

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives. 2 Sam. 1 : 23

It was very lovely and pleasant of David to say so. He had no hesitation, of course, in saying this of his beloved Jonathan, every memory of whom was very pleasant, like a sweet strain of music, or the scent of the spring breeze; but he might have been excused for omitting Saul from the graceful and generous epithets he heaped on the kindred soul of his friend. But death had obliterated the sad, dark memories of recent days, and had transported the Psalmist across the dream of years to Saul as he was when he was first introduced to him. All that could be said in praise of the first Hebrew king was crowded into these glowing lines--the courage, martial prowess, swiftness to aid those who required help, his pleasantness and courtesy in address.

This is the love of God, which He breathes into the hearts of his children. They become perfect in love, as He is. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." It is God-like for his children to love their enemies, bless those who curse them, and pray for all who spitefully use and persecute them. Is such love ours? Do we forbear from thinking evil? Do we look on the virtues more often than the failures of our friends? Do we cast the mantle of forgiveness over the injuries done to us, and dwell tenderly on the excellences of our foes? Such is the love which never fails, but endures when faith has turned to fruition, and hope has realized its dreams.

We need most of all a baptism of love. A piece of clay will become fragrant if placed in contiguity to attar of roses. Let us lie where John did, on the bosom of incarnate love, till we begin to love as he.

掃羅和約拿單活時相悅相愛。 撒下一23

大衛這樣論到掃羅和約拿單，是非常可愛且令人喜悅的。他當然不會猶疑描述他所愛的約拿單，每想到約拿單都是非常愉快的，就像樂曲般的甜美，又像春風的花香；然而他可以不必用優美大方的形容詞來描寫掃羅，像他多多的讚揚他志同道合的朋友約拿單一樣。但是死亡已經塗抹最近那些悲傷暗淡的記憶，並且帶著這位詩人[大衛]越過歲月的夢境來到掃羅面前，當時他初次被引見掃羅。所有可以稱讚希伯來人第一位國君的言辭，都擠在這首熱情的哀歌中——膽量、英勇、快速援助需要幫助的人、談吐有禮、令人喜愛。

這就是神的愛，祂將愛注入祂兒女的心中。他們就在愛裡變得完全，像祂一樣。「基督在我們還作罪人的時候為我們死，神的愛就在此向我們顯明了。（羅五8）」神的兒女愛他們的仇敵，祝福那咒詛他們的人，並為那惡待他們、逼迫他們的人祈禱，這樣他們就像神了。我們有這樣的愛嗎？我們禁止自己不去思想惡事嗎？我們常看我們朋友的美德多過他們的失敗嗎？我們用寬恕的外衣遮蓋我們身上的傷痕，並且溫柔地注意我們敵人的長處嗎？這樣的愛永不失敗並且長存，直到信心結出果實，盼望的夢想變成真實。

我們最需要的就是愛的洗禮。若是把一塊泥土放在玫瑰花的香精旁，它也會變得芳香。讓我們像約翰一樣，躺在愛的化身[耶穌]的胸懷裡，直到我們開始像祂那樣去愛。

The men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king. 2 Sam. 2: 4

Thus was David anointed a second time. Hitherto he had been the leader of a troop; now he became king of his own tribe: and his kingdom clustered around the ancient city of Hebron.

TYPICALLY, we learn that our blessed Lord will be acknowledged King of his own people, the Jews, before He is accepted by the world at large. Now, his kingdom is in mystery--it is in the Adullam stage. Men are gathering to Him from all quarters; but as yet the world does not recognize it in their political calculations. But ere long the Jews will recognize Him as King, and then we may begin to expect his enthronement over the populations of the globe. When they repent and are converted, times of repenting will come to all the world.

EXPERIMENTALLY we are taught, that as each new department of our life unfolds, we should give Christ a fresh coronation. The attitude which we took up years ago, of complete consecration, must be applied perpetually to each fresh development of experience. Each new step should be characterized by a definite waiting on God, that there may be a fresh enduement of power, a recharging of the spirit with his might. Was He King in the cave, then be sure to acknowledge Him as such, now that you are called from obscurity into the glare of noon. Whenever God says, by the circumstance of your life, Go up; always kneel at the feet of Jesus, "Lord, in the very little I found my joy and strength in serving Thee only; and now, amid the greater responsibility and publicity of my life, I desire to be thy earnest, simple-minded, whole-hearted follower."

Have you anointed Jesus as your King? Do not fail. Remember how near of kin He is.

猶大人來到希伯崙，在那裡膏大衛作 ... 王。 撒下二4

這是大衛第二次受膏。直到此刻他乃是一支軍隊的首領；現在他成為自己支派[猶大支派]的王：他的國度聚集在這座古城希伯崙周圍。

在預表上，我們認識到我們可頌的主將被祂本族的人，就是猶太人，承認為他們的王，而後才被世界全體接受為王。現今，祂的國度是在奧秘裡 — 在亞杜蘭洞的階段。人們從四方聚集到祂那裡；但是世界在他們政治上的考量，尚未承認祂的王權。然而不久猶太人將要承認祂是君王，然後我們就可開始期待祂登基作王治理全世界。

在經歷上，我們受教導，當我們生命每一新的領域打開時，該在此重新加冕祂為王。多年以前我們所採取的完全奉獻的態度，必須不斷應用在每一新發展的經歷上。每一新的階段都明確以事奉神為特點，就會得著新的能力，靈裡重新充滿祂的大能。從前祂在洞穴裡作王，你既然從卑微無名中被召出來，進入正午耀眼的光芒，那麼你就要確實承認祂是王。每當神藉著你生命中的環境對你說：「上去吧！」，你總要跪在耶穌的腳前說：「主啊，過去在小事上，我只在事奉你的時候找到喜樂和力量；現今我的生命在公開的場合，承擔更大的責任，我願作你熱切、單純、全心的跟隨者。」

你已膏耶穌作你的君王了嗎？不要辜負祂。要記住，祂是你何等的近親。

David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker. 2 Sam. 3: 1

The war between the flesh and the Spirit is long, but the end is sure. As the Baptist said of Jesus, so must the flesh say of the Spirit, He must increase; I must decrease. Sometimes in the long strain of the war, our spirit dies down. Will the bugle never cease to ring out its alarm ? Will the assaults never come to an end? When shall we be able to lay aside sword and breastplate, and to enter the land of rest? Oh to be able to say with the Apostle, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith!"

Yet take heart. The assaults diminish in frequency and strength in proportion as they are faithfully resisted. Each time you resist successfully you will find it easier to resist. The strength of the vanquished foe enters the vanquisher.

Moreover, ultimate victory is secured. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4,5). It makes a great difference to the soldier, when he belongs to an All-Victorious Legion, and serves under a Captain that never lost a fight. And there can be no doubt as to the issue in your heart or mine. "He must reign till He has put all enemies under his feet."

At any moment we may look for the sudden collapse of a great portion of the confederacy of evil, which has so long menaced us; as when Abner suddenly came to Hebron to give in his adhesion to David. What a huge piece of cliff fell that day into the sea! Expect the sudden collapse of evils which have long troubled you.

大衛家日見強盛。掃羅家日見衰弱。 撒下三1

肉體與聖靈之間的爭戰是漫長的(加五17)，然而結局是確定的。正如施洗約翰如何論到耶穌，肉體也要同樣論到聖靈：祂必興旺，我必衰微(約三30)。有時在持久的爭戰中，我們的靈會漸漸衰退。難道軍號永遠吹不停嗎？難道攻擊永遠不終止嗎？何時我們才能將刀劍與胸甲摘卸下來，進入安息之地？哦，但願能夠像使徒保羅那樣說，「那美好的仗我已經打過了，當跑的路我已經跑盡了，所信的道我已經守住了！」(提後四7)」

然而，你要剛強壯膽。當你愈充滿信心地抵擋，這些攻擊的次數與力道就隨著縮減。每一次你成功抵擋，你都會發現愈容易抵擋。被征服之仇敵的力量會進入征服者裡面，成為征服者的力量。

不僅如此，最終得勝是確定的。「因為凡從神生的，就勝過世界。使我們勝了世界的，就是我們的信心。勝過世界的是誰呢？不是那信耶穌是神兒子的嗎？(約壹五4-5)」一個士兵若是屬於一支全勝的軍隊，服役於一個戰無不勝的將領之下，這對他有重大的影響。而且，關乎你我心中問題的疑惑也不會存在。「基督必要作王，等神把一切仇敵，都放在祂的腳下。(林前十五25)」

在任何一刻，我們都可以期待，那長久加害於我們的邪惡，其同黨的大部分突然倒塌；就像押尼珥突然來到希伯崙，向大衛交出他的支持。那一天，何等大的一片懸崖掉進海裡！你要期待那些長久困擾你的邪惡突然坍塌。

As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity. 2 Sam. 4: 9

It was the midday of David's life, and, looking back, he saw how good the Lord had been to him. Step by step God had brought him up out of a horrible pit, and from the miry clay, setting him upon a rock, and establishing his goings. What need was there, then, that men should interfere to hasten the unfolding of the divine purposes? It had been his lifelong habit to wait. Whatever he needed he looked to God to supply. Whatever difficulties blocked his path, he looked to God to remove. Whatever men stood in his way, he looked to God to deal with them. Twice in the wilderness he refused to take Saul's life. He had executed the Amalekite because he claimed to have slain Saul on Gilboa. And, in pursuance of the same policy, he could have no complicity in the act of the murderers of Ishbosheth, even though they made his way clear to the throne of Israel.

Let God redeem thee out of all thine adversities. Do not lose heart or hope. Do not put forth thy hand to snatch at any position or deliverance by an act which might afterwards cause thee shame or sorrow. "Trust in the Lord, and do good. Roll thy way upon the Lord. Trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him" (Psa. 37: 3-7, R.V.). He who turns glaciers to rivers that pass away, will remove all thy difficulties and perplexities. He shall cause thee to inherit the land. He will promote thee in due time, and give thee to see thy desire upon thine enemies. He who redeemed thy soul by his most precious blood cannot fail thee, however long he may tarry. Remember that He ever liveth, and loveth, and reigneth.

我指著救我性命脫離一切苦難，永生的耶和華起誓。 撒下四9

這是大衛人生的正午，回首過去，他看見耶和華多麼恩待他。一步一步，神將他從可怕的深坑中拉上來，從污泥中救出來，把他安置在磐石上，並堅立他的進程。既然如此，何需人介入來促進神旨意的顯明呢？等候已經是他一生之久的習慣。凡他所需的，他仰望神來供應。無論任何困難阻擋他的道路，他都仰望神來挪去。無論何種人攔阻他，他都仰望神來處置他們。兩次在曠野，他拒絕奪取掃羅的性命。他處死了那亞瑪力人，因他聲稱自己在基利波山殺了掃羅(一13-16)。又因著同樣的原則，他不能與殺害伊施波設一黨的人同謀作惡(5-12節)，即使他們如此行，使他順利取得以色列的王位。

讓神救你脫離所有的逆境。不要灰心喪膽。不要用那些事後會讓你羞愧或痛悔的行動，伸手奪取任何地位或尋求解脫。「你當倚靠耶和華而行善。當將你的事交託耶和華，並倚靠祂，祂就必成全。你當默然倚靠耶和華，耐性等候祂。(詩卅七3, 5, 7)」那位將冰山化作河流而消逝的，也將要挪去你一切的艱難和困惑。祂必叫你承受地土(詩卅七29)。到了所定的日子，祂將抬舉你，並給你看見你的仇敵遭報(詩一一八7)。祂既用祂最寶貴的血救贖了你的靈魂，就絕不可能丟棄你，無論祂會遲延多久。要記住，祂永遠活著，永遠愛，永遠掌權。

And David took him more wives out of Jerusalem. 2 Sam. 5: 13

This is terribly disappointing! According to the ideas of the surrounding nations, the greatness of a monarch was gauged by the extent of his harem. But the law of Moses put severe restraint on the multiplication of wives, "that his heart turn not away" (Deut. 17: 17). It seems as though the soul of David sank into sensual indulgence and luxuriance. It lost much of its early hardihood and strength in consequence; and at this period of his life those seeds were sown, which in after years brought forth such a plentiful and terrible harvest of anguish, murder, and impurity, in his family.

Few of us realize how much our character owes to the stern discipline to which God subjects us. The only way to keep us healthy and vigorous is to send us many a nipping frost, many a keen northern blast. The bleak hillside breeds stronger natures than the warm sheltered valley. The difference between Anglo-Saxon and Negro is largely wrought by temperature and soil. The campaign, with its strain on every power of endurance, trains better soldiers than the barracks. As David was a stronger, better man, when hunted like a coney in the rocks of Engedi, so are we braced to a nobler life, when all things seem against us.

Few of us can be trusted with unbroken happiness. God is compelled to withhold what the flesh craves. But where prosperity has shone on your path, be very careful not to abuse it. Consider it as indicating God's loving trust in you. He would rather convey his lesson in sunshine than in storm. But walk carefully and humbly, looking to Him constantly for daily grace, and never relaxing the girdle about the loins.

大衛 ... 在耶路撒冷又立后妃。 撒下五13

這讓人非常失望！根據周圍列國的觀念，一個君王的偉大，是用他後宮的規模來衡量的。但是摩西的律法對於妃嬪的增加有著嚴格的限制。「恐怕他的心偏邪」（申十七17）。看起來大衛的心已沉迷在肉體的放縱與奢華裡，因而失去了早年的剛毅和力量；大衛在他人生這個階段，撒下這些（情慾的）種子，在後來的年日，他家中便產生非常可怕的後果：痛苦、兇殺和污穢。

我們很少有人意識到，我們品格的養成，應何其多歸功於神使我們遭受的嚴厲管教。使我們保持健康茁壯的唯一方法，就是給我們大量刺骨的冰霜，和凜冽的北風。荒涼的山坡比溫暖避風的山谷，更能培養出堅強的品性。盎格魯·撒克遜人與黑人的區別，大部分是由氣溫和土壤造成的。戰場，以及其對耐力的極大考驗，比軍營培養出更優秀的士兵。正如大衛在隱基底的岩石中，像兔子一樣被追殺的時候，是一個更強壯更優秀的人。同樣地，當萬事看起來都不利於我們時，反而使我們振作起來，迎接更高貴的生命。

我們當中很少有人能承受得起不間斷的幸福。神是不得已才扣留肉體所渴求的東西。但當興隆已照亮你的前程，要非常小心不要濫用它。把它看成是神對你充滿愛的託付。祂寧願在陽光下而非在暴雨中傳授功課。但你要謹慎謙卑而行，時常仰望祂，尋求每日的恩典，永遠不要鬆開你的腰帶。

They set the Ark of God upon a new cart. 2 Sam. 6: 3

This was their mistake. The divine directions were explicit that the Ark of the living God must be carried on the shoulders of living men. There would have been no stumbling of oxen, no swaying of the Ark to falling, no need for Uzzah to reach out his hand, if only this simple direction had been obeyed. This breaking forth of God was to recall men to simple absolute obedience to the rules and regulations that had been so explicitly laid down in the Levitical code. It would not fall into disuse without grave loss to the entire people. Better that one life should be sacrificed for disobedience than that the whole nation should be impoverished for the relaxation of that ancient law.

We are fond of bringing new carts to God. At every birthday we build the new cart of good resolution, and place thereon the Ark of God. We will be different, and on our fresh endeavours the Lord of Hosts shall ride; but we must drive, and if needs be, steady the Ark. Ah! it is not long before the oxen stumble, and Uzzah who drives is smitten to the dust of death.

God wants, not new carts, but the living shoulders of consecrated men. We must live for Him, surrendering ourselves to his service; not driving, but being driven; not conducting, but being impelled; not imposing our thoughts on Him, but being willing to submit ourselves to Him. There is no need to fear God, if only we will obey Him, and in obedience discover the laws by which we may approach and serve Him. Then the power which otherwise flames forth to destroy will become the useful servant of our faith, and we shall be able to undertake great things for God.

他們將神的約櫃 ... 放在新車上。 撒下六3

這是他們的錯誤。神的命令很明確地規定，永生神的約櫃必須用人的肩膀來抬。只要遵守了這項簡單的命令，就不會有牛失前蹄，約櫃晃動，烏撒也不用伸手去扶了。神突然的擊殺，是為了喚醒眾人，單純絕對遵守利未人條例明確的規則(民四章)。利未人的條例若不遭廢棄，就不會給全國人帶來嚴重的損失。寧可一個生命因違反這律法而犧牲，勝過整個國家因對這古老律法的放鬆而衰敗。

我們喜歡把新車給神。在每一個生日我們建造良好決心的「新車」，並把神的約櫃放在上面。我們會變得不一樣，萬軍之耶和華也會乘坐在我們新的努力之上；但是我們必須平穩駕駛車子，並且若有必要就得扶住約櫃。啊！沒有多久，牛就失蹄，趕車的烏撒就被擊打，死在地上。

神所要的，不是新車，而是聖別之人活的肩膀。我們必須為祂而活，將自己交出來為要服事祂；不是駕馭，而是被駕馭；不是指揮，而是降服；不是將我們的想法強加給祂，而是願意順服祂。只要我們順服祂，我們就不需要害怕神，並且在順服中找到可以接近祂、事奉祂的法則。這樣，那股燃燒摧毀的力量，將變成我們信心有用的僕人，我們也必能為神承擔大事。

Do as Thou hast said. 2 Sam. 7: 25

This is the voice of a childlike faith.

NOTE WHAT LED TO THESE WORDS. Nathan had just unfolded to the king all the purposes of God's heart towards him. That He would establish his throne, deliver him from his enemies, and set up his dynasty to succeed him--this and much else. David's heart was full of joy and gladness--he knew that God would not run back from his word; but he felt none the less the duty of claiming the fulfilments of these guarantees. So it is with all the promises of God; though they are Yea and Amen in Christ, it is requisite for us to put our hand on them; plead them before God; and claim their fulfilment with appropriating faith.

NOTICE THE ATTITUDE IN WHICH DAVID UTTERED THESE WORDS. "He sat before the Lord." Was not this the position of rest and trust? On another occasion, he lay all night upon the earth (12: 16), in an agony of prayer, because not sure of God's purpose, and hoping to turn God by the extremity of his anguish. But there is a marvellous alteration in the tone of our prayer, so soon as we can base it on the declared purposes of God. We enter into his rest; we put ourselves in the current of his purposes; we sit before the Lord.

MARK THE BLESSEDNESS OF COMMUNION WITH GOD. It is as a man talks with his friend. We are not required always to kneel when we pray, or to con over a certain form of words; we can sit and talk with God, catching up his words as they fall on our hearts, and reflecting back on Him in praise, and prayer, and happy converse. All true prayer originates in the declarations of God's love, to each of which we answer, Do as Thou hast said.

照你所說的而行。 撒下七25

這是孩子般的信心所發出的聲音。

請注意是什麼事情引出了這句話。拿單剛剛告訴大衛王，神心中對他所有的旨意。神要堅立他的國位，救他脫離他的仇敵，建立接續他的王朝 — 以及更多別的美意。大衛的心充滿喜悅和歡樂 — 他知道神不會反悔祂所說的話；儘管如此，他覺得仍然有責任請求實現這些承諾。對於神所有的應許都是這樣的；儘管在基督裡都是「是的」，都是「阿們的」(林後一20)，我們仍然需要把我們的手放在神的應許上面，在神面前為這些應許祈求，用信心來要求這些應許的實現。

請注意大衛說這句話的態度。「他坐在耶和華面前。」這不是安息和信靠的姿勢嗎？在另一個場合，他終夜躺在地上(撒下十二16)，極度痛苦地禱告，因為他不確定神的旨意，而希望藉著他痛苦的極致，來改變神的心意(撒下十二22)。我們一旦能將我們的禱告，建立在神已表明的旨意之上，我們禱告的語調就會有極大的轉變。我們進入祂的安息；我們就會順著祂旨意的水流；我們就坐在主面前。

請留意與神相交的福分。就像人與朋友交談一樣。當我們禱告時，我們不一定總是跪下，或者背誦一定格式的話語；我們可以坐下來，和神交談，抓住落在我們心田上神的話，並在讚美、禱告並快樂的談話中向祂回應。一切真實的禱告都起源於神愛的宣告，我們對這樣宣告的回應是：照你所說的而行。

The silver and gold he had dedicated of all nations which he subdued. 2 Sam. 8:11

David might not build the temple, but he was bent on making provision for it. Indeed, Solomon had never been able to do as he did, unless his father had gathered these stores of gold and silver. Thus other men labour, and we enter into their labours; but the accomplished building is credited by God to each. He does not forget David when Solomon's temple stands complete. The reward is proportioned to each man's service, according to his share.

It is a glorious thing when we not only defeat our foes, but get spoils out of their overthrow which we can use for the service of God and man. It is as possible for us as for David. Out of our failures, temptations, mistakes, let us get the power of helping and directing others. In death Jesus won the keys of death and Hades, and the power to become a merciful and faithful High Priest; and now He ever liveth to make intercession for his people. (Heb. 7: 25).

But the main lesson of this chapter is the foreshadowing of God's purpose, that Gentiles should contribute to the building of his Temple. What was literally true in the case of the temple of Solomon, is spiritually true of the heavenly Temple, the Church. From every nation, and kindred, people and tongue, souls are being gathered, who form a spiritual house, a holy Temple in the Lord. The whole world is destined to contribute to that structure, which is being prepared secretly and mystically, but shall ere long be manifested in its full glory. It is very interesting to get this suggestion from the chronicles of a nation so exclusive and haughty as the Jews. "They shall come from the East and West . . . "

他治服各國所得來的金銀都分別為聖，獻給耶和華。 撒下八11

大衛可以不建造聖殿，但他專心一意为建聖殿做預備。如果不是大衛聚集的大量金銀，所羅門實際上根本不可能達到他所做的。所以別人勞苦，我們加入他人的勞苦；但神將最終完成的建築歸功給每一個人。當所羅門的聖殿完工之時，神沒有忘記大衛。賞賜是按每個人在事奉上所擺上的比例來分的。

當我們不但戰勝仇敵，並且從被打敗的仇敵那裡取得掠物，作為服事神和人的用途，這是多麼榮耀的事！我們和大衛一樣可以成就這樣的事。但願我們從所遭遇的失敗、試探、錯誤裡，得到能力來幫助和指引別人。耶穌藉著死，贏得了死亡和陰間的鑰匙(啟一18)，並得到權柄，成為一位慈悲忠信的大祭司(來二17)；現在祂長遠活著，替祂的子民祈求(來七25)。

這一章主要的教訓是神旨意的預告：外邦人應該在建聖殿上有所貢獻。在所羅門所建造的聖殿上，外邦人真正有所貢獻；在建造屬天的聖殿(教會)上，就屬靈的意義，外邦人也真的有所貢獻。從各國、各族、各民、各方，眾人被召聚(啟五9)，成為在主裡屬靈的家、聖潔的殿。整個世界都註定要為這殿作貢獻，這殿正被隱密且奧秘地預備，但不久就要顯出完全的榮耀。有趣的是，這個暗示卻出自猶太這樣一個排外且傲慢民族的史冊。「從東從西 ...，將有人來 ...」(路十三29)。

Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. 2 Sam. 9: 7

Four times in this chapter we are told of the lame man eating bread at the royal table. But what are these facts recorded and repeated for, save to accentuate the infinite blessings which come to us through the divine love?

Mephibosheth had done nothing to merit the royal favour. Not a word is said of his being well-favoured and attractive. So far from that, he was lame on both his feet, and probably a sickly invalid. In his own judgment he was worthless as a dead dog. His state was impoverished; no deed of prowess could win David's notice; he was almost entirely at the mercy of his servant, Ziba. In these respects there are many analogies to our own condition in the sight of God. We are lame indeed; and, so far as we are concerned, it is quite impossible that we should ever win the divine regard, or sit at his table among his sons.

But between David and Jonathan a covenant had been struck, which had provided for the children of the ill-fated Jonathan (1 Sam. 20: 14-16). It was because of this sacred obligation that Mephibosheth fared as he did. Look away, child of God, to the covenant struck between God and thy representative, the Son of his love. It is idle of thee to seek to propitiate the divine favour, or earn a seat at his table; but if thou art willing to identify thyself with thy Lord, and to shelter thyself in Him by the living union of faith; if thou canst base thy plea on the Blood of the everlasting covenant--then the provisions of that covenant between Father and Son shall be extended to thee: and because of God's love to Jesus thou shalt sit at the divine table, and be regarded as one of the heirs of the great King.

你也可以常與我同席吃飯。 撒下九7

在這章經文中有四次告訴我們，這個瘸腿的人與王同席吃飯。為何記載這件事並且一再複述呢？莫非是要強調藉著神的愛臨到我們的無限福分。

米非波設並沒有做過任何配得王恩寵的事。也沒有任何話語提及他的美貌或吸引人的地方。絕對不是那樣，他兩腿都是瘸的，也可能體弱多病。在他自己看來，他就如一條死狗，毫無價值。他處境貧困；沒有英勇的行為可以贏得大衛的注意；他幾乎完全由他僕人洗巴擺佈。在神的眼中我們的境況在這些方面與米非波設有許多相似之處。我們確實是瘸腿的；就我們來說，我們幾乎不可能贏得神的好感，也不可能與祂的眾子一同坐席。

但大衛和約拿單之間已訂立了盟約，這盟約為不幸的約拿單的後人提供了保障(撒下廿14-16)。米非波設如此蒙恩，乃是因著這個神聖的盟約。神的兒女！放眼看神與你的代表——祂的愛子之間所立的約。你試圖討神的喜愛，或在祂的筵席上掙得一席之地，這些都是徒勞無功的；如果你願意與你的主融為一體，藉著信心與主有活的聯結，而藏身在祂裡面；如果你能將你的請求建立在永恆之約的寶血上面——那麼天父和聖子之間所立聖約的規定將延伸到你身上：因著神對耶穌的愛，你將得以坐在神的筵席上，並被視為這位偉大君王的一位後嗣。

The Lord do that which seemeth Him good. 2 Sam. 10: 12

Israel was arrayed against overwhelming odds. To human sight it must have appeared very improbable that Joab would be able to hold his own. However, he made the best arrangements he could; exhorted his men to be of good courage and do their utmost; and then piously left the issue to the God of battles.

There are times in all lives when the case seems desperate. How can we meet with ten thousand him who cometh against us with twenty thousand! Heart and flesh fail. What resource is there, then, save in the flight of the lonely man to the only God? It is for God to act, since the help of man is vain.

IN YOUR PERSONAL STRAITS. When patience is exhausted; when the last handful is taken from the barrel; when complicated trials meet and hem you in; when the iron gate and the keepers before the door appear to render escape impossible--then look up, God is marching with reinforcements to your aid.

IN YOUR WORK AND WAR FOR GOD IN THE WORLD. We too often act and speak as if success were to be won by the forces that we may be able to bring into the field, whereas God asks us for nothing more than fidelity and the right disposition of such forces as we can command; He will do all the rest.

IN YOUR OUTLOOK ON THE CONFLICT BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL. It is quite true that there appears to be an infinite disparity between the one and the other. But there are other forces in the field than appear. There is another host of which God Himself is captain. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard. "There is none like unto the God Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven to thy help."

願耶和華憑他的意旨而行。 撒下十12

以色列擺陣對抗擁有壓倒性優勢的強敵。在人看來，約押不大可能撐得住陣腳。然而，他照所能的做最好的安排；他勉勵他的戰士要剛強，竭盡全力；然後虔誠地將這件事交給主宰戰事的神。

每一個人的生命裡都有看似絕望的時候。我們一萬人怎麼可能應付前來爭戰的二萬大軍呢？膽量消退，體力也軟弱了。這個孤單的人，除了奔向獨一的神之外，還有什麼對策呢？這是神行動的時候，因為人的幫助都是枉然。

在你個人的困境裡。當耐心耗盡；當最後的一把從缸中取出；當許多複雜的試煉會合，將你包圍；當鐵門和門前的守衛讓逃跑看起來是不可能時——向上看，神帶著援軍正前來幫助你。

在這世界，你為神的工作和爭戰裡。我們經常說話行事都像：成功是由我們能夠帶入戰場的力量贏得的。然而神要求我們的，只是忠誠和正確地部署我們能掌握的力量；祂將作其餘所有的事。

在你展望善惡之間的衝突裡。善與惡之間真正看起來有無限的差異。但在戰場上，除了可以看到的之外，還有其他的力量。有另一支軍隊，是神自己率領的。當敵人如洪水湧來時，主的靈就舉起軍旗。「耶書崙哪，沒有能比神的。祂為幫助你，乘在天空。(申卅三26)」

David tarried still at Jerusalem. 2 Sam. 11 : 1

Ah! Fatal dalliance in the arms of sensual ease! It led to David's undoing. It was the time of the year when kings generally went forth to the fight; and in earlier days David would never have thought of leaving to Joab or others the strain and stress of conflict when there were hard knocks to give and take. Indeed, on more than one occasion his followers had remonstrated against his exposing the Light of Israel to the risks of the battlefield. But now he sends Joab and his mighty men to fight against Ammon, while he tarries securely at Jerusalem. In this fatal lethargy he betrays the deterioration of his soul. Already the walls were broken down, and entrance into the citadel was easy. We are not surprised to learn that as he sauntered lazily on his palace roof in the sultry afternoon he was swept away before the rush of sudden passion, and took the poor man's ewe lamb to satisfy the vagrant, hungry impulse which suddenly came to him.

Beware of hours of ease! Rest is necessary; times of recruiting and renewal must come to us all; nature positively demands re-creation; but there must be no neglect of known duty, no handing over to others of what we might and could do ourselves, no tarrying behind the march of the troops when we should go forth with them to the battle. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. Be most on guard when not actively engaged against the enemy. One unlocked gate may admit the foe to the citadel of the life, and rob you of peace for all after-days. The luxury of the plains of Capua was more fatal to the soldiers of Hannibal than the passage of the Alps.

大衛仍住在耶路撒冷。 撒下十一1

啊！依偎在肉體安逸懷抱中致命的閒蕩！這導致大衛的墮落。一年中的這個時候，通常是列王上前線打仗的時候；早些年，大衛絕不會在決定猛烈攻擊的進退時，把戰鬥的緊張壓力留給約押或其他的人。的確，隨從他的人曾經不止一次諫勸他不該使以色列的燈暴露於戰場的危險中(廿一17)。但如今他差約押和他的勇士們去和亞捫人爭戰，自己卻安心留在耶路撒冷。這致命的懶散暴露他內心的墮落。城牆已經毀壞，進入城堡就容易了(箴廿五28)。我們一點也不覺驚訝看到他在一個悶熱難耐的下午，在王宮的平頂懶洋洋散步時，被突如其來的情慾衝昏了頭，取走那窮人的母羊羔[註1]來滿足這突然來的浪蕩、飢渴衝動。

務要留心安逸的時光！休息是必要的；養精蓄銳的時間必定臨到我們每一個人；我們的本性確實需要娛樂；但是我們絕不可忽視我們已知的責任，不可將自己可以做的事推給別人，在我們本應該隨軍前進上戰場的時候，不可逗留在行進軍隊的後面。儆醒禱告，免得入了迷惑(太廿六41)。沒有與仇敵積極爭戰時，最該警惕防衛。一扇沒有鎖好的大門，就可以放敵人進入生命的堡壘，把你今後一生的平安全部奪走。對於漢尼拔(Hannibal)的士兵而言，卡普阿平原的奢華比阿爾卑斯山道更加致命[註2]。

[註1] 寓意說法，指拔示巴(撒下十二3)。

[註2] 漢尼拔Hannibal, 247-183(?)BC，北非古國迦太基的將領，曾率領軍隊翻越阿爾卑斯山攻打羅馬帝國，並曾佔領意大利第二大城卡普阿。

And David went to Rabbah, and fought against it, and took it. 2 Sam. 12: 29

Victory might seem to have been for ever forfeited after so great a fall. We could not have been surprised had we been told that from this time onward the course of David's conquests had stayed. And yet this thought would be a misconception of God's dealing with the penitent. Where there is true contrition, confession, and faith, He not only forgives, but restores; He not only restores to the enjoyment of his favour, but reinstates in opportunities of usefulness. So Jesus not only met the apostle who had denied Him, and put him back into the old position of happy fellowship, but gave him a commission to feed his sheep and lambs.

We have sometimes met backsliders who have doubted the possibility of their forgiveness; or, if they have realized this, they have never dared to hope that they could ever be what they had been. And so long as faith refuses to believe in the perfect work of God's love, it must inevitably take a back seat. Let us seek for such an entire faith in God's forgiving and restoring love as to dare to believe that we are put again into the old place, and allowed to anticipate the same victories as aforesaid. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1 : 9).

Directly David said, "I have sinned," in the flash of a moment Nathan said, "The Lord hath put away thy sin"; and when Joab sent tidings that Rabbah was about to fall, David was permitted the honour of its final capture, though it had been associated so closely with Uriah's death. Where sin abounds grace superabounds, and reigns through righteousness. Dare to believe this.

於是大衛聚集眾軍，往拉巴去攻城，就取了這城。 撒下十二29

在如此嚴重的跌倒之後，勝利似乎已永遠喪失了。假如有人告訴我們從這時刻起，大衛征服敵軍的經歷停止了，我們絕不會感到驚訝。然而這種思想是誤解神對悔改之人的處置。對於真正的痛悔、認罪與信心，祂不但赦免，並且恢復；祂不僅恢復蒙祂悅納的喜樂，而且給予機會恢復用處。如此耶穌不僅去見那個曾經否認祂的使徒，使他回到原有快樂的交通裡，而且給他一個使命，就是餵養祂的羊與小羊（約廿一15-17）。

我們有時遇到一些重蹈覆轍的人，他們懷疑自己得著赦免的可能性；即或他們明白這點，他們也從來不敢奢望自己能夠恢復到原先那樣。當信心拒絕相信神愛完全的工作時，就必定會退縮。讓我們尋求這一個完全的信心，相信神赦免與恢復的愛，好叫我們敢於相信我們會被恢復到先前的位置上，也可以期待與先前一樣的勝利。「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）」

大衛直截地說：「我犯罪了！」拿單立刻說：「耶和華已經除掉你的罪」；當約押送信告知拉巴即將被攻陷時，大衛仍蒙許可取得最終奪城的榮譽，儘管這戰爭與烏利亞的死有著如此緊密的聯繫。罪在哪裡顯多，恩典就更顯多了，並且恩典要藉著義作王（羅五20-21）。你要勇敢相信這一點。

Then the king arose, and tare his garments, and lay on the earth. 2 Sam. 13: 31

Throughout the incidents of this chapter, the soul of David touched the bottom of the sea of anguish and remorse. The circumstances narrated were in themselves sad enough; but there was a more bitter element in them for David, because he knew that they were the harvest of which his own sin was the seed. Here began to be fulfilled the sentence of God through Nathan, "The sword shall never depart from thine house."

He had broken up the peace of another's home, and peace had quitted his home, never to return. He had defiled the purity of Uriah's wife, and the purity of his own daughter had been trampled underfoot. He had smitten Uriah, and now Absalom had murdered Amnon. Through those awful hours when the entire fate of the whole of his family seemed trembling in the balance, he drank to the dregs the cup of bitterness. Oh, how true are the apostle's words: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Sin resembles the Australian weed, which when once it is sown in the waters will spread with such rapidity as to spoil their beauty, and choke their flow. We must distinguish between the penal and natural results. The penal were borne by Christ for us all, and are remitted for evermore; but the natural remain even to forgiven penitents, as they did to David. Still, God's grace may transmute them into blessings, and cause pearls to grow where before there had been gaping wounds. Ask God to take in hand the natural consequence of yours sins, and make them means of grace and ennoblement.

王就起來，撕裂衣服，躺在地上。 撒下十三31

在本章一連串的事件中，大衛的心達到了痛苦懊悔之海的深處。所敘述的這些景況本身已夠悲慘了；但是對於大衛，其中還有更苦澀的成分，因為他曉得這些事是他自己犯罪撒下種子所得的收成。神藉著拿單的宣判在這裡開始應驗了：「刀劍必永不離開你的家。（撒下十二10）」

他破壞了別人家庭的平安，於是平安離開他的家，永不返回。他玷污了烏利亞妻子的貞潔，於是他自己女兒的貞潔也被人踐踏在腳下。他殺了烏利亞，於是現在押沙龍謀殺了暗嫩。在那段可怕的期間，他全家的人好像都處在前途未定的不安中，大衛喝盡了苦杯。哦，使徒的話是何等真實：「人種的是甚麼，收的也是甚麼。順著情慾撒種的，必從情慾收敗壞；順著聖靈撒種的，必從聖靈收永生。（加六7-8）」

罪就像澳大利亞的雜草，一落到水裡就會迅速擴展，以致破壞水上的美景，堵塞水流。我們必須分辨懲罰性的後果和自然的後果。懲罰性的後果已被基督為我們所有的人擔當，並且被永遠免除了；但自然的後果仍要臨到那些即使已經悔改得蒙赦罪的人，就像這些後果臨到大衛那樣。神的恩典可以將它們化作祝福，叫珍珠在裂開的傷口處生長。求神來掌管你犯罪的自然後果，使它們成為恩典與得尊貴的憑藉。

Yet doth He devise means that his banished be not expelled from Him. 2 Sam. 14: 14

The means that David devised were really inadequate. He allowed his heart to dictate to his royal sense of justice and rectitude, and permitted Absalom to return to his country and home without one word of confession, one symptom of penitence. The king was overmastered by the father; and the result was disastrous. It shook the respect of his people, undermined the foundations of just government, slackened the bands of every family in the land, and confirmed Absalom in his wilful and obstinate career. "What!" said he to himself, "does my father bid me come back without conditions? Does he demand no confession or reparation? Then he condones my sin."

Let parents be warned. If your children disobey, and violate the rules of your home, you have no right to treat them as you did before, until they have owned their sin. You must insist on penitence, confession, and reparation, though it take hours or days or even weeks of suffering and pleading to bring it about.

Into what relief does David's mistake throw God's way of forgiveness and salvation! Had he acted as David, and as so many wish us to believe, He would have reinstated the human family in the Paradise of his love without waiting for the work of the Mediator, or the confession of the prodigal. By the arbitrary exercise of his sovereign will He might have wiped out the record of our sins without our concurrence. But it would have been to the irreparable undoing of man. Hence it behoved Christ to suffer, by his blood making an atonement for our sins, and by his Spirit bringing us to penitence and confession.

神... 乃設法使逃亡的人不至成為趕出、回不來的。 撒下十四14

大衛所想出的方法實在不適當。他允許他的感情指揮自己高貴的公義感、正直感，許可押沙龍沒有一句認錯的話，沒有一個悔改的表現，就回到他的國、他的家中。大衛作王的公義被他為父的愛壓倒了；其結果是悲慘的。這動搖了百姓對他的尊敬，侵蝕了公正統治的根基，鬆開了國中維繫每一個家庭的繩索，並且加強了押沙龍任性頑固的生涯。押沙龍自言自語道：「什麼！我父親無條件吩咐我回去嗎？他不要求認錯或賠償嗎？那麼他不追究我的罪了。」

為人父母的要受到警告。如果你的子女不順從，且違反了你家裡的規矩，那你就不能再按事發之前的方式對待他們，直到他們承認自己的過錯為止。你必須堅持他們悔改、認罪且賠償，儘管這需要數小時、數天，甚至是數週之長的痛苦與懇求才能達成。

大衛的錯誤何等突顯神赦免與救贖的方法！就如許多人希望我們相信，假若祂行事也像大衛一樣，那麼祂就會在祂愛的樂園裡直接恢復人類大家庭，而不必等待中保的工作(提前二5)，或是浪子的認罪(路十五17)。祂可以不需要我們的同意，單獨使用祂主權的意志來塗抹我們的罪案。但是這將導致人不可挽回的墮落。因此，基督必須受害，用祂的血為我們贖罪，並藉著祂的聖靈帶我們悔改、認罪。

Here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him. 2 Sam. 15: 26

There is the patience of hope. We love to gird ourselves in the vehemence of our self-will, to go where we choose, to rule the lives of others; but as the years pass and our pride is humbled, the sinews of our strength slackened, and the radiance of early prospects overcast, we are willing to hand ourselves over to our Father, saying, "Behold, here am I; let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him."

It was thus that Isaac was passive in the hands of Abraham. It was thus that Jesus spoke to his Father, "I come to do thy will, O my God." It was thus that the maiden who was blessed above women, answered the angel's message. It was thus that Paul, when urged not to go up to Jerusalem, avowed his willingness to live or die, as the Lord might choose.

God is ever working upon us through circumstances; and, as in the present case, sometimes He overrules the plottings of wicked men to fulfil his Divine purpose. His will is sometimes brought to us in a cup which a Judas holds to our lips. How blessed to be able to say, as we go forth to meet our Father's will, Behold, here am I! and to look beyond the plottings and machinations of our enemies to One who loves us infinitely. Whatever He permits must be good. Good, if driven as an exile from our home; good, if exposed to the revilings of a Shimei; good, if the heart breaks in bitter tears. All must be good which the good Lord permits or appoints. Many were the afflictions of David, but out of them all he was delivered. When he had learnt the lesson, the rod was stayed. God did not take away his mercy from him. Thou too art in his hands, and He will certainly bring thee again, and show thee the city and his habitation.

我在這裡，願祂憑自己的意旨待我。 撒下十五26

這是有盼望的忍耐。我們喜愛憑著自己強烈的固執，去我們選擇的地方，管轄別人的生命；但隨著年日的經過，我們的傲氣受挫，我們有力的肌肉鬆弛，早年前途的光輝變暗淡，於是我們願意將自己交託給父神，說：「看哪，我在這裡，願祂憑自己的意旨待我。」

就是這樣，以撒在亞伯拉罕的手中不抵抗。耶穌就是這樣對祂的父說：「神啊，我來了，為要照你的旨意行。(來十7)」那在婦女中最為有福的童貞女，也這樣回答天使的信息(路一38)。當有人求保羅不要上耶路撒冷時，他也這樣聲明，或生或死他都願意，只要照著主的意思(徒二十一13)。

神一直藉著環境在我們身上作工；並且有時候祂會推翻惡人的計謀，來達成祂神聖的旨意，正如此刻大衛的情形。祂的旨意有時是藉著猶大帶來，遞到我們嘴唇上的杯[比喻極大痛苦的經歷(太廿22)]。當我們前去遵行父旨意的時候，能夠說：「看哪，我在這裡！」並且能夠越過我們仇敵的陰謀詭計，看到無限愛我們的那一位，這是何等有福啊！祂所允許的，無論何事都必是美善的。是美善的，即使從我們的家裡被趕出來流浪；是美善的，即使受到示每的咒罵(撒下十六5)；是美善的，即使傷心痛哭。凡良善的主允許指定的一切都必是美善的。大衛有許多苦難，但從所有這些苦難，他都蒙了拯救。當他學會了這個功課，(管教的)杖就停住了。神沒有從他身上撤走祂的憐憫。你也是在祂的手中，祂必然會再次把你帶回來，看見這城和祂的居所(25節)。

The king and all the people came weary, and refreshed themselves there. 2 Sam. 16: 14

A great weariness falls often on our souls. We are wearied because of the greatness of our way, and inclined to say there is no hope. Memory tires us, perpetually casting up the record of past unfaithfulness and transgression. The bitter way of the natural consequences of sin is toilsome and difficult to the feet. We faint before the averted eye of former friends and the pitiless criticism of foes. Longings for a vanished past, for life and love, for purity and peace, grind heavily in the soul. Our King has known something of human weariness, though not from all the sources that cause it in his subjects.

But amidst the presence of our weariness the voice of God may be heard saying, "This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshing." There is rest for weary souls beneath the shadow of the cross, in the sight of which the burden rolls away. There is rest and refreshment as we sit in the banqueting house of Christ's manifested and realized affection. There is refreshment as we eat of his flesh and drink of his blood; as we yield our will to his; as we sit with Him in heavenly places. We assuredly find Him to be "a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. 32: 2).

There is no hill Difficulty without its arbour; no desert without its oasis; no sultry heat without its shadow of a great rock; no weariness without its pillow; no intolerable sorrow without its solace; no weariness without its refreshment; no failure of man without a very present help in God.

王和跟隨他的眾人，疲疲乏乏的到了一個地方，就在那裡歇息歇息。 撒下十六14

我們的心常遇見極大的疲乏。我們疲乏，因為我們的路途艱巨，而且使我們認為沒有希望。回憶使我們疲倦，因為不斷地計算已過不忠實和過犯的記錄。罪所帶來自然結果，使痛苦的路走起來艱辛費勁。我們面對朋友迴避的眼光，以及仇敵無情的批判，而喪失勇氣。渴望過往消失，渴望生命與愛，渴望純潔與平安，這些渴望沉重地折磨我們的心。我們的君王知道人的疲乏，儘管祂不是從所有會導致祂臣民疲乏的源頭中得知的。

但我們在疲乏當中，也許會聽到神的聲音說：「你們要使疲乏人得安息，這樣才得安息，才得舒暢。(賽廿八12)」在十字架的影子下，有為著疲乏之人預備的安息，人一看見十字架，重擔就消逝了。當我們坐在基督顯明並實現之愛的筵宴所(歌二4)，就有安息與舒暢。當我們吃祂的肉、喝祂的血(約六56)，當我們自己的意志降服於祂的旨意，當我們與祂一同坐在天上(弗二6)，我們就得舒暢。我們確定的發現祂是那「一人像避風所和避暴雨的隱密處，又像河流在乾旱之地，像大磐石的影子在疲乏之地。(賽卅二2)」

沒有一座「艱難山」沒有涼棚；沒有一片沙漠沒有綠洲；沒有一個酷暑沒有大岩石的蔭影；沒有一個疲乏沒有枕頭；沒有一段難以忍受的悲傷沒有慰藉；沒有一個疲乏沒有舒暢；沒有一次人的失敗沒有神即時的幫助。

Arise, and pass quickly over the water. 2 Sam. 17: 21

The water of Jordan may serve as an illustration for our position. Our David has passed over the waters of death, and in doing so has taken us with Him. There is a sense in which in the morning light of Easter Day all who believed passed over with Him, so that "by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan."

We all hold the doctrine of Substitution. Do we sufficiently realize that of Identification? Not only did Jesus die for us, but we died with and in Him. In Him, as the true Noah's Ark, the whole Church passed over the Jordan of death from the old world to the new. There are some who do not understand that in the purpose of God we are already standing on resurrection ground. Across the water we can hear the murmur of the world, and detect its corruption; but we are the inheritors of the world in which there is no death nor corruption nor the dominion of sin. When a man realizes this he no longer braces himself up to meet death, because he knows that in the person of Christ he has left it behind for ever.

What is true, however, in God's purpose should be the aim and goal of our daily striving. To us there comes the unceasing call, "Arise, and go over Jordan." There is always a thither and a hither side for every experience and act. We may always do as the world does; this is to stay on the death side. We may always do as Christ does; this is to pass over to the risen and living side. Reckon that you have died, and mortify the deeds of your body. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness."

你們務要起來，快快過河。 撒下十七21

約但河的水可以作為圖畫，說明我們的地位。我們的大衛已經渡過死亡之水，並帶著我們與祂一同渡過。就著某種意義來說，在復活那天的晨光中，所有信祂之人都與祂一同越過[死亡]了，因此「到了天亮，無一人不過約但河的。(22節)」

我們都持守著「代替」這一教義。但我們是否足夠領會「認同」這個教義呢？耶穌不僅為我們死，我們也在祂裡面與祂同死。在祂裡面——祂如同真挪亞方舟，整個教會渡過了死亡的約但河，從舊世界進入了新境界。還有人不明白，在神的旨意中我們已經站在復活的土地上了。當我們穿過河中，可以聽到世界的低語，並發現世界的朽壞；然而我們要承受那沒有死亡、不朽壞、罪不再掌權的世界。當人明白這點，他便不再需要鼓起勇氣去面對死亡了，因為他知道在基督的身位裡，死亡已經永遠被留在背後了。

然而，那在神的旨意裡真實的事[指上一段所說的]，應該成為我們每日努力的目標。「起來，過約但河。」這呼召不斷地臨到我們。在每一個經歷和行動中，總有一個那一邊和一個這一邊。我們可以一直像世人一樣行事；就是留在死亡的這一邊。我們也可以一直像基督一樣；就是過到復活與永生的那一邊。你要算自己已經死了[羅六11直譯]，並要治死身體的行為[羅八13直譯]。「基督若在你們裡面，身體就因罪而死，靈卻因義而活[羅八10直譯]。」

Wherefore wilt thou run? . . . Come what may, said he, I will run. 2 Sam. 18:22, 23 (R.V.)

Joab did not love David, as Ahimaaz did, and could not understand what made the young man so eager to carry the tidings. Doubtless Ahimaaz and Cushie entirely misinterpreted the heart of David, and thought he would be glad to hear that the rebellion was stamped out, and Absalom was dead. And it was because of the pleasure which he thought to give his king that the swift-footed son of Zadok pleaded for permission to run. What though there would be no reward, or that it would fall to the lot of Cushie, who had already started at Joab's command--that mattered not, the love of David constrained him.

How often that question of reward is thrown at the servants of God! It is one of the favourite taunts of the world; as Satan said of Job, that we do as we do because we are paid. "Doth Job serve God for nought?" And nothing so startles men as disinterested service. They cannot account for it; but it wins their respect. "Reward or no reward; recompense or none; smiles or tears, come what may, let me run." That is the spirit that becomes a Christian, and convinces the world. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

Ahimaaz outran Cushie. The one was a volunteer for love's dear sake; the other, a bond-servant, doing as he was told. Love lent wings to his feet, and speeding past his fellow bore him first into David's presence. So God's will is done in heaven: "The cherubim ran and returned like a flash of lightning." So God's will is done on earth: "They departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring his disciples word. And behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail!"

何必要跑去呢？他又說，無論怎樣，我要跑去。 撒下十八22-23

約押不如亞希瑪斯那樣愛大衛，他不明白是什麼讓這年輕人如此渴望去報信。毫無疑問，亞希瑪斯和古示完全誤解了大衛的心，以為他會高興聽到叛亂被碾平，而押沙龍也死了。正是因他以為會給王帶來快樂，撒督這腳步快捷的兒子，才懇求准許讓他跑去報信。雖然沒有賞賜，或是賞賜給了奉約押之命已經上路的古示，那也沒有關係，對大衛的愛迫使他去報信。

賞賜的問題時常拋在神的僕人面前。這是世人所喜愛的一種嘲諷；就像撒但論到約伯，我們做我們所做的，乃是因為我們得著酬勞。「約伯敬畏耶和華，豈是無故呢？（伯一9）」沒有比毫不計利益的服事更令世人驚訝的了。他們對此無法解釋；但卻投以敬重。「無論有無賞賜，無論有無報酬，無論是笑還是淚，無論怎樣，讓我跑去！」這種精神才與基督徒的身分相稱，並能折服世人。「基督的愛激勵我們。（林後五14）」

亞希瑪斯趕過了古示人(23節)。一個是為了深切之愛而甘願的人；另一個是奴僕做所吩咐的。「愛」將翅膀借給他的雙腳，使他加速趕過他的同伴，並使他第一個來到大衛面前。神的旨意就是如此成就在天上：「基路伯往來奔走，好像電光一閃。（結一14）」神的旨意也如此成就在地上：「婦女們就急忙離開墳墓，又害怕，又大大地歡喜，跑去要報給祂的門徒。忽然，耶穌遇見她們，說：願你們平安！（太廿八8-9）」

The King is near of kin to us. 2 Sam. 19: 42

There are two derivations for the word king: one from the word can--the king is the man that can do things; the other from the word kin--the king is closely related to us, of our kith and kin. In either case, there is a beautiful meaning, as touching our Lord and Saviour. He is King, because He has overcome our enemies, and can overcome. He is King, because He has taken on Himself our flesh and blood, and has for ever made us one with Himself. The King is our kinsman. Our kinsman is King.

It is very comforting to know how really our Lord has identified Himself with us. The Gospels are full of the wonderful story. His kinship was manifested in:

HIS PRAYERS. He bade us speak to God as our Father; in that marvellous possessive pronoun, not only linking us all to one another, but including Himself in our petitions, save when we ask for forgiveness.

HIS INFIRMITIES. "We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." His hunger and thirst; his weariness and exhaustion; his suffering unto death--all accentuate the closeness of the tie between us.

HIS TEMPTATIONS. "In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The avenues through which the tempter could approach Him were those by which he assails us also. No temptation took Him, but such as is common to man. So to every lonely soldier of his He draws near, saying, "Be of good cheer; I have passed through it all. I am your brother in the fight; I feel for you with a quick sympathy; the glories of my throne do not alter my true-hearted love."

因為王與我們是親屬。 撒下十九42

王(king)這個英文字有兩個字源：一個從「能(can)」來的，王是能成事的人；另一個從「親屬(kin)」來的，王與我們關係親近，是我們的親戚朋友。這兩個字源，在關於我們的主救主上，都有著美好的意義。祂是王，因祂已經戰勝了我們的眾仇敵，並且祂能夠戰勝。祂是王，因祂親自穿上我們的血肉之體(來二14)，並使我們永遠與祂自己成為一。王是我們的親屬；我們的親屬是王。

知道我們的主何等確實與我們融為一體，是十分令人欣慰的事。福音書中充滿了這方面奇妙的故事。祂與我們的親屬關係，顯明在以下幾方面：

祂的禱告。祂吩咐我們向神說話，稱祂「我們的父」(太六9)；這奇妙的「我們的」，不僅將我們彼此相連，更將祂自己包括在我們的祈求之中，除了當我們祈求赦免之外。

祂的軟弱。「因我們的大祭司並非不能體恤我們的軟弱。(來四15)」祂的飢餓與乾渴；祂的疲倦與困乏；祂受苦直至死 — 這都加強祂與我們之間親密的聯結。

祂受試探。「祂也曾凡事受過試探，與我們一樣；只是祂沒有犯罪。(來四15)」試探者「就近祂」的途徑，也是祂[試探者]「攻擊我們」的途徑。人常遇見的試探，沒有一樣曾打敗祂。所以祂向靠近祂的每一個孤單的士兵說：「打起精神來，這一切我都經歷過了。我是你在戰鬥中的弟兄；我以敏銳的同情與你一同感受；我寶座的榮耀不會改變我真誠的愛。」

The men of Judah clave unto their King. 2 Sam. 20: 2

We are reminded of the exhortation of the good Barnabas, that with purpose of heart the converts of Antioch should cleave unto the Lord. This is the test of a true faith. We often come to the dividing of the paths. We stand on the watershed of the hills: that way leads back to Moab with its fascinations; this on to Canaan with its spiritual attractions. Orpah and Ruth must choose. Each is equally profuse in speeches and tears; but the ultimate test of love is whether they will stay or go. Which will cleave to the widowed Naomi? She is the truest lover; her fidelity will attest the fervour and strength of her affection. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and returned to her people and her gods, while Ruth "clave unto her."

We must cleave to Jesus, in spite of the derision of the multitude. We must be prepared to stand with Him when He stands alone, or goes forth alone to die. We must be willing to stem the mighty tide of the world which has left Him and pours past us. Though all forsake Him, yet we must cleave.

We must cleave to Jesus, in spite of the rebellion of the flesh. Our whole nature may sometimes rise in insurrection, demanding some forbidden fruit. It is no child's play then for the lonely will to stand by itself in unshaken fidelity and loyalty; but it must.

We must cleave to Jesus when He seems to rebuff us. Only those who can stand so sharp an ordeal, are exposed to it. But sometimes we are called to pass through it as Job, that angels may learn how Christ's lovers cling to Him, not for his gifts, but for Himself.

猶大人... 都緊緊跟隨他們的王。 撒下二十2

我們聯想到良善的巴拿巴的勸勉，他要安提阿教會的信徒立定心志，恆久靠主(徒十一23)。這是對一個真實信心的試驗。我們常走到岔路口。我們站在山脊分水線上：那條路返回極具吸引力的摩押地；這條路繼續引向富有屬靈吸力的迦南地。俄珥巴和路得必須作選擇(得一3-18)。她倆都有豐富的言辭和淚水；但愛的最終考驗是她們是留還是去。哪一個會緊緊跟隨寡婦拿俄米，她便是最真實愛拿俄米的人；她的忠誠將證明她愛的熱情和力量。俄珥巴與婆婆親嘴而別，回她本國和她所拜的神那裡去了，只是路得「緊緊跟著拿俄米。(得一14直譯)」

我們必須緊緊跟隨耶穌，即使眾人嘲笑。我們必須預備，當祂獨自站立時，與祂站在一起；當祂獨自前去受死時，與祂站在一起。我們必須甘願抵抗這世界的洪流，這洪流就是離棄祂並傾瀉掃過我們。縱然所有的人都離棄祂，我們也要緊緊跟隨。

我們必須緊緊跟隨耶穌，即使肉體反抗。有時我們全部的本性會起來反叛，要求吃禁果。孤單的心志要在堅定不移的忠貞中獨自站立，絕非輕而易舉的事；卻必須如此行。

我們仍然必須緊緊跟隨耶穌，當祂好像拒絕我們。只有那些能夠經得住如此尖銳考驗之人，才會遭到這般考驗。但有時我們被召要經過這考驗，就如約伯一樣，讓眾天使都知道愛基督的人是如何緊緊跟隨祂，不是為了祂的恩賜，而是為了祂自己。

Because he slew the Gibeonites. 2 Sam. 21 : 1

The Gibeonites were under the protection of a special covenant, which had been entered into between them and Joshua. That covenant was the outcome of a ruse on their part. But since it had been most solemnly made by the leaders of Israel, it held good. The fact of their deceit and chicanery could not absolve Israel from the oath which had been passed for their safety. For centuries the provisions of this covenant had been observed, till Saul invaded them, and slew the Gibeonites. This was a grievous sin, which, according to the religious light of the time, seemed to demand blood; and David proposed to atone for blood by blood. Nothing but blood could atone for sin so black and dark.

We are also protected by a covenant, into which the Father has entered with the Son, not for our worthiness or merit, but only because He would. The provisions of that covenant engage to take us to be his people, to remember our sins no more, and to make the divine law the object of our love (Heb. 8). And the argument is irresistible, that if man is so mindful of a covenant as to feel that its infraction is a sin which can only be expiated by blood-shedding, it is impossible to suppose that God will ever run back from his.

O my soul, thou mayest rest secure in this: here is an everlasting rock; this foundation shall suffice thee for evermore. Thou art in the Son of his love. Though thou art sinful and evil, yet thou art included in the covenant which is more lasting than that of day and night. Jesus has met its conditions on thy behalf, and has undertaken to secure thy obedience and holiness.

因掃羅 ... 殺死基遍人。 撒下二十一1

基遍人有一個特別的約保護著他們，那約是他們與約書亞立的(書九章)。那約是他們用欺詐得來的。但因為以色列眾首領曾經極嚴肅地立下這約，所以這約仍然持續有效。基遍人雖用詭詐欺騙，以色列人並不能因此廢除容基遍人存活的誓言。幾百年來，這約的條款都被遵守，直到掃羅入侵並殺死基遍人。這是一項嚴重的罪，按照當時宗教律法的規定，是要用血來償還的；大衛便提出以血還血來贖罪。除了血，沒有其他任何東西能夠贖如此黑暗深重的罪。

我們也受著一個約的保護，是父神與祂兒子所立的約，並非因著我們配得，或是因我們的功績，而僅僅因為祂願意。這約的條款承諾：接納我們作祂的子民，不再記念我們的罪愆，並使神聖的律法成為我們心所愛的對象(來八10-12)。這樣的論據是無可反駁的，人若這樣銘記一個約，以致覺得違反這約便是犯罪，這罪只能靠流血來抵償，那就不可能認為神會違背祂的約。

哦，我的心啊！你可在此放心安歇：這是永遠的磐石；這個根基能夠永遠滿足你。你在祂的愛子裡面。儘管你有罪、邪惡，然而你被包含在這約的範圍內，這約比白晝黑夜的規律還要長久不變。耶穌已經為你，滿足約的條件，並負責來成全你的順從和聖潔。

Thy gentleness hath made me great. 2 Sam. 22: 36

THE triumph of God's gentle goodness will be our song for ever. In those far distant ages, when we look back on our earthly course, as a grown man on his boyhood, and when the words of this Psalm shall express our glad emotions, we shall recognize that the Hand which brought us thither was as gentle as our mother's; and that the things we craved, but failed to receive, were withheld by his gentle goodness. Our history tells what gentleness will do.

The Apostle besought the Corinthian converts by the gentleness of Christ (2 Cor. 10: 1). Though there were abuses amongst them that seemed to call for stringent dealing, he felt that they could be best removed by the gentle love which he had learned from the heart of Christ. The wisdom which is from above is gentle as well as pure; and in dealing with the sin that chokes our growth, it is probable that gentleness will do more than severity. The gentleness of the nurse that cherishes her children; of the lover to her whom he cherishes above himself; of the infinite love which bears and endures to the uttermost--is the furnace before which the foul ingredients of our hearts are driven never to return. We might brave the lion; we are vanquished by the Lamb. We could withstand the scathing look of scorn; but when the gentle Lord casts on us the look of ineffable tenderness, we go out to weep bitterly.

That He has borne with us so lovingly; that He has filled our lives with mercy even when compelled to correct; that He has never altered in his tender behaviour towards us; that He has returned our rebuffs and slights with meekness and forbearance; that He has never wearied of us--this is an everlasting tribute to the gentleness that makes great.

你的溫和使我為大。 撒下二十二36

神的溫柔慈愛的勝利將永遠是我們的詩歌。到了將來那遙遠的年代，當我們回顧地上經過的路程，如同一個已長大的人回顧他的童年，當這首詩表達我們喜悅的心情時，我們必承認那雙將我們帶到那邊的手，就像母親的手一樣溫和；我們曾渴望卻未得到的事物，乃是被祂的溫柔慈愛所攔住。我們以往的經歷說出溫柔所要成就的。

使徒保羅藉著基督的溫柔，懇求哥林多教會的眾信徒(林後十1)。儘管他們中間有許多弊病，似乎需要嚴厲對付，但保羅認為這些弊端，最好是藉著他從基督學到的溫柔愛心來消除。從上頭來的智慧是溫柔且清潔的(雅三17)；並且在處置那阻礙我們成長之罪的事上，那種溫柔可能比嚴厲來得更有效。保姆的溫柔呵護孩子；情人的溫柔珍惜他所愛的人超過自己；無限之愛的溫柔，這愛忍耐包容至極——這溫柔如火爐，要驅逐所遇到的人心中的污穢，使這些污穢不再復返。我們可以勇敢面對獅子；卻被羔羊征服。我們能抵抗鄙夷之人的刻薄眼神；但當溫和的主用難以形容的溫柔望著我們時，我們便出去痛哭(太廿六75, 可十四72, 路廿二62)。

祂用如此愛憐容忍我們；即使被迫糾正，祂仍用憐憫充滿我們的生命；祂從未改變對待我們溫柔的態度；祂用溫和與容忍來回報我們的拒絕和藐視；祂從未對我們厭倦——這是那成就大事之「溫柔」的證明。

As the light of the morning when the sun riseth, a morning without clouds. 2 Sam. 23 : 4

The dealings of God with man are compared to morning light, and the sprouting of tender grass in the sunshine that follows rain. The one may refer to youth, and the other to age. In each there is sunlight: in the one case it is before the clouds have gathered; in the other after they have dispersed.

CLOUDS. There are many different sorts: the cirrus, like platings in the sky; the cumulus, in heaps, like the summits of distant mountains; the strata, or long bars; the nimbus, heavy with showers. There is a counterpart for each human life, without which we should miss much of those experiences of light and shade that so frequently reveal the nature of the light. We should not know God's comfort and very present help, if it were not for the clouds which are born in the marsh-lands of trouble. Who does not prefer the changeful beauty of an English spring to the unclouded blue of Italian skies?

THE LIGHT OF THE MORNING. The love of God steals over hearts as the dawn. He is the Rock; but his advent breaks gently as light. So God's love came to Lydia, whose heart opened as a flower its petals. This makes it difficult for some of us to decide the moment of our regeneration ; only we know that, once darkness, we are now light in the Lord.

CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN. We all know something of cloud and rain. If we did not, our lives would be arid as a desert. Rain is necessary to fructify the seeds that lie buried in the soil; but clear shining is needed too. Times of joy are needed equally as those of sorrow. The tender grass is the child of rain and sun. Hast thou had tears, thou shalt have smiles! Hast thou had clouds and rain, thou shalt have clear shining!

他必像日出的晨光，如無雲的清晨。 撒下二十三4

神對待人的方式，好比晨光與雨後陽光中發生的嫩草(4節)。一個提及青年時期，另一個指老年的時候。每一個情況中都有陽光：一個是在雲彩聚集之前；另一個則是在雲彩散去之後。

雲彩。雲有很多種：卷雲，好像天空中的鍍金片；積雲，一堆堆的，彷彿遠山的山峰；層雲，或是長條狀的；雨雲，積滿了雨水。人生的每一階段都有相對應的雲彩，沒有雲彩我們就會失去很多對於光和陰影的體驗，雲彩時常揭示出光的本質。若沒有充滿困難的沼澤地所產生的雲朵，我們就不會知道神的安慰及隨時的幫助。相對於意大利無雲的藍天，誰不更喜愛英倫春天多變的美麗呢？

晨光。神的愛猶如黎明悄悄臨到我們的心。祂是磐石；但祂到來卻如同光一般溫柔。神的愛像這樣臨到呂底亞(徒十六14-15)，她的心敞開，彷彿花朵打開花瓣。這令我們中間有些人難以確定重生的時刻；我們只知道，我們曾經黑暗，如今卻在主的光中。

雨後的晴光。我們多少都了解一些雲和雨。如果我們不了解，那麼我們的生命就會如沙漠一樣貧瘠。要讓埋在土壤裡的種子結果，雨是必要的；而晴光也是需要的。快樂的時光是需要的；同樣，憂傷的時刻也是不可少的。嫩草因雨水和陽光而滋生。如果你流淚，你就必有歡笑！如果你經歷雲和雨，你就必經歷晴光！

Neither will I offer burnt offerings . . . of that which doth cost me nothing. 2 Sam. 24: 24

God'S love to us cost Him something. He spared not his own Son, and that Son spared not his blood. But how little our love to Him costs us! Let us understand that where there is true, strong love to Jesus, it will cost us something. Love is the costliest of all undertakings.

It will cost us Self-denial. Christ and self are perfectly incompatible; to have the one we must be prepared to surrender the other. The heart subtly schemes to hold both; but it does not deceive Christ. He knows in a moment when we have preferred to spare ourselves and to sacrifice Him, or to obey Him and sacrifice ourselves. We know it also. At first we may find it an effort to count all things but loss for Him; but as we go on doing it, and drink in the fresh air that breathes about the mountains of self-denial--above all, as we see the smile of pleasure on his face--our hearts leap with joy, and we love to give Him everything, not thinking of the cost, any more than Mary did when she broke the alabaster box of very precious ointment. After all, it is but fitting that we offer our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

It will cost us Companionships. Those who knew us will pass us with averted faces. It will cost us hard-earned money; for we shall realize that we have no property in anything that we possess. It will cost us high reputation amongst our fellows. But what shall we mind if we gain Christ? You cannot give up for Him without regaining everything you have renounced, but purified and transfigured. Did not the Lord say so? And did He not add a hundredfold, with persecution. Let us heartily respond, "Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee!"

我不肯用白得之物作燔祭。 撒下二十四24

神對我們的愛，使祂付出重價。祂沒有吝惜自己的兒子，並且祂的兒子也沒有吝惜自己的血。然而我們對祂的愛所付出的代價何等的小！讓我們明白，對於耶穌真切強烈的愛，是要我們付出重價的。愛是一切承諾要做的事情中最昂貴的。

我們要付上捨己的代價。基督與「己」是完全不相容的；要得著其中的一個，我們必須預備捨棄另一個。人心巧妙地設法要兩者兼得；但這騙不過基督。當我們預備要捨棄祂而保全自己時，或是要捨棄自己而順從祂時，祂立刻就知道。我們也知道。起初我們會發覺，為要得著祂而丟棄萬事(腓三8)是不容易的；但當我們堅持這樣做，並吸入捨己之山的清新空氣時——尤其當我們看到祂臉上喜悅的笑容——我們的心歡欣雀躍，我們樂於將一切獻給祂，不計代價，甚至比馬利亞打破盛著極貴香膏的玉瓶更高的代價(太廿六7, 路七37-38)。我們「將身體獻上，當作活祭，是聖潔的，是神所喜悅的。」這畢竟是合宜的(羅十二1)。

我們要付上友誼的代價。那些認識我們的人經過我們身旁帶著迴避的臉色。我們要付上辛勞所賺之錢財的代價；因為我們意識到，我們擁有的，並不是我們的產業。我們要在同伴中間付上聲譽的代價。但我們若得著基督，我們還在意什麼呢？你不會為祂放棄一切而不重新得回，只是它們變得純潔、改了樣子。主豈不是這樣說過嗎？祂豈不要加給我們百倍以及逼迫嗎(可十29-30)？讓我們衷心回應，「主，你知道萬事，你知道我愛你！(約廿一17)」