辯，冒著失去我們自己名譽的風險，將一些本來是針對他的憎恨，轉移到我們自己身上來，我們便成為他的支持者。

即使我們不喜愛彼此，就像掃羅不喜愛大衛，讓我們給那美善的聖靈留下空間，使祂在我們內心的法庭為對方申辯；就像約拿單為他朋友所做的。讓我們思想祂所提及對方良善和有愛心的事；讓我們將自己置於對方的處境中；讓我們願意凡事相信，凡事盼望(林前十三7)。讓我們為他人代求，因為這是基督的跟隨者最像祂的一項工作，祂長遠活著，為人代求(來七25)。

Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. 1 Sam. 20: 18

Jonathan and David had entered into a covenant, each loving the other as his own soul. Anxious to shield his friend from the wrath of his father, Jonathan discloses to David the plan by which he shall know how matters fared in the royal palace. David's vacant seat suggests a lesson for us.

There are a good many empty seats in our houses. Those that occupied them can never do so again; they have gone never to return again, and we miss them sorely.

Let us see to it that we do not leave our seats in the home circle needlessly vacant. Let not the mother be away at the dance, or even at the religious meeting, when she should be at home, joining in her children's evening prayers. Let the father be very sure that God has called him elsewhere, before he habitually vacates his place in the evening family circle. Let each of us avoid giving needless pain to those we love by leaving empty seats. But if God calls us away to his service, then for those who miss us, another Form shall glide in, and sit in the vacant chair; and they will become conscious that the Master is filling the gap, and beguiling the weary moments.

Above all, let not your seat be empty in the house of God, at the ordinary service, or at the Lord's Table. We are too prone to allow a trifle to deter us from joining in the sacred feasts. At such times we are missed, our empty seat witnesses against us; there is a lack in the song and prayer, which cries out against us; there is a distinct loss to the power of the service, which is in proportion to the number of earnest souls present. Oh that there may be no empty seats at the marriage supper, vacated through our unfaithfulness!

你的座位空設，人必理會你不在那裡。 撒下二十18

約拿單與大衛立約，各人愛對方如同愛自己的性命一般。約拿單急切要保護他的朋友免遭他父親的憤怒，他向大衛透露計畫，好讓大衛知道王宮中事情如何發展。大衛的空座提示我們一個功課。

我們的家中有許多空設的座位。曾經坐在其上的人不再回來，他們一去不復返，我們切切想念他們。

讓我們留意，不讓我們在家中的座位不必要地空著。作母親的應該在家與她的孩子們一同晚禱時，不要離家去跳舞，甚或去赴宗教聚會。作父親的習慣性地在晚上與家人團聚中缺席之前，讓他清楚確認是神呼召他去別處。讓我們每一個人都避免因缺席而帶給我們所愛的人不必要的痛苦。但若是神呼召我們服事祂，那麼對於那些思念我們的人，有別的行影必悄悄進來取代，坐在空座之上，他們也會感覺到主填補了空缺，並打發那疲乏厭倦的時光。

最重要的是不要在神的家中缺席，無論是平日的服事，或是領聖餐。我們太容易被瑣事牽絆而不赴那神聖的筵席。每當我們缺席時，眾人就想念我們，空位便見證我們的不是；詩歌與禱告中有了一個空缺向我們呼喚；服事的力量中有了一個明顯的缺失，事奉的能力是照著火熱的人出席多寡而定。但願在羔羊的婚宴上，無人因不忠心而缺席(啟十九9)！

There is none like that; give it me. 1 Sam. 21:9

What David said of the sword of Goliath we may say of Holy Scripture--the sword of the Spirit--"There is none like that."

THERE IS NO BOOK LIKE THE BIBLE FOR THOSE CONVINCED OF SIN. The Word of God assures the sinner of God's love in Christ, whilst it refuses to condone a single sin, or excuse one shortcoming. The Bible is as stern as conscience herself against sin, but as pitiful as the heart of God to the sinner. It, moreover, discloses the method by which the just God becomes the justifier of those who believe.

THERE IS NO BOOK LIKE THE BIBLE FOR THE SORROWFUL. It tells of the Comforter; it reminds us that in all our sorrow God also is sad; it points to the perfect plan according to which God is working out our blessedness; it insists that all things are working together for good; it opens the vision of the blessed future, where all the griefs and tears of men shall be put away for ever.

THERE IS NO BOOK LIKE THE BIBLE FOR THE DYING. "Read to me," said Sir Walter Scott, on his dying bed, to his friend. "What shall I read?" "There is only one book for a dying man," was the answer; "read to me from the Bible." The Book which tells of the Lord, who died and rose again; of the mansions which He has gone to prepare; of the reunion of the saints; of the fountains of water of life--is the only pillow on which the dying head can rest softly.

In these days of debate and doubt there is no such evidence for the divine authority of the Bible as that which accrues from its perpetual use, whether in our own life, or in the conviction of the ungodly.

這刀沒有可比的！求你給我。 撒二十二19

大衛所說歌利亞的刀，對我們來說，就是聖經 — 聖靈之劍(弗六17) — 「沒有可比的」。

對於認罪悔改的人，聖經是沒有可比的。神的道向罪人保證在基督裡面神的愛；但拒絕縱容任何罪，或為任何缺點找藉口開脫。聖經正如良心一樣，嚴厲反對罪；聖經也如同神的心一般，同情罪人。聖經更揭示公義的神稱信祂的人為義的方法。

對於憂愁的人，聖經是沒有可比的。聖經講論保惠師；提醒我們，神在我們所有的苦難中也是心裡憂傷；聖經指出那完美的計畫，神照著那計畫作工，使我們蒙福；聖經堅持萬事互相效力(羅八28)；它開啟蒙福之未來的異象，那時人們就不再有痛苦和眼淚。

對於垂死的人，聖經是沒有可比的。沃爾特·司各特爵士 [1771-1832, 蘇格蘭歷史小說家及詩人。] 在他臨終時，對他的朋友說。「請讀給我聽。」「讀什麼呢？」司各特回答說：「對一個垂死的人，只有一本書。請讀聖經給我聽。」這本書述說主死而復活；述說祂去預備地方；述說聖徒們的重聚；述說生命活水源泉 — 這是唯一一個可以讓垂死之人安睡的枕頭。

在這個爭論質疑的時代中，沒有任何證據，比得上聖經被經久使用所產生的屬神權威，無論是用在我們自己的生命活中，或是用於定罪不敬虔的人。

Till I know what God will do for me. 1 Sam. 22: 3

We shall never get to the end of all that God will do for us, if only we perfectly give ourselves up to Him. David had a very imperfect vision of all that was in God's plan for him; he had an inkling, but that was all. And we have still less. Yet let us recapitulate some of the things which God will do for us.

He waits to give us the spirit of Sonship: so that we may ever be conscious of his Fatherhood, and look up into his face in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the Mount of Transfiguration alike, calling Him Abba, Father.

He longs to lead us to full consecration; to lead us into such close association with Jesus in his redeeming purpose, that we may become his willing bond-servants, with no other purpose and aim in life than his service and glory.

He desires to deliver us from all known sin: that we may be blameless and harmless, his children without rebuke in this sinful world, who walk before Him in holiness and righteousness all our days.

He wants to anoint us with the Holy Spirit: so that our ministry to men may have more of the savour of Christ; may plough deeper furrows in human hearts; may have more abiding results.

He desires us to come into partnership with his Son--here in his redemptive purpose, yonder in his throne. To this indeed He calls US.

Who can know all that God waits to do, not here only, but yonder, when life has entered upon its eternal stage! "Now are we children of God; and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be" (1 John 3 : 2, R.V.).

等我知道神要為我怎樣行。 撒二十二3

只要我們將自己全然交給神，就不會來到神在我們身上一切工作的盡頭。大衛對於神在他身上的計畫並不完全明白；他略有所知，僅此而已。而我們知道的就更少。但讓我們來扼要重述一些神要為我們做的事。

祂等待著要賜我們「兒子的靈」(羅八15)：使我們能時常察覺到祂是父，並在客西馬尼園中仰望祂的面，如同在變化山上一樣仰望祂的面，呼叫祂「阿爸，父」。

祂渴望引導我們達到全然分別為聖；祂渴望引導我們在祂的救贖旨意中與耶穌進入親密的聯繫，好使我們成為祂甘心的奴僕，一生除了為著事奉祂、榮耀祂，別無其他目標。

祂渴望救我們脫離一切已知的罪：好使我們無瑕疵且不傷人，在這個罪惡的世界中作祂無可指摘的兒女，一生聖潔、公義行在祂面前。

祂要用聖靈膏我們：好讓我們對人的服事更有基督的馨香；讓我們在人心犁更深的犁溝；可以得著更多長存的果子。

祂渴望讓我們與祂的兒子合作 — 今世在祂的救贖旨意中，將來在祂的寶座上。祂呼召我們正是為此。

誰能明白神等候著要做的一切呢，不僅在這裡，更在將來當生命進入永恆之時！「我們現在是神的兒女，將來如何，還未顯明。(約壹三2)」

He said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod. 1 Sam. 23: 9

David was passing through one of the most awful experiences of his life, when his men spoke of stoning him instead of taking up his cause. How many times in this chapter we are informed that David inquired of the Lord! Some three or four times the appeal for direction was renewed, as though he were fearful to stir one step by the light of his own unaided wisdom. In that changeful life of his, it must have been extremely difficult to set the Lord always before him, and await divine direction. Many a time his circumstances might seem to demand immediate action rather than prayer; and the rude soldiery must have insisted on their voice being heard rather than a priest's; but David was not deterred by one or the other, and still held to his practice of consulting the Urim and Thummim stone, set in the ephod; which was probably a splendid diamond, flashing with God's distinct "Yes," or growing cloudy and dark with his definite "No."

Let us inquire of the Lord. The answer will surely come, if we wait for it. If we are not sure of it, let us still wait, for it will come--not so early as to save us from using our faith, not so late as to permit us to be overwhelmed. Direction will come in the growing conviction of duty, in the drift of circumstances, in the advice of friends, in the perceptions of a sanctified judgment. None that wait on God can be ashamed. Whether our duty be to arise and pursue, to sit still, or to escape-- "the meek He will guide in judgment; the meek He will teach his way." He gives us a white stone in which a name is written, which only they know who receive.

他... 就對祭司亞比亞他說，將以弗得拿過來。 撒下二十三9

大衛正經歷他人生中一段最窘迫的體驗，當時跟隨他的人說要用石頭打死他，而不是支持他的理想(撒下卅6)。這一章裡面告訴我們多少次大衛求問神！他反復求問神的指引約有三四次，彷彿他生怕憑著自己那未受幫助的智慧移動一步。在他多變的人生中，經常將耶和華擺在他的面前，等候神聖的指引，一定是非常困難的事。很多時候，他的情況看起來需要採取立即行動而非禱告；粗野的士兵堅持要他聽取他們的意見而非祭司的意見；但大衛並沒有受任何的攔阻，並且堅持求問放在以弗得裡面的烏陵和土明；那可能是一顆璀璨的鑽石，隨著神清楚的「是」而閃亮，或隨著祂的「否」而變黯淡。

讓我們來求問耶和華。若我們等待，答案一定會出現。若我們對答案還不確信，就讓我們繼續等待，因為它一定會出現 — 不會過早，以至於我們不運用信心；也不會過遲，以至於我們受不了。在職責逐漸明確時，在環境變化的動向中，在朋友的勸告中，在對聖別判斷的領會中，指引就臨到。凡等候神的必不羞愧(詩廿五3)。無論我們的本分是該起身追趕，或安靜，或逃離 — 「祂必按公平引領謙卑人，將祂的道教訓他們。(詩廿五9)」祂賜我們一塊白石，石上寫著新名，除了那領受的以外，沒有人能認識(啟二17)。

And David's heart smote him. 1 Sam. 24: 5

It is well to have a tender conscience, and to obey its least monitions, even when men and things militate against it. Here was an opportunity for David and his band to end their wanderings and hardships by one thrust of the spear; but though it was a very small thing that he had done, David was struck with remorse for having taken advantage of Saul's retirement in the precincts of the cave, where his men and he were hiding, and cut off a piece of his robe.

IT WAS A TRIFLING MATTER, and yet it seemed dishonouring to God's anointed king; and as such it hurt David to have done it. We sometimes in conversation and criticism cut off a piece of a man's character, or influence for good, or standing in the esteem of others. Ought not our heart to smite us for such thoughtless conduct? Ought we not to make confession or reparation?

CIRCUMSTANCES SEEMED TO FAVOUR IT. Of all the scores of caves in the neighbourhood, the king had happened to choose the very one, in the dark recesses of which David and his men were sheltering. What more natural than to obtain some token to convince the king how absolutely he had been in his young rival's power? But favouring circumstances do not justify an act which is not perfectly healthy and right. Opportunity does not make a wrong thing right.

HIS MEN UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE ACT, nay, they wanted him to go further. Their standard was a very low one, not only in this case, but in others. How wonderful that David kept such a high ideal amid such comrades! We shall not be judged hereafter by the standard which obtained among our comrades.

大衛心中自責。 撒下二十四5

擁有敏銳的良心、並順從良心最微小的訓誡，是美好的事，即使眾人和事情都阻擾這良心的訓誡。此時正是機會，只需用槍刺一下，大衛和跟隨他的人便可結束他們的漂泊與困苦。大衛趁著掃羅進入他[大衛]和跟隨的人藏身的山洞時，割下掃羅外袍的衣襟，雖然這只是一件很小的事，大衛卻心中自責。

儘管是件小事，但還是羞辱神所膏的王；大衛這樣做，心裡感到難過。我們有時在談話和批評中將一個人的品格、良好的影響、或受人尊重的身分割下一小塊。難道我們不應該因著這欠缺考慮的行為而心中自責嗎？難道我們不應該認罪補償嗎？

周遭環境看來有利於行動。在附近所有許多的山洞，掃羅王恰巧選了這一個，就是大衛和跟隨他的人藏身其黑暗深處的山洞。大衛割下掃羅的一塊衣襟作為證據，使掃羅確信他已全然落在大衛的手中，這件事是再自然不過的。然而有利的環境，不能讓一個不完全有益且不正當的行為被稱許。機遇不會讓錯誤的事變成對的，[所以大衛良心自責]。

跟隨他的人一致贊成他的行動，不僅如此，他們想要大衛更進一步。他們的標準是很低的，不僅在這件事上，也在很多其他事上。大衛在這樣一群同伴中保持著如此高的典範，是多麼美好啊！將來我們不是照著同伴採納的標準受審判。

This shall be no grief unto thee. 1 Sam. 25 : 31

There was an inimitable blending of woman's wit with worldly prudence in the words of the beautiful Abigail. Poor woman, she had had a sorry life of it, mated to such a man as Nabal was! An ill-assorted pair certainly, though probably she had had no hand in bringing about the alliance. Like so many Eastern women, she was the creature of another's act and choice. But she succeeded in averting the blow which David was hasting to inflict, by asserting her belief that the time was not far distant when he would no longer be a fugitive from his foes, and by suggesting that when that happy time came it would be a relief to feel that he had not allowed himself to be carried to all lengths by his hot passion.

It was very salutary advice. Let us always look at things from the view-point of the future, when our passion shall have subsided, when time shall have cooled us, and especially when we review the present from the verge of the other world--how then?

We can well afford to do this since God is with us, and our life is bound up with Him in the bundle of life. Abigail reminded David that God would do to him all the good of which He had spoken, and would sling out his enemies as from a sling. So God will do for us; not one good thing will fail of all that He hath promised; no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper. Within a little, Nabal was dead, and David's wrong righted. So shall the evil that now molests us pass away. God will deal with it. Let us leave it to Him: before Him mountains shall melt like wax; and we shall have nothing to regret.

我主必不至心裡不安。 撒下二十五31

美麗的亞比該所說的話無人能效仿，她的話結合著婦人的智慧與世上的精明。但這可憐的婦人，卻嫁給一個像拿八這樣的人，過著不幸的生活！這確實是不相配的一對。雖然她可能並未參與促成這個結合，就如許多東方的女子，受別人的行動與選擇所支配。但她成功阻止大衛急忙要施行的擊打，宣稱她相信大衛逃亡的日子很快就會結束，並告訴大衛當美好的時光來到時，想到他沒有容讓自己任憑滿腔熱血行事，會感到寬慰。

這是十分有益的勸解。但願我們總是從未來的角度看待事情，當烈怒平息，當時間使我們冷靜下來，特別是從另一個世界[指來世。來二5]的邊緣回顧現今時——我們將如何呢？

我們可以經得起這樣的回顧，因為神與我們同在，我們的生命與祂緊密相聯。亞比該提醒大衛，神必照祂所應許的話賜福給他，神要拋去他的仇敵，如用機弦甩石一樣(29節)。神也會為我們這樣做；祂所應許的好處，沒有一樣會落空；沒有一個興起來對付我們的武器會成功。沒多久，拿八就死了(38節)，大衛所受的冤屈得到平反。現在困擾著我們的惡事也必過去。神將會處理這樣的事。讓我們將惡事交給祂：諸山見耶和華的面，便消化如蠟(詩九十七5)；我們就沒有悔恨。

Then said Saul, I have sinned. 1 Sam. 26: 21

The Apostle makes a great distinction, and rightly, between the sorrow of the world and the sorrow of a godly repentance which needeth not to be repented of. Certainly Saul's confession of sin belonged to the former; whilst the cry of the latter comes out in Psalm 51, extorted from David by the crimes of after years.

The difference between the two may be briefly summarized in this, that the one counts sin a folly and regrets its consequences; whilst the other regards sin as a crime done against the most Holy God, and regrets the pain given to Him. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

Obviously Saul's confession was of the former description, "I have played the fool." He recognized the unkingliness of his behaviour, and the futility of his efforts against David. But he stayed there, stopping short of a faithful recognition of his position in the sight of God, as weighed in the balances of eternal justice.

Many a time in Scripture do we meet with this confession. The Prodigal, Judas, Pharaoh, David, and Saul, uttered it; but in what differing tones, and with what differing motives! We need to winnow our words before God; not content with using the expressions of penitence, unless we are very sure that they bear the mint-mark of heaven, and deserve the master's Beatitude, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

When sin is humbly confessed, the Saviour assures us: "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee, go in peace." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

掃羅說，我有罪了。 撒下二十六21

使徒保羅做了一個重大且正確的區分，世俗的憂愁，有別於生出敬虔之懊悔的憂愁，敬虔的懊悔是沒有後悔的(林後七10)。掃羅的認罪確實是屬於世俗的憂愁，而敬虔懊悔的憂愁則來自詩篇五十一篇，是大衛在以後的歲月，因犯罪而被逼出來的吶喊。

兩者之間的區別可以這樣簡要總結，一種是看罪為愚蠢，並為這罪帶來的後果而後悔；另一種則將罪視為不法的行為，違背最聖潔之神，並為這罪帶給神痛苦而後悔。「我向你犯罪，惟獨得罪了你，在你眼前行了這惡。(詩五十一4)」

顯然掃羅的認罪屬於前一種的描述。「我行事愚昧。(21節另譯)」他承認自己的行為有失王的風範，他與大衛為敵的努力也都歸於徒然。然而他只停留在那裡，還沒有真誠的認識到，照著永恆公義的天平衡量他在神眼中的情況。

在聖經中我們屢次看到認罪。浪子(路十五11-32)、猶大(太廿七3-4)、法老(出九27, 十16-17)、大衛(詩五十一篇)、掃羅(撒下廿六21)，這些人都曾說自己有罪；然而他們的語氣多麼不同，動機也多麼不同！我們要在神面前揚淨我們的話語；不僅停在表達懺悔，除非我們十分確定這些懊悔的話帶著屬天的戳記，並配得主的祝福，「哀慟的人有福了，因為他們必得安慰。(太五4)」

當我們謙卑認罪，救贖主就給我們確據：「你許多的罪都赦免了，平平安安的回去吧。(路七47-50)」「我們若認自己的罪，神是信實的，是公義的，必要赦免我們的罪，洗淨我們一切的不義。(約壹一9)」

And David said, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul. 1 Sam. 27: 1

What a fit of despondency and unbelief was here! We can hardly believe that this is he who in so many psalms had boasted of the shepherd care of God, who had so often insisted on the safety of God's pavilion. It was a fainting fit, brought on by the bad air he had breathed amid the evil associations of Adullam's cave. Had not God promised to take care of him? Was not his future already guaranteed by the promises that he should succeed to the kingdom? But nothing availed to check his precipitate flight into the land of the Philistines.

Bitterly he rued this mistake. The prevarication and deceit to which he was driven; the anguish of having to march with Achish against his own people; the sack and burning of Ziklag: these were the price he had to pay for his mistrust. Unbelief always brings many other bitter sorrows in its train, and leads the soul to cry,

How long, O Lord? Wilt Thou forget me for ever?

How long wilt Thou hide thy face from me?

Let us beware of losing heart, as David did. Look not at Saul, but at God, who is omnipotent; not at the winds and waves, but at Him who walks across the water; not at what may come, but at that which is--for the glorious Lord is round about thee to deliver thee. He shall deliver thy soul from death, thine eyes from tears, and thy feet from falling. He that has helped will help. What He has done, He will do. God always works from less to more, never from more to less. Dost thou not hear--hast thou not heard--his voice saying, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee? What, then, can man do unto thee? Every weapon used against thee shall go blunt on an invisible shield!

大衛心裡說，必有一日我死在掃羅手裡。 撒上一十七1

這是何等突發的沮喪與不信！我們難以相信這個人就是在許多詩篇中誇耀神的牧養，時常堅稱神帳棚安全的那個人。這次突然喪膽，是有害地聯想到亞杜蘭洞中所呼吸的惡劣空氣所引起。難道神不曾應許照顧他嗎？他的未來豈不是已經有應許保證，必定接續作王嗎？然而這些都無法有效地阻止他突然投奔非利士的行為。

他為著這錯誤痛苦地後悔。他被迫搪塞欺騙；不得不與亞吉一同行軍攻擊以色列人的痛苦(撒上一十九章)；被亞吉辭退；以及洗革拉遭受焚燒(撒上一1-6)。這些都是他為自己的不信所付上的代價。不信總是帶來許多其他的苦楚憂愁跟在後頭，使他的心呼喊：

耶和華啊，你忘記我要到幾時呢？要到永遠嗎？

你掩面不顧我要到幾時呢？ (詩一三1)

讓我們提防像大衛那樣的灰心喪膽。不要看掃羅，而是仰望神，祂是全能的；不要看風浪，而是看在海面上行走的主；不要看將要發生的事，而是看現在的事 — 因為榮耀的主在你身旁要搭救你。祂要救你的靈魂脫離死亡，使你的眼不再流淚，使你的腳不致跌倒。祂曾經幫助，必再幫助。祂曾作過的，必再作。神作工總是從少到多，絕不會從多到少。你沒聽到嗎？你不曾聽過嗎？祂的聲音說，我必不撇下你，也不丟棄你(申一6, 書一5, 代上二八20, 來一三5)。那麼，人能對你怎樣呢？所有攻擊你的武器都將在那看不見的盾牌前失去鋒利！

Because thou obeyest not the voice of the Lord, therefore . . . 1 Sam. 28: 18

Thus unforgiven sin comes back to a man. We cannot explain the mysteries that lie around this incident; but it is clear that in that supreme hour of Saul's fate, that early sin, which had never been confessed and put away, came surging back on the mind and heart of the terror-stricken monarch. "Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, and didst not execute his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the Lord will deliver Israel also with thee into the hands of the Philistines" (R.V.). But Saul did not realize that even then the gates of God's love stood open to him, if only he would pass through them by humble penitence and faith. If instead of applying to the witch, he had sought God's mercy, light would have burst on his darkened path, and he had never perished by his own hand on Mount Gilboa.

In strong contrast with this, let us put the assurance of the new covenant: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." When God forgives, He blots out from the book of his remembrance. The sin is gone as a pebble in the ocean; as a cloud in the blue of a summer's sky.

Saul's was a sin of omission. The question was not what evil he had done, but the good he had failed to do. Let us remember that we need pardon for the sad lapses and failures of our lives, equally as for the positive transgressions. And if such things are not forgiven, they will lie heavy on our consciences when the shadows of death begin to gather around us. The New Testament especially judges those who knew and did not do--the slothful servant, the virgin without the oil, the priest that passed by on the other side.

因你沒有聽從耶和華的命令，... 所以 ... 撒上一十八18

就這樣，尚未得赦免的罪回到一個人身上。我們無法解釋這件事的奧秘；但很清楚的是，掃羅先前所犯的罪，他從未承認並除去，那罪在掃羅生命最後一刻，洶湧地回到這驚慌失措的王腦海與心頭上。「因你沒有聽從耶和華的命令，祂惱怒亞瑪力人，你沒有滅絕他們，所以今日耶和華向你這樣行，並且耶和華必將你和以色列人交在非利士人的手裡。(18-19節)」然而掃羅沒有意識到，即使在那個時候，神愛的大門依舊向他敞開，只要他憑著謙卑的懺悔和信心踏進去。如果他沒有求問女巫，而是尋求神的憐憫，亮光便會照射到他昏暗的路徑上，他也不會在基波利山上，親手摧毀自己的性命(撒上一4)。

讓我們來看與此形成強烈對比的，新約的保證：「我不再記念他們的罪愆，和他們的過犯。(來十17)」當神赦免，祂就從祂的記憶冊中完全塗抹。罪就消失如同一顆卵石沉入大海，如同一片雲彩消失在夏日蔚藍的天空。

掃羅的罪是疏忽的罪。問題不在於他做了什麼惡事，而在於他所沒有行的善。讓我們記住，為我們生命中不幸的差錯缺失，我們需要赦免，正如明確的過犯需要赦免。如果這樣的事沒有得到赦免，當死亡的陰影開始籠罩我們時，這些未蒙赦免的罪便會沉重壓在我們良心上。新約特別定罪那些「知道行善卻不去行(雅四17)」的人：懶惰的僕人(太廿五14-30)，沒有預備油的童女(太廿五1-13)，看見被打傷的人，卻從路的另一邊過去的祭司(路十30-31)。

What do these Hebrews here? 1 Sam. 29:3

It was a very natural remark. The Philistines were going into battle with the Hebrew king and his troops, and it was very anomalous that a strong body of Hebrews should be forming part of the Philistine array. They had no business to be there. The annoyance of the chief captains and lords that surrounded Achish was natural enough. For long, probably, it had been smouldering; now it broke out into flame.

It is very terrible when the children of the world have a higher sense of Christian propriety and fitness than Christians themselves, and say to one another, "What do these Hebrews here?" The word "Hebrew" means one that has passed over--a separatist. The death of our Lord Jesus was intended to make all his followers separatists. Through Him they have passed from death unto life; they have been delivered out of the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The appeal of his cross to us all is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Too often, however, that call is unheeded; and, for fear of man, we mingle with the ranks of the enemies of our Lord.

If Christians attend the theatre; if Sunday-school teachers, elders or deacons of a church, are found participating in the pleasures of the ungodly; if the young Christian man is found loosely consorting with the card-players of the smoking-room of an ocean steamer--may not the sneer go round, "What do these Hebrews here? What doest thou here, Elijah?" is the remonstrance of God. "What do these Hebrews here?" that of the world, which not unfrequently has a truer sense of propriety than God's professing followers.

這些希伯來人在這裡作什麼呢？ 撒下二十九3

這是非常自然的評語。非利士人要與希伯來人的王及其軍隊打仗，而在非利士軍隊的陣容中，卻有一隊強悍的希伯來人，這十分反常。他們不該在那裡。眾首領的惱怒環繞著亞吉，這是很自然的。也許他們惱怒已積壓多時；現在終於爆發出來。

當屬世的人比基督徒自己，更明白基督徒該有的體統；當屬世的人彼此說：「這些希伯來人在這裡作什麼呢？」這是很糟糕的事。「希伯來」一詞的意思是一個已經越過了的人，一個分別出來的人。我們主耶穌的死，是要將祂的跟隨者分別出來。藉著祂，他們已經出死入生了(約五24)；他們已蒙拯救脫離黑暗的權勢，遷到神愛子的國裡(西一13)。祂的十字架對我們所有的人呼喚：「你們務要從他們中間出來，與他們分別。(林後六17)」然而，太多時候這個呼喚被忽略了；因著懼怕人，我們就混雜在主仇敵的陣容之中。

如果基督徒去戲院；如果主日學教師、教會長老或執事，被發現參與不聖潔的娛樂；如果年輕的基督徒弟兄，被發現在海洋輪船的吸煙室中，與玩牌的人放蕩廝混——豈不是讓譏笑流傳嗎，「這些希伯來人在這裡作什麼呢？」「以利亞啊，你在這裡作什麼呢？(王上十九9,13)」這是神的告誡。世人說：「這些希伯來人在這裡作什麼呢？」世人對於合乎體統的行為，經常比自稱為神的跟隨者有更真實的體會。

David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. 1 Sam. 30: 6

His God! Doubtless the chronicler heard him say repeatedly, as he was so fond of saying, "My God, my God." "I will say unto God, my rock, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Though he had seriously compromised God's cause, by the failure of his faith, by consorting with Achish and the Philistines, by a tortuous and treacherous policy, yet God was still his God; and, in the supreme crisis which had overtaken him, he naturally betook himself to the covert of those loving wings.

HE ENCOURAGED HIMSELF. He would go back on promises of forgiveness and succour, which had so often cheered him in similar straits. He would recall his songs in former nights as black as this, and therefore would have hope. He would remember that he had been brought through worse trials; and surely He who had helped him against Goliath and Saul would not fail him against the Amalekites. Besides, he had probably left his dear ones in the protection of the encamping angel; and though his faith might be tried, it could not be entirely disappointed. In this way he encouraged himself. All around was tumult and fear; but in God peace and rest brooded, as swans on a tranquil lake. His men might speak of stoning him; his heart be greatly distressed for wives and children; his life be in jeopardy: but God was a very present help. "Why art thou cast down, and disquieted, O my soul? Hope thou in God."

In similar circumstances, let us have resort to similar sources of comfort; hide in God, and encourage ourselves in Him. It was in this spirit that John Knox, when about to face death, said to his wife, "Read to me where I first cast anchor."

大衛卻倚靠耶和華他的神，心裡堅固。 撒下三十6

他的神！無庸置疑，編年史家曾聽到大衛反覆地說他所喜愛說的話，「我的神，我的神。」「我要對神我的磐石說：你為何忘記我呢？（詩四十二9）」儘管他曾因為失去信心，與亞吉及非利士人同夥，使用彎曲奸詐的策略，而嚴重損害神的利益；然而神依舊是他的神，並且在突然遭遇極大危機時，他自然地逃往那慈愛的翅膀得庇護。

他堅固自己。他回到赦免和搭救的應許中，這些應許常在類似的困境中鼓勵他。他想起過去在同樣漆黑的夜裡他所唱的歌，並因此而有望。他想起曾蒙拯救脫離更嚴厲的試煉；那曾幫助他對抗歌利亞和掃羅的那位，必不會在他對抗亞瑪力人時撇棄他。此外，他也許將他親愛的人交給駐守的天使保護；儘管他的信心會受到考驗；但不會全然失望。就這樣他鼓勵著自己。周圍盡是混亂和恐懼，但在神裡面有平安和安息庇護，如同天鵝停在平靜的湖中。跟隨他的眾人大可說要用石頭打死他(6節)；他的心為妻子和孩子們很愁苦；他的生命在危險之中；但神是隨時的幫助(詩四十六1)。「我的心哪，你為何憂悶？為何在我裏面煩躁？應當仰望神。(詩四十二11, 四十三5)」

在類似的景況下，讓我們求助賜同樣安慰的源頭；藏身在神裡面，並在祂裡面得鼓勵。就是在這樣的靈中，約翰·諾克斯[16世紀蘇格蘭牧師，蘇格蘭新教改革領袖。] 臨終之時，對他的妻子說，「請將那最初令我投靠安歇的經文，讀給我聽。」

All the valiant men . . . 1 Sam. 31: 11, 12

This was a noble and generous act. At the beginning of his reign, in the early dawn of youthful promise and prowess, when he was the darling of the nation, Saul had interposed to deliver their beleaguered city. And now, as the awful tidings of his defeat and suicide spread like fire through the country, the men whom he had succoured remembered his first kingly act, and showed their appreciation for his kindness by doing a strong and chivalrous deed in rescuing his remains from dishonour. They could not help him, but they could save his honour. When David heard of this act, he sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-Gilead, thanking them for their chivalrous devotion to the memory of the fallen king, and promising to requite the kindness as one done to the entire nation, and to himself.

Are we careful enough of the honour and name of our dear Lord ? He has done for us spiritually all that Saul did for Jabesh-Gilead, and more. He has delivered our soul from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling. Let us be swift to maintain the honour of his name among those who are so apt at making it their scorn.

It was well that these men did not wait for others to act. Had they done so, the body of Saul might have rotted piecemeal on the walls of the temple at Bethshan. If they had left this act of reparation for Abner, or Ish- bosheth, it would never have been done. There is no order of precedence, when a wrong has to be righted, or a friend vindicated. The man who is next must act. Let us strike into the fray, and count that our opportunity is warrant enough. He who can, may.

他們中間所有的勇士。 撒下三十一11-12

這是高貴大方的舉動。在掃羅統治初期，他年輕的希望和才華初現曙光，那時他受全國上下愛戴，掃羅介入並搭救了被圍困的城——基列·雅比(撒下十一章)。而現在，他戰敗和自殺的消息如火般在國中傳開來，這些曾受掃羅搭救的人記起掃羅作王第一次的壯舉，便救他的屍身免遭羞辱，藉這堅強而充滿義氣的舉動，來表達對他善行的感恩。他們不能幫助他，但可以為他保護尊嚴。當大衛聽說這一舉動，就差遣使者去道謝，因基列·雅比人用俠義的獻身來記念這位殞落的國王，大衛應許要報答這善舉，正如人為全國行善，也是對大衛個人行善(撒下二4-7)。

我們是否足夠留心親愛主的尊榮與名聲呢？祂在屬靈層面為我們作的，就如掃羅為基列·雅比所作的，並且更多。祂救我們的靈魂脫離死亡，救我們的雙眼不致流淚，救我們的雙腳不致跌倒。讓我們在那些輕易褻慢主名的人中間，迅速來維護祂名的尊榮。

這些因基列·雅比人沒有等待別人就採取行動，是很合宜的。若他們遲延，掃羅的屍首將會一塊塊在伯·珊城牆上腐爛。如果他們將這事留給押尼珥[掃羅的元帥]或是伊施波設[掃羅的兒子](撒下二8)，可能這事便永遠作不成了。當一個錯誤應當被糾正，或是朋友需要辯白，便沒有位分的優先順序。在身旁的人就必須行動。讓我們立即投身戰鬥，並視我們的機會為足夠的正當理由。能作的，就可以作。