

As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress. 1 Kings 1 : 29

"In my distress I called on the Lord, and cried to my God." Never let there be distress without its cry. He will hear your voice out of his temple, and your cry will come before Him even into his ears. He will answer, and set you in a large place. There is even a gain to be won from distress, because it brings out new phases of Christ's redemptive help.

God redeemed David from the calumny of those who maligned him without cause. In so many of his psalms he refers to the unjust and cruel hatred which misrepresented him and his doings. But God, to whom he committed his cause, vindicated him, so that his righteousness shone as the light, and his judgment as the noonday. So He will do for you. Those who now lay all manner of unkind charges to your door, will be compelled to admit your innocence. Only leave your cause with God, and be still.

God redeemed David from all the afflictions that shadowed his early days: from his wanderings in the wilderness; from his hairbreadth escapes in the caves; from meeting his death on many a terrible battlefield. We hardly realize, just now, how much we owe to the Angel of God's redemption, who is ever beside us, environing us with careful love, so that no evil may approach us, or snare take our feet. Our pathway is thick with snares and dangers, as the pilgrims found it when journeying through the valley of the shadow; but there is a way out, and in the morning we shall marvel to see how we escaped.

God redeemed David's life from destruction. This was the greatest miracle of all, when we consider the strong passions that slumbered within him, breaking out whenever he broke loose from God's grace.

我指著救我性命脫離一切苦難、永生的耶和華起誓。 王上一29

「我在急難中求告耶和華，向我的神呼求(詩十八6)。」絕不要在危難中而沒有呼求。祂必從祂的聖殿聽見你的聲音，並且你的呼聲必來到祂的面前，甚至進到祂的耳中。祂必回應，而且把你安置在寬闊之處。人甚至從苦難中獲得益處，因為苦難帶來基督救援新的層面。

神救大衛脫離那些無理之人的誹謗。在許多大衛的詩篇裡提到，那些扭曲他個人及他作為的不公正且殘酷的仇恨。然而他將自己的理交託給神，神就為他辯護，使他的公義如光發出，使他的判斷明如正午(詩卅七5-6)。同樣，祂必為你成全。那些將各種無情的責難歸到你身上的人，必不得不承認你的無辜。只要將你的事理交託給神，並且要安靜。

神救大衛脫離年輕時所遭受的苦難：在曠野漂流，在洞穴中千鈞一髮的逃命，在諸多駭人戰場中脫離死亡。就是現在我們幾乎沒有察覺，對神拯救的使者我們應該多麼感恩，祂一直在我們身邊，以呵護的愛環繞我們，以致沒有惡者可以接近我們，沒有網羅得以絆住我們的腳。我們的道路充滿網羅和危險，就如走天路的人行經幽暗深谷，卻有出路，在早晨我們將會驚異發現已逃脫。

當我們想到在大衛裡面那沉睡的強烈情慾，在他一掙脫神的恩典時就冒出來，神卻救他的性命脫離滅亡，這真是最大的神蹟！

That the Lord may continue his word. 1 Kings 2:4

How strongly David held to God's promise! It was deeply graven in his soul. How could he forget the word which guaranteed the succession of his race upon the throne of Israel! At the same time he distinctly recognized that the fulfilment was conditional. There was an if in it. It was only in so far as his children took heed to walk before God in truth that God was bound to place them on the throne of Israel; therefore he urged Solomon to keep the charge of the Lord, that the Lord might continue his word. We also must obey the threefold condition if we would enjoy a continuance of God's helpful care.

1. BE THOU STRONG. The strength which is in Jesus Christ waits to make us strong. In the Lion of the tribe of Judah there is the boldness which will not swerve in the face of the foe. Timid women and little children in the days of persecution have waxed valiant in the fight, and have not flinched from death, because Jesus was beside them.

2. KEEP THE CHARGE OF THE LORD THY GOD. He has committed to our care many a sacred deposit, in return for our deposit with Him (2 Tim. 1: 12, 14; R.V., marg.). They are his holy Gospel, the Rest Day, the doctrines of the Evangelical Faith, and the Inspired Word. Let us watch them until we see them weighed out in the temple as were the sacred vessels which Ezra committed to the priests for transport across the desert (Ezra 8:33).

3. KEEP HIS STATUTES AND COMMANDMENTS. We must obey with reverent care the one great law of love, which includes all the rest. Acting thus, we shall put ourselves in the way of enjoying a continuance of that favour which God has promised.

使耶和華成就向我所應許的話。 王上二4(另譯)

大衛何等緊緊抓著神的應許！這應許深深刻在他心裡。他怎能忘記那承諾保證他的家族不斷接續坐在以色列王位的話。同時，他明確認識到這應許的實現是有條件的。這裡有一個「若」(4節)。只要他的子孫謹慎誠實行在神面前，神就照著應許把他們放在以色列的王位上；所以他勉勵所羅門遵守耶和華所吩咐的，使耶和華可以成就祂的應許。如果我們要繼續享有神的眷顧，就必須遵從這三重的條件。

1. **當剛強**(2節)。在耶穌基督裡面的力量，等著要剛強我們。在猶大支派的獅子[耶穌]裡面，有著在敵人面前不閃躲的勇敢。因著耶穌在身旁，膽怯的婦人和小孩，在被迫害日子的爭戰中變得英勇(來十一34)，在死亡面前不退縮。

2. **遵守耶和華你的神所吩咐的**(3節)。祂交給我們許多神聖的託付，來回應我們所交託祂的(提後一12)。祂的託付就是：祂神聖的福音、主日、基督信仰的教義、以及祂所默示的話[聖經]。讓我們看守神所託付的，直到看見它們在神殿中都過了秤，好像以斯拉將搬運越過沙漠的聖潔器皿過秤交給祭司一樣(拉八33)。

3. **謹守祂的律例、誠命**(3節)。我們必須以虔敬的心遵守那一條最大的、愛的律法，這愛的誠命包括一切其餘的律法。這麼做，我們就能繼續蒙受神所應許的恩惠。

I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked. 1 Kings 3 : 13

The understanding heart was Solomon's supreme request, and it was given him before the morning light had broken over Jerusalem. But God did exceeding abundantly beyond what he asked or thought. Riches and honour, victory and long life, were thrown in as part of the divine gift; as paper and string are given by the tradesmen with the goods we purchase. It seems as though our Lord's words were anticipated, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST. One of the most important lessons of life is to discern the relative value of the objects within our reach. The child will take the handful of glass beads, and leave the heap of diamonds in the rough. It is the terrible mistake of men that, perplexed by earth's cross-lights, they put evil for good and good for evil; they make earth rather than heaven their centre; time rather than eternity their measurement.

SEEK GOD AND ALL THINGS IN HIM. Things without God cannot satisfy the craving of the soul. To know God, and to be known by Him, is to possess all things. All that is lovely, strong, or right, in any human being was in the Creator before it entered the creature; having God, you possess all things in Him.

BE MORE CAREFUL OF WHAT YOU ARE THAN WHAT YOU HAVE. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth; but in his purity, truth, tenderness, and the properties of his soul. The fruit of the Spirit must ever be manifest in the life of the believer--"Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

你所沒有求的，我也賜給你。 王上三13

聰明智慧的心是所羅門最大的願望，在耶路撒冷的曙光顯露以先，神就賜給了他。神賜給他的，極其豐富，超過他所求所想的。富足、尊榮、得勝與長壽也成為神聖禮物的一部分；就如店家隨著我們購買的物品，附加的包裝紙和繩子。看來就像我們主的話提前支付的：「你們要先求祂的國和祂的義，這些東西都要加給你們了。(太六33)」

以首要的事為優先。人生最重要的功課之一，乃是分辨我們所能取得之物的相對價值。一個孩子可能抓起一把玻璃珠，卻放下一堆未加工的鑽石。人所犯的可怕錯誤，就是被地上不同的見解所困惑，而把好的當成壞的，把壞的當成好的；他們以屬地的事而非屬天的事作為中心；以有限的時間而非永恆作為衡量的標準。

尋求神和在祂裡面的一切。沒有神在其中的事物，都不能滿足人的心。認識神，並被神所認識，就擁有一切。所有在人裡面可愛的、剛強的、正當的事，在進入受造物之前，都在造物主裡面；有了神，你就擁有在祂裡面的一切。

要留心你所是的勝過你所有的。一個人的生命並不在於他擁有許多東西；而是在於他的純潔、真誠、溫柔、以及他靈魂的特質。聖靈的果子必須顯在信徒的生命中——「仁愛、喜樂、和平、忍耐、恩慈、良善、信實、溫柔、節制。(加五22-23)」

Largeness of heart. 1 Kings 4: 29

We must all admit that our soul is too narrow. It holds too little, knows too little, is deficient in will-power, and, above all, in capacity of love; and when we are called to run in the way of God's commandments, we break down in despair, and cry, "If I am to be a runner, Thou must first enlarge my heart."

How little we know of the experience which Madame Guyon describes when she says: "This vastness or enlargedness, which is not bounded by anything, increases every day; so that my soul in partaking of the qualities of her Spouse seems also to partake of his immensity."

"There is," remarks one of the old Puritans, "a straitness, slavery, and narrowness, in all sin; sin crumples up our souls; which, if they were freely spread abroad, would be as large and wide as the whole universe. No man is truly free; but he that hath his will enlarged to the extent of God's will, by loving whatsoever God loves, and nothing else, he enjoys boundless liberty, and a boundless sweetness." God's love embraces the universe. He "so loved the world that He gave his only-begotten Son." We who have partaken of the divine nature must also love as He does.

Thomas à Kempis says, finally: "He who desires glory in things outside of God, or to take pleasure in some private good, shall many ways be encumbered and straitened; but if heavenly grace enter in, and true charity, there will be no envy, neither narrowness of heart, neither will self-love busy itself, for divine charity overcometh all things, and enlargeth all the powers of the soul." Give unto us, O God, this largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore!

廣大的心。 王上四29

我們全都必須承認我們的心太狹小了。我們的心容納的少，知道的少，意志力不足，尤其愛的度量不足；當我們蒙召在神誠命的道路上奔跑時，我們在絕望中崩潰並呼叫：「如果我要成為一個奔跑的人，你必須先擴大我的心。」

我們幾乎不太認識蓋恩夫人[註1]所描述的經歷：「這種遼闊或擴大，不受任何限制，每天都在增加，所以我的心分享著她[我的心]良人的特質，就好像分享著祂的無限。」

一個年長的清教徒講論說：「在所有罪裡都有狹窄、奴役和狹隘；罪壓垮我們的心；我們的心若自由往外擴展，將如宇宙般寬廣。沒有人是真正自由，但人的意志藉著愛神所愛，而不愛其他的，被擴大到神意志的程度，他就能享有無限的自由和無限的甜美。」神的愛擁抱全人類。祂「愛世人，甚至將祂的獨生子賜給他們。」我們既與神的性情有分，就必須像祂一樣去愛(彼後一4,7)。

金碧士[註2]最後說：「人愛慕在神之外其他事物的榮耀，或以自己的良善為樂，必多方受到拖累且變狹窄；但如果天上的恩典與真正的仁慈進入心中，就不會有嫉妒，不會有狹隘，不會因自愛忙碌，因為屬神的仁慈勝過所有事物，並擴大所有心裡的力量。」神哪！賜我們廣大的心，如同海邊的沙不可測量(29節)。

[註1] 蓋恩夫人，**Madame Guyon**, 1648-1717, 法國平信徒，因基督信仰坐牢25年。一生注重與耶穌活的禱告交通。她的著作《簡易祈禱法》對後世影響甚廣。她的傳記《馨香的沒藥》可以看出她靈命的成熟，數世紀以來並不多見。

[註2] 金碧士，**Thomas à Kempis**, 1380-1471, 德國修道士，古典名著《效法基督》的作者。

Now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side. 1 Kings 5 : 4

God is the Rest-Giver. When He surrounds us on every side with his protecting care, so that our life resembles one of the cities of the Netherlands in the great war--inaccessible to the foe because surrounded by the waters of the sea, admitted through the sluice--then neither adversary nor evil occurrent can break in, and we are kept in perfect peace, our minds being stayed on God.

*Hidden in the hollow of his blessed hand,
Never foe can enter, never traitor stand.*

Have you experienced the rest which comes by putting God round about you, on every side--like the light which burns brightly on a windy night because surrounded by its four panes of clear glass? Ah! what a contrast between the third and fourth verse: Wars on every side; Rest on every side. And yet the two are compatible, because the wars expend themselves on God, as the waves on the shingle; and there are far reaches of rest within, like orchards and meadows and pasture-lands beyond the reach of the devastating water.

Out of such rest should come the best work. We are not surprised to find Solomon announcing his purpose to build a house unto the name of the Lord. Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus, anointed Him. Out of quiet hearts arise the greatest resolves; just as from the seclusion of country hamlets have come the greatest warriors, statesmen, and patriots. Men think, foolishly, that the active, ever-moving souls are the strongest. It is not so, however. They expend themselves before the day of trial comes. Give me those who have the power to restrain themselves and wait; these are they that can act with the greatest momentum in the hour of crisis.

現在耶和華我的神使我四圍平安。 王上五4

神是賜平安者。當祂以祂的保護四圍環繞我們，以致我們的生命如在大戰中荷蘭諸城一樣 — 仇敵無法接近，因為四周被海圍繞，只能從水門進入 — 所以既無仇敵也無惡者能闖入，我們被保守在全然的平安中，我們的心思得以停留在神身上。

藏身於祂的聖手中，
仇敵不能進入，叛逆者也無法站立。

你是否經歷過那安息？是來自將神擺在你的周圍 — 就如在狂風的夜裡，明亮燃燒著的火光被四塊透明玻璃板所圍繞。啊！在第3節與第4節之間有著多麼強烈的對比：一個是四圍爭戰；一個是四圍平安。但這兩者卻是相容的，因為戰爭耗盡其力在神身上，正如海浪拍打岸邊的卵石灘；在裡面的遠處有平靜的區域 — 有果園、草地、牧場，這些地方都在海水的破壞力所能及的範圍以外。

從這樣的平安來的才是最美好的工作。我們並不驚奇聽見所羅門宣告要為耶和華的名建殿。安坐在耶穌腳前的馬利亞用香膏抹祂。從安靜的心中，產生最大的決心；好像最偉大的戰士、政治家、和愛國志士來自與世隔絕的小村落。人們愚蠢地認為，活躍不停的人是最強有力的。事實並非如此。他們在審判日來到之前就耗盡了。我寧願那有自制力並等候的人，他們在危機時刻才最有能力行動。

There was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard. 1 Kings 6: 7

In absolute silence, like the growth of a palm in the desert, that noble building arose in the symmetry of its fair proportions. But there was plenty of quarrying and hammering and chiselling before the materials were brought to the site.

The absolute silence with which the Temple rose is a meet emblem of the progress of the Church, from its foundations laid in the Apostolate towards the top stone, which before very long will be laid upon the completed structure. Amid the rise and fall of dynasties and empires, the Church is being built. Soul after soul, as so many added bricks, is being quietly placed upon the walls. Some day the world will be amazed when it sees the New Jerusalem descend out of heaven from God. The mightiest works of God are the fruit of silence.

You and I are now in the quarry, hewn, chipped, chiselled: or are we in the saw-pit, being sawn, planed, pierced by nails. Be of good cheer! It will not be long, the preparatory work will be over, and we shall become part of the eternal structure. Into heaven there can enter neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron. The trial will have done its work. Sorrow and crying will flee away. The apostle Paul, who knew more than any man what trial and pain meant, could confidently declare: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Then shall the city of God shine forth in completed beauty, her walls Salvation and her gates Praise; and the triumphant song of the redeemed shall ring forth: "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

鎚子、斧子、和別樣鐵器的響聲都沒有聽見。 王上六7

如同棕櫚樹在全然靜默中生長在沙漠裡，那高貴的建築，按著美麗的比例，勻稱地興建起來。但在所有材料被帶到工地之前，有許多採石、鎚擊與鑿刻的工作。

在全然靜默中興起的聖殿，恰當地象徵教會的進展，從使徒奠立的根基，到很久以後要安放在整個結構上的頂石。在王朝與帝國興衰之間，教會正在被建造。信徒一個接著一個，就如許多加上的石材被靜靜地砌在牆上。有一天，當世人看見從神那裡由天而降的新耶路撒冷時，將要驚訝。神最偉大的工程，竟然是靜默的產物。

你我現今在礦石場，經歷被劈開、削切、鑿刻的過程：或許我們正在鋸木坑裡，被鋸開、刨平、釘上釘子。要振作起來！不必太久，這準備的工作就要結束，而我們就要成為這永恆建築的一部分。鎚子、斧頭或任何鐵器都不能進入天庭。試煉將完成它的工作。悲傷與哭泣將消失。使徒保羅比任何人更了解何為試煉與痛苦，他自信地宣告說：「我想現在的苦楚，若比起將來要顯於我們的榮耀，就不足介意了。(羅八18)」神的城必發出全然美麗的光輝，她「救恩」的城牆與「讚美」的城門；以及蒙救贖之人得勝的歌聲必響亮唱出：「但願頌讚、尊貴、榮耀、權勢，都歸給坐寶座的和羔羊，直到永永遠遠！（啟五13）」

In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them. 1 Kings 7: 46

The Apostle tells us to obey from the heart that mould or form of doctrine to which we were delivered (Rom. 6: 17). What a mould is to the metal which is wrought into various forms of utensils, that the form of sound doctrine is to believers who desire to resemble Christ. When our hearts, melted in contrition and penitence, are poured into the teaching of the Apostles, to ponder it in memory, and to carry it out in life, they are, so to speak, cast into the pattern of Jesus Christ, which they wear for evermore. Thus we are conformed to the image of his Son.

We differ as widely as the vessels named here. Some are lavers, and some bases; some shovels, and some basons. It matters little what shape we bear; so long as we are cleansed and meet for the Master's use. Each vessel in Solomon's temple filled its own niche. The machinery of the whole would have been hindered if one had been missing. Be content with the shape which the Great Designer hath intended for thee. Yield to it. Dare to pour thyself into the dark passages of the mould. Do not ask the intention of this or that. Obey from the heart, otherwise thou mayest have to be broken up, and put back again into the furnace to go through the process once more. This is the Plain of the Jordan for us, the place of death; but soon we shall be remitted to the Palace and Temple of God.

There is no clue to the understanding of the mysteries of our mortal life, save the hypothesis, that we are being prepared for the position which has been prepared for us in the eternal world. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

是遵王命在約但平原鑄成的。 王上七46

使徒告訴我們要從心裡順從所傳給我們道理的模範[羅六17,這裡「模範」按原文可譯作模具、模子]。模具對金屬而言，是用來使金屬被鑄成各種不同的器具，健全的教導對「渴慕像基督」的信徒也是一種塑造的模具。當我們的心在憂傷痛悔中熔化，被澆注在使徒的教導中，在記憶中默想並在生活中實行，他們就如同被鑄成耶穌基督的樣式，永遠穿戴基督。如此我們便與祂兒子的形像相合了(羅八29直譯)。

我們彼此的差異要比這裡提及的器皿之間的差異更大。有些是盆，有些是底座；有些是鏟，有些是盤子。我們是什麼形狀不是那麼重要，只要我們是潔淨的並合乎主用。所羅門的聖殿中每個器皿都有自己合適的位置，如果缺少一個，就會妨礙整體的運作。你要滿足於那位偉大的設計者所命定給你的形狀。順服祂的定意，勇敢地把自己澆注入模具的黑暗通道中。不要詢問或這或那的意圖，你要從心裡順從，以免被打碎放入熔爐再次經過模塑的過程。這就是我們的「約但平原」，死亡之地；但不久之後，我們將被送入王宮和神的殿。

我們無法解釋人生的奧秘，除非設定這個前提：我們正為著永恆世界中為我們所預備的角色受裝備。「並且我們曉得萬事都互相效力，叫愛神的人得益處。(羅八28)」

That He maintain the cause of his servant, as every day shall require. 1 Kings 8:59 (R.V.)

The marginal (R.V.) reading is, "The thing of a day in its day." What rest would come into our lives, if we really believed that God maintained the cause of his servants! Men hate you, and say unkind or untrue things about you; on your part, though you are quite prepared to admit that you have made mistakes, yet you know that you desire above all things to act as God's servant should, that your motives are sincere, and your hands clean--be of good courage then: God will maintain your cause, as every day may require.

Or, you are beset by strong competition; and, in order to hold your own, you have been tempted to do what is not perfectly the best--to spice your teaching with a little heterodoxy, puff your wares with misleading titles, to adulterate your goods. But there is no need to do this; if only you are faithful to God, He will maintain your cause, as every day may require.

Or, you are tempted almost beyond endurance, and think that you must yield. The seductions are so insidious, the pitfalls so carefully concealed, the charm of evil so subtle. But, if you will only look away to God, you will find Him a very present help to maintain your cause. Oh, trust Him; for none of them that do so can be so desolate. Daily strength for daily need; daily manna for daily hunger; daily maintenance for daily temptation. These are assured.

As we stand on the hill-top in the morning and look across the valley of the coming day, its scenes are too closely veiled in heavy-hanging mists for us to specify all our requests. We can breathe the comprehensive petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." And God will suit his help to each requirement. As the moment arrives "the thing" will be there.

願... 神... 每日為他僕人... 伸冤。 王上八59 [「伸冤」或譯作「維護義理」]

如果我們真相信神為祂的僕人伸冤，我們的生命將會有何等的安息！人恨你，說許多關你的事，冷酷不實；在你這方面，即便你已預備好來承認所犯的錯，但是你知道你最渴望的是：做神僕人所當做的事，就是動機誠摯，雙手清潔(詩廿四3-4) — 那麼，你就當剛強壯膽；神必按著每日的需要為你伸冤。

或者你被強烈的爭競包圍，為了維護你的權益，你被誘惑去做那不是完美上好的事 — 在你的教導中添加一點偏頗，用誤導的標題來吹捧你的物品，或是在你的貨品中摻假。其實沒有必要這樣做，只要你對神忠誠，祂必每日為你伸冤。

或者你受到的誘惑幾乎過於你所能承受的，使你以為必須屈服。那誘惑是如此陰險，陷阱被小心掩飾，邪惡的魔力如此狡猾。但是只要你轉臉仰望神，就會發現祂是隨時的幫助，來維護你的義理。哦，信靠祂吧！因為沒有一個這樣做的人會孤單淒慘。每日所需的力量、每日饑餓所需的嗎哪、每日承受誘惑所需的扶持，這些都是確實得到保證的。

當我們早晨站在山頂眺望要來這一天的山谷，那場景被濃霧深深籠罩，以致我們無法詳細描述所有的需求。我們可以低聲發出那綜合的祈求：「我們日用的飲食，今日賜給我們。(太六11, 路十一3)」神必按著每一個需要提供合適的幫助。當那一刻來臨時，「所需的那一件」就會在那裡。

I have hallowed this house which thou hast built. 1 Kings 9: 3

Man builds; God hallows. This co-operation between man and God pervades all life. Man performs the outward and mechanical; God the inward and spiritual. Paul plants, Apollos waters; but God gives the increase. We elaborate our sermons and addresses, building them up with careful, eager thought; but God must work in and through them for his own glory in the salvation and upbuilding of souls. We must be careful to do our part with reverence and godly fear, remembering that God must work in realms we cannot touch, and to issues we cannot reach, before our poor exertions can avail.

May we not apply this especially to the education of a child's life ? Many who read these lines are engaged in building structures which will outlive the Pyramids. The body is only the scaffolding, behind and through which the building of the soul is being upreared. The materials with which we build may be the gold, silver, and precious stones, of our example, precept, careful watching, and discipline; but God must come in to hallow. Our strenuous endeavour must be supplemented by the incoming of the Holy Spirit.

God hallows by his indwelling. Holiness is the result of his putting his Name into a place, a day, a human soul; for his Name is his nature, Himself. Each day may be a building, reared between sunrise and sunset, with our activities; but it were vain to hope to realize our ideal unless the structure become a Temple filled with God. Build what you will; but never be satisfied unless God sets his eyes and heart upon your life, hallowing and sanctifying each day and act to Himself.

我已將你所建的這殿分別為聖。 王上九3

人建造，神分別為聖。這種神與人之間同工的原則普及所有的人。人做外在和機械性的工作；神做內在和靈性的工作。保羅栽種了，亞波羅澆灌了，唯有神叫他生長(林前三6)。我們在證道和講章上費盡心思，用謹慎而迫切的思考來構建這些講章；但神必須為著祂自己的榮耀，在這些話語裡面，藉著這些話語做工，來拯救並建立靈魂。我們必須懷著虔誠與敬畏的心(來十二28)，小心做我們這一份，謹記我們微弱的努力對人有所裨益之前，神必須在我們無法觸及的領域與無法構到的議題上動工。

難道我們不可以把這個原則特地應用在孩童生命的教育上嗎？很多讀到這些文字的人，正在從事建立比金字塔更久存的結構。身體不過是鷹架[建築房屋所搭的臨時架子]，使靈魂藉它得以被建立。我們建造所用的材料可能是金、銀、寶石(林前三12)，就是用我們的榜樣、訓誡、細心看顧、以及管教；但神必須進來使之分別為聖。我們艱苦的努力必須聖靈進來才能補足。

神藉著祂的內住來分別為聖。聖別是因著神在某一個地方、某一天、或某一個人身上，立了祂名產生的結果；因為祂的名就是祂的本性、就是祂自己。每天都可能有一建築，用我們從日出到日落之間的活動來建造；但除非那結構成為被神充滿的聖殿，否則就不要希望它能實現我們的理想。照你所願的建造吧，但若非神將祂的眼、祂的心放在你的生命中(3節)，將每一天及每一個行動都分別為聖，就永遠不要感到滿意。

Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee. 1 Kings 10: 9

There were two reasons why Solomon was on the throne. First, because of God's love to him; secondly, because of God's love to Israel. May we not address our Saviour with similar expressions of gladness as those which the queen addressed to a less than He?

How well it is, now and again, to let ourselves go in exuberant adoration! Prayer is good, but it may revolve too largely about our own needs and desires: thanks are right, when we have received great benefits at his hands; but praise is best, because the heart forgets itself and earth and time, in enlarged conceptions of its adorable Lover and Saviour.

We are reminded in this connection of a noble hymn by old John Ryland:

*Thou Son of God, and Son of Man,
Beloved, adored Emmanuel,
Who didst, before all time began,
In glory with thy Father dwell:*

*We sing thy love, who didst in time,
For us, humanity assume,
To answer for the sinner's crime,
To suffer in the sinner's room.*

*The ransomed Church thy glory sings,
The hosts of heaven thy will obey;
And, Lord of lords, and King of kings,
We celebrate thy blessed sway.*

We can never praise Him enough. Our furthest thoughts fall short of the reality. His wisdom and prosperity exceed his fame. No question He cannot answer; no desire He cannot gratify; no munificence He cannot excel. Happy are they who stand continually before Him. Let us see that this is our happy privilege; not content to pay Him a transient visit, returning to our own land, but communing with Him always of that which is in our heart.

耶和華你的神是應當稱頌的，祂喜悅你。 王上十9

所羅門作王有兩個原因。第一，因為神愛他；第二，因為神愛以色列(9節)。難道我們不應該對我們的救主表達同樣的喜悅，如同示巴女王對一個比祂微小的人所表達的嗎(6-9節)？

當我們偶爾讓自己進入熱情洋溢的崇拜中，那是多麼美好！禱告是好的，但禱告可能多半繞著我們自己的需要與渴求運轉；當我們從祂手中領受恩惠，向神表達感謝是正當的；但讚美才是上好的，因為人的心在對所愛慕的良人和救主加大的思想中，忘卻了自我、忘卻了時間及空間。

這使我們想起老約翰·李蘭[註] 一首高貴的聖詩：

你是神子，也是人子，
受愛戴尊崇的以馬內利，
你在創世以先，
在榮耀中與父神同在。

我們歌頌你的愛，
在時間裡，為了我們，取了人的樣式，
來擔當人的罪，
站在罪人的地位受苦。

被贖的教會頌讚你的榮耀，
天使天軍遵行你的旨意；
萬王之王，萬主之主，
我們歡慶你神聖的統治。

我們對祂的讚美永遠都是不夠的。我們最深遠的思想仍然構不到祂實際的情形。祂的智慧 and 昌盛超過祂的名聲(7節)。沒有一個問題祂不能回答(3節)；沒有一個願望祂不能滿足；沒有一個慷慨大方祂不能超越(5節)。那些持續侍立在祂面前的人是有福的(8節)。但願我們明白這是我們有福的特權；不要僅止於匆匆拜訪祂一下，就又回到自己的地方，總要將我們心上的事向祂傾訴。

[註] 老約翰·李蘭 Rev. John Ryland Sr. D.D., 1753-1825, 英國浸禮會差會 Baptist Missionary Society 創始人之一。他曾為近代海外宣道先驅克理威廉 William Carey 施洗。

His wives turned away his heart. 1 Kings 11:4

Every man is vulnerable at one point of his character. Strong everywhere else, and armoured, he is weak there; and our great enemy knows just where to strike home. It would have been useless to argue with Solomon for the claims of idols. He could at once, by his wisdom, have annihilated all infidel arguments, and have established the existence and unity of God. But, step by step, he was led by silken cords, a captive, to the worship of other gods. It is a solemn warning; and Nehemiah was perfectly justified when, in his contention with the Jews who had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab, he said, "Did not Solomon, king of Israel, sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him who was beloved of his God."

Let young people beware where they let their hearts go forth in love. Whom we love we resemble; and in the marriage tie it is almost inevitable that seductions to the lower will overcome the drawings to the higher. When a Christian disobeys God's distinct command against intermarriage with the ungodly, he begins to sink to the level of his ungodly partner whom he had thought to raise to his own religious standing.

Our associates determine the drift and current of our life. It is so easy to launch upon the current that flows past our feet; it seems impossible that the laughing, enticing water should ever carry us against sharp, splintering rocks, or over breaking cataracts. When we are compelled to associate with the ungodly, let us maintain a strict self-watch, and pray that the breath of the heavenward gale may more than counteract the tendency of the earthward current.

他的妃嬪使他的心偏離。 王上十一4(直譯)

每個人在他的性格上都有個弱點。其他方面都很剛強，好像披上了盔甲，但在那個點上卻是軟弱；而我們的大仇敵知道哪裡可以擊中要害。與所羅門為偶像的權利爭論，肯定是徒勞的。他可以立刻憑藉他的智慧將這些異教爭論徹底擊潰，並且立論神是存在且是獨一的。但是，一步一步地，他被輕柔的繩索牽引成為俘虜，去拜別的神。這是一個嚴肅的警告；尼希米的話完全有理，當他在對付那些娶亞實突人、亞捫人、摩押人為妻的猶太人時，他說：「以色列王所羅門不是在這樣的事上犯罪麼？在列國中並沒有一王像他，且蒙他神所愛。(尼十三23-26)」

年輕人要提防自己的心在愛情上走向何處。我們愛誰就會像誰；在婚姻的關係中，受引誘往低處的趨勢遠勝過被拉拔到高處去，這幾乎是必然的。當一個基督徒違抗神明確的命令，與不敬神的人結婚，他就開始下沉到他不敬神之伴侶的水平，儘管他原本想要將他的配偶提升到自己信仰的立場。

我們的夥伴決定我們生命漂流的方向。在漫過我們腳的水流中行走是何等容易；那嬉笑、引誘人的水看起來不可能把我們沖向鋒利、劈裂人的岩石，或將我們沖下令人粉身碎骨的瀑布。當我們被迫與不敬神的人作伴時，讓我們保持嚴格的自我警覺，並要禱告使那吹向天上強風氣流，勝過朝地方向的潮流。

The month which he had devised of his own heart. 1 Kings 12: 33

Jeroboam acted on expediency. It did seem reasonable to argue that the constant going up to Jerusalem to worship might alienate the people from his throne, and awaken a desire for the old national unity; and without doubt a mere worldly wisdom extolled his setting-up of idol-gods at Bethel and Dan; but his policy in this respect led to the downfall of his kingdom. Had he trusted God's promise, made through the prophet Ahijah, the Divine purpose would have ensured the continuance of his rule; but the prompting of expediency resulted in ultimate disaster (ch. 14).

How prone we all are to devise out of our own hearts! We take counsel with ourselves, and do what seems prudent and far-seeing, with the inevitable result of being betrayed into courses of action that God cannot approve, and of which we have reason to repent bitterly. It is infinitely better to wait on God till He develops his plan, as He most certainly will, when the predestined hour strikes. He who trusts in his own heart, and takes his own way, is a fool. To run before God is to sink knee-deep into the swamp. We must make all things after the pattern shown us on the Mount, and take our time from God's almanack. What a contrast to the course of Jeroboam was that of the Son of Man! He would do nothing of Himself. His eye was always on His Father's dial-plate, and thus He knew when his time was not yet fulfilled. He was always consulting the movement of his Father's will, and did only those things which He saw his Father doing. Similarly make God's will and way thy Pole-star. Oh to be able to say with our blessed Lord, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."!

他私自所定的月日。 王上十二33

耶羅波安按著自己的利益行動。繼續上到耶路撒冷去敬拜，可能會使百姓與他的王位疏離，或可能會喚起從前國家統一的渴望，這個理由辯解看起來是合理的；僅僅屬世的智慧也會毫無疑問稱讚他在伯特利和但設立偶像；然而他在這方面的策略卻導致他王國的滅亡。如果他相信神藉著先知亞希雅所發出的應許(王上十一29-38)，神的意旨定能保證他持續統治；但是私利的催促，導致了最後的災難(十四章)。

我們每個人都何等容易在心裡私自籌劃！我們自己籌算，作那看似精明、有遠見的事，卻不可避免地導致我們被出賣，陷入神不稱許的行為中，在這一點上我們理應痛切悔改。等候神，直到祂顯示祂的計畫，這是好得無比的，因為當祂預定的時間一到，祂必定顯示祂的計畫。心中自是、偏行己路的，便是愚昧人(箴廿八26, 十二15)。跑在神的前頭就必陷入及膝的泥沼。我們必須照著在山上指示我們的樣式作一切的物件(出廿五40)，並按神所定的日子行事。耶羅波安的道路與人子[耶穌]的道路有何等大的不同！祂不憑自己作什麼。祂始終定睛在父的錶盤上，所以祂知道何時祂的時間還沒有到。祂一直在求問父旨意的動向，並且看見父作什麼事，祂才作什麼事(約五19)。同樣，要將神的旨意和道路作為你指示方向的北極星。但願我們能夠同可稱頌的主一起說：「我不求自己的意思，只求那差我者的意思。(約五30)」！

Forasmuch as thou hast been disobedient but camest back. 1 Kings 13:21, 22 (R.V.)

We are inclined at first sight to pity this unknown prophet, and to justify his return; but as we look closer into the story, we not only discover the reason for the severe penalty that overtook him, but we are warned lest we make a similar mistake. When we have received a direct command fresh from the lips of Christ, we must act on it, and not be turned aside by a different suggestion, made to us through the lips of professing Christians. God does not vacillate or alter in the thing which proceeds from his mouth. When we know we are in the line of his purpose, we must not allow ourselves to be diverted by any appeal or threat, from whomsoever it may emanate. Deal with God at first-hand.

The rule for determining the true worth of the advice which our friends proffer us, is to ask, first, whether it conflicts with our own deep-seated conviction of God's will; and, secondly, whether it tends to the ease and satisfaction of the flesh, as the old prophet's suggestion certainly did. Beware of any one who allures you with the bread and water that are to break your fast. That bait is likely enough to disturb the balance of your judgment. When a voice says spare thyself, be on the alert; it savours the things that be of man, not of those that be of God.

Learn to deal with God at first-hand. Do not run hither and thither to human teachers, or to the Church. Be still before God, and what He says in the depths of thy soul, do. His Holy Spirit shall guide you into all truth; and when once his way has been revealed to thee, go straight on, listening to no other voice, however much it professes Divine inspiration.

你既違背 ...，反倒回來。 王上十三21-22

我們傾向在乍看之下同情這位不知名的神人，認為他的返回合理，而為他辯護；但當我們更仔細看這個故事，我們不但發現嚴厲懲罰突然臨到他的原因，而且我們也受到警告，免得犯下類似的錯誤。當我們直接從基督親口領受了命令，我們就必須照著行，不可因著自稱是基督徒的人，提出不同的建議，而偏離神的命令。神不會搖擺不定，或更改從祂口中所出的話。當我們知道我們在神旨意的路線上，我們就絕不能讓自己因引誘或威脅而改變方向，無論這些出自何人。你要直接與神打交道。

判定我們朋友提供建議的真正價值，其法則是：首先要問，這建議與在我們自己裡面對神旨意根深蒂固的信念是否有衝突；其次，這建議是否有助於使我們的肉體得舒適與滿足，正如那老先知的建議確實達到的。你要當心任何人拿著餅和水來誘惑你，叫你中斷禁食。那樣的誘餌足可擾亂你判斷的平衡。當有聲音叫你寬待自己時，就要警惕；它體貼人的意思，不體貼神的意思(太十六23)。

要學習與神有直接的來往。不要東奔西跑找老師，或找教會。要安靜在神面前，祂在你內心深處所說的，你就去做。祂的聖靈要引導你進入一切的真理(約十六13)；一旦祂的路顯明給你，你就要向前直行，不聽從任何其他的声音，不論它宣稱多麼有神的靈感。

I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. 1 Kings 14: 6

How foolish! Jeroboam thought that the old prophet could penetrate the veil that hid the future, but not the disguise in which his wife wished to conceal herself. As we might have expected, the aged prophet's inner sight read her heart. From God no secrets are hid. Immediately on his accosting her by her name there came the dread announcement of inevitable disaster.

We must not hesitate to unfold all the consequences of sin. As watchmen on the walls, we are bound to tell men of the certain fearful looking for of fiery indignation which shall devour the transgressors. None of us should flinch from declaring the whole counsel of God. We should specially insist on the guilt side of sin. Not only that it is a misfortune, a mistake, an error, a disease, a tyranny; but a crime. The sinner is a criminal, who has incurred the just wrath and anger of a holy God: for which he must suffer a due recompense.

Oh for more tenderness that we may with tears warn men of their doom! We are so self-possessed, so stolid; we need to ask that our eyes, like Jeremiah's, should be fountains of tears, that we might weep day and night. If the tidings are heavy, let us first feel their pressure on our own hearts; let us bend over the regions of despair and darkness, and hear the bitter weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and come back to warn our brethren, lest they also come to that place of torment. Though it was with fear and much trembling that Paul preached the Gospel, yet he did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. And while we go to men with the good tidings of salvation, we must not withhold the heavy tidings from those who persist in unbelief.

我奉差遣將凶訊告訴你。 王上十四6（新譯本）

何等愚蠢！耶羅波安以為年老的先知亞希雅，可以看穿那覆蓋未來的單紗，而不能識破他妻子想要隱瞞身分的改裝。正如我們已經可以預期的一樣，那位年邁先知裡面的眼光看出她的心事。沒有祕密向神是隱藏的。他以她的名字招呼她，緊接著就宣告那不能避免的可怕災禍。

我們必須毫不猶豫地揭示罪的一切後果。就像城牆上守望的警衛，我們有責任告訴眾人，那將要吞滅一切罪人，火般可怕的烈怒。我們不應該有人退縮，不宣告神完整的警告。我們應該特別強調罪疚感的一面。罪不僅僅是不幸、過失、錯誤、疾病、暴虐，更是罪行。罪人就是罪犯，招致聖潔的神公義的忿怒；為此他必要承受當得的報應。

但願我們有更多的溫柔，使我們能夠帶著淚水，警告世人他們的滅亡！我們是何等鎮定自若、感覺遲鈍；我們要求神使我們的眼睛像耶利米那樣，成為淚水的泉源，讓我們可以晝夜哭泣。如果是凶惡的訊息，讓我們首先在自己心中感受凶訊的壓力；讓我們俯身靠近絕望、黑暗的地帶，聽聽那痛苦的哭泣、哀嚎、切齒，再回來警告我們的弟兄，免得他們來到那痛苦的地方。儘管保羅是帶著恐懼戰兢傳講福音，但他從未迴避宣講神全部的警告。當我們將救恩的福音帶到人面前時，我們也應該不保留地向那些堅持不信的人講明這凶訊。

Asa did . . . , right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father. 1 Kings 15: 11

It is a great thing to have such a testimony as this. We may do right in our own eyes; yet the eye of the Lord may detect evil which neither our associates nor we have seen. We may deceive ourselves, we may deceive others; but we cannot deceive God. In the home or business, in situation or factory, let us live as under the searching gaze of God.

Asa's life was one of religious activity: he destroyed the idols of his father, and even deposed his queen-mother, "because she made an idol in a grove." It needs Divine courage so as to live for God that at home or afield men shall take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. This is what the world is languishing for--reality, consistency under all circumstances, and before all men.

There are, however, two clouds overhanging this otherwise bright life. "The high places were not removed" (14). Though idols were destroyed, the groves in which they were erected remained. They were no snare to him; and he took care that during his life they should not ensnare others; but after his death, in the reign of Jehoshaphat his son, "the people offered and burnt incense" in them (22: 43). We must not only cleanse our way before the Lord, but remove any evil thing which may cause others to stumble.

The other cloud is indicated in 2 Chron. 16: 12: "He was diseased in his feet Yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians." Strange that in affliction he should not have turned to the Great Physician. The enemy of souls is ever on the watch. Pray that amid the pains of death you may not act unworthily.

亞撒效法他祖大衛行耶和華眼中看為正的事。 王上十五11

有像這樣的見證是一件大事。我們可能作自己眼中看為正的事，然而主的眼睛可能查出罪惡，是我們的同伴或是我們都沒有看見的。我們可以騙自己，我們也可以騙別人；但我們騙不了神。在家裡或在生意上、在職場或在工廠，讓我們生活像在神鑒察的目光之下。

亞撒的生命有虔誠的活力：他毀壞他列祖所立的偶像，甚至貶了他祖母太后的位，「因她造了可憎的偶像亞舍拉。(13節)」這需要神所賜的勇氣，使我們為神而活，無論在家中還是離家在外，人都知道我們是與耶穌一致的。這正是世界所渴望的——在一切環境中、在所有的人面前真實與堅定可靠。

然而，有兩片烏雲懸掛在這原本光明的生命之上。「只是邱壇還沒有廢去(14節)」。儘管偶像被除去，但那立偶像的邱壇仍在。雖然邱壇並不成為亞撒的網羅；在他生前，他也留心不叫邱壇成為別人的網羅；但他死後，在他兒子約沙法執政的時候，「百姓仍在那裡獻祭燒香。(廿二43)」我們不僅必須潔淨自己在神面前的道路，也要除去一切可能造成別人跌倒的罪惡。

另一片烏雲記在歷代志下十六章12節：「他腳上有病，... 病的時候沒有求耶和華，只求醫生。」很不可思議，他在病痛中沒有轉向那位大醫生。靈魂的仇敵一直在緊盯著。你要祈求，使你在死亡的痛苦中不要行不當的事。

Ahab did more to provoke the Lord to anger than all the kings. 1 Kings 16: 33

His sin was very aggravated, largely through the influence of Jezebel, his young and beautiful wife, who introduced the abominations of Phoenician idol-worship. This is why he is said to have exceeded his predecessors in wickedness. They broke the second commandment, and worshipped Jehovah under the form of a calf. Ahab and Jezebel broke the first, and chose other gods--Baal, the sun, and Ashtoreth, the moon. The inveterate love for this idolatry was connected with licentious rites with which these deities were served. What wonder that the land became corrupt when the fountains of its religious life were polluted at the source?

The connection between the indulgence of impurity and the declension of spiritual life, is very close. As the apostle Paul tells us in Romans 1, the men that refuse to retain God in their knowledge are given up to the working of passion; and as they yield to passion they lose the sweet, clear impression of the truth and nearness of the Christ. The first, second, and third thing to be said to young people on venturing out into the world, corrupt through many deceitful lusts, is, Be pure. Wear the white flower of a blameless life. If you cannot be faultless, be blameless. If you cannot realize all the good you know, at least refrain from all the evil. Keep your robes unspotted from the world. Then through purity of heart and obedience in life, you shall see God. As the living Christ enters the heart, He will drive before Him the brute forms of evil, overthrow the tables of the money-changers, and will sit to teach of God. Give yourself unreservedly into his keeping, that He may govern and control every avenue of your life.

亞哈 ... 所行的惹耶和華 ... 的怒氣，比他以前的以色列諸王更甚。 王上十六33

亞哈的罪更加深重，主要是受他年輕美貌的妻子耶洗別影響，她引進腓尼基人可憎的偶像崇拜。這就是為什麼說他的惡行比他以前的列王更甚(30節)。以前的列王觸犯了第二條誡命，以牛犢的像當作耶和華敬拜。亞哈和耶洗別觸犯了第一條誡命，選擇拜別神——巴力就是日頭、亞斯他錄就是月亮。對偶像根深蒂固的迷戀，與祭祀這些神祇的淫蕩儀式有關。當信仰生活的源頭被污染時，地就變得敗壞，這有什麼好驚訝的呢？

縱容不潔與靈命衰退的關連是非常緊密的。正如使徒保羅在羅馬書一章26節告訴我們的，那些拒絕認識神的人，被棄絕任憑情慾驅使；而當他們順從情慾時，他們就失去了對真理甜美、清晰的印象，也失去基督的親近。當年輕人冒險進入這個因諸多欺騙人的情慾所腐化的世界時，給年輕人的第一、第二和第三告誡都是：要純潔。要穿戴那無暇生命的潔白花朵。如果你不能做到無瑕疵，至少要無可指摘。如果你不能實現你所知道的一切善事，至少要避免一切惡事。讓你的袍子不沾染世界的污穢。這樣，藉著心中的純潔和生命中的順從，你就必得見神(太五8)。當活的基督進入人的心，祂會驅走在祂面前各樣粗野的邪惡，推翻兌換銀錢之人的桌子(約二15)，然後坐下來教導關於神的事。你要將你自己毫無保留地交給祂管理，讓祂掌管你生命的每條道路。

I have commanded the ravens, . . . a widow woman . . . there. 1 Kings 17: 4, 9

WE MUST BE WHERE GOD DESIRES. Elijah spoke of himself as always standing before the Lord God of Israel. He deemed himself as much a courtier in the royal palace as Gabriel (Luke 1 : 19). And he could as distinctly stand before God when hiding beside Cherith, or sheltering in the widow's house at Zarephath, as when he stood erect on Carmel, or listened to the voice of God at Horeb. Wherever you go, and whatever ministry you are called to undertake, glory in this, that you never go to any greater distance from God.

If we are where God wants us to be, He will see to the supply of our need. It is as easy for Him to feed us by the ravens as by the widow woman. As long as God says, Stay here, or there, be sure that He is pledged to provide for you. Though you resemble a lonely sentinel in some distant post of missionary service, God will see to you. The ravens are not less amenable to his command than of old: and out of the stores of widow women He is as able to supply your need as He did Elijah's, at Zarephath.

How often God teaches best in seclusion and solitude! It is by the murmuring brooks of nature that we have our deepest lessons. It is in the homes of the poor that we are fitted for our greatest tasks. It is beside couches where children suffer and die, that we receive those preparations of the heart which avail us when the bugle note summons us to some difficult post.

GOD LEADS THROUGH DEATH TO LIFE It was needful that the child should die, that sin might be remembered and dealt with; but through Death's portal the trio entered a richer, fuller life. Fear not that gateway!

我已吩咐烏鴉在那裡 ... 我已吩咐那裡的一個寡婦 ... 。 王上十七4,9

我們必須在神要我們的地方。以利亞稱自己一直侍立在以色列的神耶和華面前。他認為自己是神宮殿裡的朝臣，如同加百列(路一19)。當他躲在基立溪旁，或藏在撒勒法的寡婦家中的時候，他仍然確實地站在神面前，正如他筆直站在迦密山上，或在何烈山聽見神聲音的時候。無論你往何處去，無論你被呼召從事何種事工，要以你永不遠離神為榮。

如果我們在神要我們停留的地方，祂會負責供應我們的需要。對祂而言，藉著烏鴉供養我們，就像藉著那個寡婦供養我們一樣容易。只要神說：停留在這裡、或在那裡，要確信祂保證要供應你。儘管你好像是宣教事工上偏遠地方一個孤單的哨兵，神會看顧你。烏鴉像古時一樣順從神的命令；祂能夠從寡婦的存糧供應你的需要，就像祂在撒勒法供應了以利亞的需要一樣。

神常在人隱退獨處時，作最美好的教導！在大自然溪流潺潺聲中，我們學到最深的功課。在窮苦人的家裡，我們為最重大的工作做準備。在孩子受苦死亡的床邊，我們的心接受預備，幫助我們在號角聲響呼召時，得以承擔某種艱難的工作。

神帶領經過死亡得生命。孩子的死是必要的，這樣罪會被想起來並被對付(18節)；但經過死亡的大門，這三個人[以利亞及寡婦母子]進入了更豐富、更完滿的生命。不要害怕那個通道！

So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel. 1 Kings 18: 42

Such differences obtain still. The children of this world and the children of light are manifest. What though the bodies of four hundred and fifty prophets lay slain in the gorge of the Kishon; or that by one great act Elijah had hewn down the upas tree, the deadly influence of which had corrupted Palestine; or that the long-expected rain was in the air--yet Ahab must eat and drink. These are the things which the children of the world seek after. Watch and pray, lest you enter into this temptation. Let appetite be kept well in hand--your servant, not your master; and see to it that you are capable of such profound and absorbing interest in the things of the Kingdom of God, as to count the gratification of physical desire unworthy to be compared with the high delights of service, prayer, and communion with the unseen.

Though he must have been exhausted with the excitements and efforts of the day, Elijah must spend the evening hour with God. Though he knew that the rain was near, he felt that his prayers were a needful condition for its bestowment. Though any part of Carmel might have become his oratory, he sought the lonely solitudes of the summit with the outspread sea before him, that his soul might hold undisturbed vigil, and that he might see over the wide expanse of the ocean the first tokens of the coming answer. His attitude denoted his humility. His repeated injunction to the lad, his perseverance. His success approved his faith.

Stand, O suppliant soul, on the highest point of expectant hope; see the hurrying answer, which was being prepared from pools and lakes and seas, long ere thy prayer began. "Before they call, I will answer."

亞哈就上去吃喝。以利亞上了迦密山頂。 王上十八42

這樣的區別依然普遍。這世界之子和光明之子的區別，是顯而易見的。儘管四百五十個巴力的先知在基順河峽谷被殺；儘管以利亞藉著一次偉大的舉動砍倒了那棵尤巴斯樹[一種毒樹，喻指拜巴力]，它致命的影響敗壞了巴勒斯坦地[即迦南地]；儘管長久期待的大雨即將到來 — 亞哈卻必須吃喝。吃喝就是世界之子所追求的事。你要儆醒禱告，免得入了迷惑(可十四38)。讓我們好好控制食慾 — 它是你的僕人，不是你的主人；要留心使你能深入專注於神國度的事，而以滿足身體的慾望不配與事奉、禱告及與神交通的喜樂相比。

儘管以利亞必然因這天的努力和興奮而精疲力竭，他卻一定要與神一起度過晚上的時間。儘管他知道大雨已經臨近，他卻感到他的禱告對於獲得神這一賜予[降雨]是必要的條件。儘管迦密山的每一處都可成為他的禱告室，他仍然尋找可以看見廣大海面、孤獨寂靜的山頂，使他的心可以儆醒不受打擾，使他可以越過遼闊的海面，看到即將要來之回應的第一個徵兆。以利亞的態度表現出他的謙卑。他對僕人重覆的命令，表現出他的堅持。他的成功表明他的信心。

懇求的人啊，要站在那期盼之希望的頂點；看那疾奔而來的回答，那是早在你的禱告開始之前，就從眾多的池、湖、海所預備好的。「他們尚未求告，我就應允。(賽六十五24)」

Behold, an angel touched him. 1 Kings 19: 5

IN all probability the angels often touch us when danger is near, threatening our health and life, or when foul fiends step up to us with hideous temptation. They find us out, especially when, like Elijah, we are alone and depressed; when nervous depression has crept about our hearts; when we seem to have failed in the conflict against evil, and long for death to end our long and weary strife. It was the lament of a holy soul on the verge of eternity, that he had made so little of the ministry of God's holy and tender angels.

It was very gracious for God to deal thus with his servant. We might have expected rebuke or remonstrance, chiding or chastisement; but we would hardly have expected such loving, gentle treatment as this. Is this the man who defied Ahab and all his priests? He is as frail and impotent as any! Nay, but God looked beneath the surface depression, and detected the strong fountains of courage and devotion that lay beneath, only capable of being called again into intense manifestation. He knew his servant's frame, and recognized that he was dust. He knew how to distinguish between the passing overstrain of the body and the heroic temper of the spirit. So, He understands us in our fits of depression and despair.

Whenever these angel-fingers touch you, whether directly or through the medium of loving mortal hands, you will always find the cake and the cruse of water. God never awakens to disappoint. It is an infinite pleasure to Him to awaken his loved ones to good things, which they had neither asked nor thought. Will not dying be something like this? The angel of life will touch us, and we shall awake to see what love has prepared.

有一個天使拍他。 王上十九5

當危險臨近，威脅我們的健康和生命時，或是當卑鄙的惡魔用可怕的誘惑來試探我們時，很可能常有天使拍我們。天使找到我們，特別是我們像以利亞這樣孤單沮喪時；當精神上的沮喪爬上我們心頭時；當我們好像已經在與罪惡的爭戰中失敗時，只求一死來結束我們漫長疲倦的爭戰。這是聖潔的人在靠近永世邊緣所發出的哀嘆，以致於他低估神聖潔溫柔天使的服事。

神是滿有恩慈地對待祂的僕人。我們可能預期祂會斥責或告誡，責備或懲罰；然而我們幾乎沒有預料到如此慈愛溫柔的對待。這是公然挑戰亞哈與他所有的祭司的那個人嗎？以利亞像常人一樣脆弱無力！然而在表面的沮喪之下，神看見埋在深層之勇氣和虔誠的強大泉源，只要再次被呼喚就能強烈顯現出來。祂知道祂僕人的本體，思念他不過是塵土(詩一〇三14)。祂知道如何區分身體短暫過度的勞累，與靈裡英勇的氣質。所以在我們沮喪和失望發作的時候，神理解我們。

每當天使的手指觸摸到你，不論是直接地觸摸或是藉著慈愛之人的手，你總會找到那餅和那罐水。神從來不喚醒你而讓你失望。喚醒祂心愛的人，給他們那些他們未曾祈求、未曾想過的美好事物，對神而言這是一件無限愉悅的事。死亡不就像這樣嗎？生命的天使將觸摸我們，我們必醒來並看見「愛」為我們所預備的。

As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. 1 Kings 20: 40

This was likely enough to happen on a battlefield. It would not be possible to hold your prisoner, and to busy yourself about other things at the same time. This man, in the prophet's parable, made a great mistake to concern himself about a number of trifles, when so serious a matter as his own life depended on giving all his attention to the custodianship of the prisoner entrusted to his care. But is it not thus that men miss the main end of life?

BUSY HERE AND THERE, AND LIFE IS GONE. Many spend their days in mere trivialities. Like children they dig in the sand; like the butterfly, they flit from flower to flower. A round of visits, a few novels, a good many hours of light gaiety; vanity, fashion, and amusement--these fill their hours, the days flash by, and life is gone. They have nothing to show for it.

BUSY HERE AND THERE, AND THE CHANCE OF SAVING OTHERS IS GONE. Lives touch lives, for the chief purpose that one should influence the other. But too often we deal only with superficialities, busying ourselves in the slightest interests, but not seeking the salvation of those with whom we associate. The dance, the game, the business relationship, monopolise our thought, and our friends are swept from us in the eddying whirl of life's battle, and are gone.

BUSY HERE AND THERE, AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS GONE. Remember how the birds caught away the seed of the Kingdom; and be sure that, in the same way, the cares and riches of this world, and the lusts of other things may enter in, and destroy the impression made on the heart. The ephemeral interests of life press hard on its real interests. Like boys, we squander in trifling the hours given to prepare for an examination on which all the future must turn.

僕人正在忙碌之間，那人就不見了。 王上二十40

這樣的事情很有可能在戰場上發生。你不可能同時一邊忙著其他的事，一邊看守你的囚犯。先知比喻裡的這個人，在像他自己性命這重大的事上，取決於他是否全力看守交給他的囚犯時，卻為著忙於一些瑣碎的事而犯下大錯。然而，世人豈不就像這樣，錯失了人生的主要目標嗎？

東忙西忙，一生就過去了。許多人將他們的日子花在許多瑣事上。如同孩子挖著沙玩耍；如同蝴蝶在花叢間飛來飛去。循環互相拜訪、讀幾本小說，花很長時間享受歡樂；浮華、時尚、消遣 — 這些東西填滿他們的時間，日子飛逝，人生便結束了。他們一生毫無成就可言。

東忙西忙，救人的機會就消失了。生命感動生命，因為生命主要的目的就是影響他人。但我們經常只是應付膚淺的事，忙於極其微不足道的權益，卻不尋求我們身邊同伴的救恩。舞會、比賽、生意往來，霸佔了我們的思想，而我們的朋友從我們身邊被人生搏鬥的漩渦捲走，就消逝了。

東忙西忙，就失去對神的認識。要記住飛鳥是怎麼奪走天國的種子；同樣，世上的思慮和錢財的迷惑，以及渴求其他事物的私慾會進來，毀壞天國的道在人心中留下的印象(太十三3-7, 19-22)。人生中短暫的權益排擠人生真實的權益。我們就像學生將該用來準備決定人生前途考試的時間，浪費在微不足道的事上。

And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? 1 Kings 21 : 20

Ahab got his garden of herbs, but he had Elijah withal, who stood at the gate like an incarnate conscience. Men may get the prize on which they have set their heart; but if they have obtained it wrongfully, the conscience of the wrong done will haunt them, and take away the pleasure on which they counted, and ultimately bring them like a quarry to the ground.

We turn our best friends into enemies, as Ahab did Elijah. The cloud that lights Israel is darkness to Pharoah; the angel that protects Jerusalem, slays the host of Sennacherib; the gentle love which anoints the Saviour, instigates in Judas a jealousy which ends in murder. The God who shows Himself merciful to the merciful is froward to the froward. The cause of the alteration is to be sought within ourselves. The sun that melts wax hardens clay, but the difference is in the clay. To the widow of Zarephath Elijah was an angel of light; whilst to Ahab he was an enemy. The difference lay in their hearts; the one being holy and loving, the other dark and turbid. What you are, determines whether Elijah will be your friend or your enemy.

This word "sold thyself" is very awful. It underlies Goethe's tragedy of Faust, in which the soul sells itself to the devil for so many years of worldly pleasure. A few promises which are never kept; a mirage that is dissipated in thin air when we approach it; a bribe of gold or silver that burns the hands which receive it--such are the price for which men sell themselves. "They sell themselves for nought." Truly the devil drives a hard bargain. When he gets the soul into his power, he laughs at his former promises, and pays as wages, death.

亞哈對以利亞說，我仇敵啊！你找到我嗎？ 王上二十一20

亞哈得到了他的菜園，就在同時，他看到了以利亞站在門口，如同良心的化身。人可以得到他們下決心要達到的目標；但如果他們用不當的方法取得，因做錯事而不安的良心會糾纏他們，奪走他們所指望的喜悅，最終將徹底抓住他們，如同獵物一般。

我們將最好的朋友轉變為敵人，就像亞哈將以利亞轉變為敵人。照亮以色列營的雲柱，對於法老卻是黑暗(出十四20)；保護耶路撒冷的天使，卻殺了亞述王西拿基立的大軍(王下十九35)；用香膏膏救主的溫柔的愛，卻挑起猶大的嫉妒，至終起意謀害救主(約十二3-8, 十八2-5)。慈愛的人，神以慈愛待他；乖僻的人，神以彎曲待他(詩十八25-26)。這種原因的轉變，要在我們自己心裡去尋找。使蠟熔化的太陽，卻使黏土堅硬，這樣的區別乃在於黏土本身。對於撒勒法的寡婦，以利亞是光明的天使；對於亞哈，以利亞卻是仇敵。區別在於他們的心；這一個心是聖潔慈愛，那一個心是陰暗渾濁。你是怎樣的人，決定以利亞成為你的朋友，或是你的敵人。

「賣了自己(20節)」一詞十分可怕。這是歌德所寫的悲劇《浮士德》的基礎，在《浮士德》劇中，人將自己出賣給魔鬼，來換取多年世俗的享樂。一些永不能兌現的承諾；一個接近即消失得無影無蹤的海市蜃樓；一個接過來便燙手的金銀賄賂 — 這些就是人出賣自己所得到的代價。「他們賣了自己，一無所得。(賽五十二3)」魔鬼真正殺價而達成一筆使人吃虧的交易。當他將人置於他的掌控之下，便對他之前的承諾一笑置之，並付給人死亡作為工價(羅六23)。

A certain man. . . smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness. 1 Kings 22 : 34

Every man we meet is clothed in armour; in other words, we all cover ourselves with plates on which to receive the thrust of accusation and reproach. "I only do as others." "I do not see any special harm in it." "My father did it before me." "I cannot help it." Such are some of the plates in the armour of the soul; and our work as Christian workers becomes abortive in so many instances, because we are content to belabour the plates, instead of striking home to the one place where the armour-joints are. Successful soul-winning depends on discovering the vulnerable part of a man, and striking there. But all this demands a very special discernment of spirits, and anointing of the Holy Ghost. Only so can we detect where best to bring about conviction, and make men know their need of the Gospel of God's grace. The great need of the present day is a sharper and more searching analysis of sin. Men need to be shown how they are violating the laws of God. They assent generally to the Scriptural statements of what God requires, but fail to realize how greatly they have come short. You are almost sure to hit, if you begin to show the various ways in which respectably-living people are coming under the divine sentence.

But several conditions must be fulfilled. (1) Study well your own heart. (2) Be a deep student of the biographies of Scripture; because every type of human character is delineated in Holy Writ. (3) Open your heart to the Holy Ghost, through whom alone you can discern spirits. He is a discernor of the thoughts of the heart, and will teach you to cut to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.

有一人... 恰巧射入以色列王的甲縫裡。 王上二十二34

我們遇到的每個人都穿戴盔甲；換句話說，我們每個人都用盔甲遮蓋自己，來抵擋控告和責備的攻擊。「別人做，我也做。」「我不覺得這有任何特別的害處。」「我父親也這麼做過。」「我控制不住。」這些就是靈魂盔甲上的一些板面；作為基督工人，我們的工作之所以在許多場合失敗，就是因為我們僅止於痛打盔甲，而不是在盔甲的接縫處擊中要害。成功贏得靈魂，取決於發現一個人脆弱的地方，然後攻擊這個地方。但這需要靈裡非常特殊的辨別能力，和聖靈的膏抹。只有這樣我們才能察覺最好在何處說服人，並讓他們知道他們需要神恩典的福音。今日重大的需要是對罪更敏銳、更徹底的分析。人需要被指出來，他們在如何違背神的律法。他們通常贊同聖經中所陳述的神的要求，但卻沒有意識到他們離神這些要求何等遠。如果你開始向人展示那些生活體面的人，在許多方面仍在神的刑罰之下，你幾乎肯定能擊中。

但有幾個條件必須履行。(1)好好檢視你自己的內心。(2)全神貫注研究聖經人物的傳記[註]；因為每種人的性格在聖經中都有描繪。(3)把你的心向聖靈敞開，單單靠著祂，你就能分辨人的靈。聖靈辨明人心中的思念和主意，祂必教導你刺入剖開魂與靈、骨節與骨髓(來四12)。

[註] 本文作者邁爾牧師著有13本膾炙人口、老少咸宜、流傳甚廣的聖經人物傳記。英文原版及中文譯本在坊間都很容易找到。