

Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. Jer. 1 : 6

A sense of helplessness is of prime importance as a preparation for ministry. Those who count themselves able to speak will never become God's mouthpiece; while those who have no words of their own will be surprised to find how forcible and perennial the stream of holy speech will become through their lips. Though you cannot, He can; and your sense of inability is the condition that the Spirit of your Father should speak through you. Learn to appropriate the Saviour's affirmation, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in Me doeth the works."

How many of the greatest men have been broken under a sense of their insufficiency! That passage in the life of John Livingstone comes back to me as I write. He had spoken at the yearly communion at Kirk o' Shotts on the Sabbath with marvellous power, and had been requested to preach on the following morning, which he promised to do on condition that his friends should spend the night in prayer. But as he awoke in the morning he was so overwhelmed with the sense of his incompetence that he went three and a half miles out of the town, to be brought back, however, and to preach so marvellously that five hundred souls were converted.

The writer can never forget the comfort that this passage gave him in early boyhood, when he anxiously feared that he never would be able to exercise the ministry of the Gospel. One morning, years ago, when in great anxiety to learn whether his was a true vocation to the Christian ministry, the Bible opened to this page, and he can bear witness that God has been faithful.

我就說：「主耶和華啊！我不知怎樣說，因為我是年幼的。」 耶一6

無助的感覺在服事的預備上，是最重要的。凡自以為能言善道的，絕不能成為神的發言人；凡自己不知怎樣說話的人，必驚訝發現，那聖潔的話語何等強而有力地不斷從他們口中出來。雖然你不能，但祂能；而你無能力的感覺，正是你天父的靈可以透過你講話的條件。你要學習取用救主肯定的話語：「我對你們所說的話，不是憑著自己說的，乃是住在我裡面的父作他自己的事。(約十四10)」

多少最偉大的人曾因著他們自覺不足而意氣消沉。在我寫作的時候，李文斯敦[註]生命中的那一幕又回到我眼前。他在安息日，在歐肖特教會的一個年度聖餐聚會中演講，帶著極大的能力，並受邀在次日早晨佈道，他答應了，條件是他的朋友要徹夜禱告。但是早晨他醒來時，他被一種不能勝任的感覺壓垮，於是他走了三哩半出到城外，但被帶回來時，他講道有驚人的能力，五百靈魂因此歸信基督。

筆者永不會忘記年少時，當焦慮地害怕自己再不能作福音的事工時，這段經文帶來的安慰。多年前的一個早晨，在巨大的焦慮中，筆者想知道，從事基督的事工是不是自己真正的天職；聖經就打開到這一頁，他可以見證，神一直都是信實的。

[註] 李文斯敦 David Livingstone, 1813-1873, 蘇格蘭著名的傳教士及探險家。李文斯敦原為醫師，被倫敦傳道會差派往非洲開荒宣道，探索新地，使非洲進入文明，對禁止販賣黑奴做出巨大貢獻，最終客死非洲，葬於倫敦西敏寺教堂。他的墓誌銘上面寫著：「基督信仰、通商、文明。」

Broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jer. 2: 13

In yonder fruitful valley a fountain rises, full of living, sparkling, delicious water. But, see, all the able-bodied inhabitants have left their houses, climbing to the rugged rocks above their homes, and are engaged with incredible labour in hewing them out those rocky cisterns which travellers tell us abound in Eastern lands. The heights resound with the ringing notes of hammer and chisel; for months they labour at their assiduous toils; but when all is done, the cisterns are discovered to be broken by flaws, and to provide but brackish water at the best.

Such is the picture painted from life by Jeremiah; but how truly it represents the spirit of the world! Leaving God, in whom alone man's thirsty spirit can find satisfaction and thirst-quenching, he hath set himself, with infinite labour, to hew out cisterns of gold and silver, cisterns of splendid houses and reputable characters, and lavish alms deeds, cisterns of wisdom and ancient lore. From any of these the hewer thinks he will obtain sufficient supplies to last him for his life. At the best, however, the water is brackish, wanting the sparkle of oxygenated life; hot with the heat of the day.

Jehovah may well ask whether such a spectacle can be matched anywhere else in the world. Heathen peoples are notoriously true to their ancestral faiths and practices. For vast eras the worship of ancestors has been maintained in China, and of fire by the followers of Zoroaster. There is no change in the votive offerings which the poor Hindus of all ages have laid before their impassive deities. "Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit."

破裂不能存水的池子。 耶二13

在肥美山谷那邊有泉源湧出，滿了流動、水氣四濺、甜美的水。但請看，所有強壯的居民都離開自己的家，攀爬上家園上方那崎嶇的岩石，忙於不可思議的勞動，鑿開那些岩石作存水的池子；旅行者告訴我們，在東方有許多這種水池。高地上迴響著鐵錘和鑿子擊打的聲音，他們辛勤工作數月，但是當一切完成時，卻發現池子有裂縫，最多只能供應帶有鹹味的水。

這就是耶利米從人世間所描繪的畫面，它是如此真實地代表世界的靈！只有在神裡面，人飢渴的靈才能找到滿足，並且不再渴。人遠離神，用他無窮盡的勞力，鑿出金的、銀的池子，鑿出豪華殿宇、美好德行、慷慨施捨的池子，鑿出智慧和古老傳說的池子。鑿池子的人以為從這些池子的任何一個，他將得到足夠的供應維持一生。然而那水是帶著鹹味的，缺乏帶氧氣生命的水泡，且因白日的高溫而發燙。

耶和華很有理由質問，這景象是否在世界上其他地方找到匹敵的對手。異教徒對他們祖宗傳下來的信仰和實行極其忠誠，這是眾所皆知的。已經有漫長的年代，中國人維持祭拜祖先，拜火教的信眾持續膜拜火。歷代以來，可憐的印度人在他們冷漠的神祇面前，供上還願的貢品，不曾改變。「豈有一國換了他們的神嗎？其實這不是神！但我的百姓，將他們的榮耀換了那無益的神。(11節)」

They shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord. Jer. 3: 16

There was a time in Israel when the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord was the symbol of the national hopes and deliverances. If Israel was smitten before her enemies, it was thither that the people turned for help. On one memorable occasion, they brought from Shiloh the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubim--and when it came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again; and even the Philistines were afraid. But Jeremiah says that this would never be done in the coming time. Why? Partly because the people would rely more on the spiritual presence than the material emblem, and partly because a new covenant would have been inaugurated, superseding the old.

In all true lives there is something of this. We outgrow our old experiences, and get as far beyond them as they were once beyond anything we had attained. It seems to you that you cannot look for higher heights, more heavenly experiences or deeper insight than you have had. Beware lest you limit God. Your highest water-mark shall be overleapt when the tide comes in again. Wordsworth says Nature was ever singing to the child a more exquisite song, and telling a more wonderful tale. And is not Nature's voice the voice of God? Are not the inexhaustible stores of Nature but an emblem of the still more inexhaustible stores of Grace? Dare to press on to the things that are before. There is more love than has ever ravished your heart; more joy than has ever shed its ecstasy through your emotions; more utter consecration, closer union; more rapturous insight into the oneness of the Holy Trinity, and our inclusion in its mystic circle.

人必不再提說耶和華的約櫃。 耶三16

在以色列中曾有個時期，耶和華的約櫃象徵這國的希望和拯救。若以色列在敵人面前受擊打，人就轉向約櫃尋求幫助。在一次令人難忘的時候，他們從示羅將坐在二基路伯中間萬軍之耶和華的約櫃抬來。耶和華的約櫃到了營中，以色列眾人就大聲歡呼，地便震動。甚至非利士人就懼怕起來(撒上四4-7)。然而先知耶利米說，以後這事將不再出現。為什麼呢？部分原因是人要更多倚靠聖靈的同在，而非物質的標誌，另一部分是因為一個新約已經開啟而取代舊約。

在所有真實的生命中，都有幾分這樣的事。我們長大而脫離以前的經驗，且遠遠超越它們，就像這些經驗曾經超越我們更早以前所達到的。你好像難以超越已有的，去尋找更高的境界、更屬天的經歷、或更深的認識。你要當心，以免你限制了神。在潮水再來到時，你最高的水位線將被越過。華滋華斯說，大自然總是不斷給孩子唱一首更優美的曲子，講述一個更精彩的故事。這大自然的聲音，不就是神的聲音嗎？大自然無盡的儲備，不就是更加無限之恩典儲備的象徵嗎？要勇敢向著擺在前頭的，努力前進。因為有更多的愛超過曾使你陶醉的愛，有更多的喜樂超過那曾使你狂喜的；有更完全的分別為聖，更緊密的連結；有更令人欣喜的認識父、子、聖靈的合一，我們也得以在這奧祕的範圍裡。

Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Jer. 4: 3

God's sowing times are often neutralized by the hardness of the soil of our hearts. Caked over by the heavy tread of the passing years, neglected opportunities, and wordly society, even by the beautiful feet of his messengers, they need to be broken up. We sometimes speak of the breaking down of a great convention; but such an experience ought to lead to a breaking up of fallow ground. If this does not accrue from the gracious working of the Holy Spirit, it must be effected by the ploughshare of pain. "Tribulation" is derived from the Latin word for a harrow, tribulum.

In Finney's Revival Sermons there is a great discourse on this text at the beginning of the book. It was the evangelist's wont to open a mission by enumerating the ways by which his hearers' hearts could be laid open to receive the seed of the kingdom. When hearing the Gospel, it is specially necessary to guard our hearers and ourselves against all hardness of heart and contempt of God's Word and commandment.

Our Lord clearly tells us what the thorns are. He says they are the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life (Luke 8 : 14). The cares of the poor are as inimical to true religion as the wealth of the rich; and the absorption of the heart in pleasure is as hurtful as either. There is no room on the soil of our nature for more than one absorbing passion. If that be for the glory of Christ, it includes all other desires and pursuits; but if our thoughts are diverted to things or persons apart from Him, there is but little energy left for a strong religious life. O God, fill our hearts with such good crops that there may be no room for thorns!

要開墾你們的荒地，不要撒種在荊棘中。 耶四3

神撒種的時候，常因我們心地剛硬而沒有產生果效。心地結成硬塊是由於長年嚴重的踐踏，錯失機會以及世俗社交活動的踐踏，甚至也曾有福音使者佳美腳蹤踏過。這樣堅硬的心需要被打碎。我們有時會提到打破一個重大的慣例，但這樣破碎的經歷應該引進開墾荒地。如果這樣的經歷不是從聖靈恩惠的工作所產生出來，它必從痛苦的犁頭產生出來。「苦難」這詞源自拉丁文中的耙子，一種打穀的器具。

在芬尼[註]《復興講壇》一書的開始，對這節經文有一段很好的披露。傳道者習慣在開始傳道時，先以不同的方式幫助聽眾打開心門，來預備接受國度的種子。在聽到福音時，尤其重要的是，要保守聽眾和我們自己不致心中剛硬，而輕視神的話語和祂的命令。

我們的主明確地告訴我們荊棘是什麼。祂說，荊棘就是今生的思慮、錢財、宴樂(路八14)。窮人的憂慮和富人的錢財，對於真正的信仰來說都一樣有害，人心沉迷宴樂，其害處也和憂慮、錢財一樣。我們本性的土壤只容許單一專注的愛慕。如果我們專注於基督的榮耀，這就包含了一切的渴望和追求，但是如果我們的思想轉移到祂以外的其他人或事，就不再有力氣來過一個虔誠的生活了。神啊，求你使我們的心中長滿好的莊稼，而不留任何餘地給荊棘。

[註] 芬尼Charles Grandison Finney, 1792-1875, 美國名牧。被譽為近代屬靈復興之父，影響19世紀初美洲大陸的大覺醒運動。他的神學思想融合了神的主權與人的自由意志。

The sand for the bound of the sea, which it cannot pass. Jer. 5:22 (R.V., marg.)

What an insignificant atom is a grain of sand! But God has chosen to arrest the advance of the mighty billows by a barrier of sand-grains. Let the ocean chafe as it will, it cannot pass its defined limits. It may destroy the solid masonry of human construction, but it is foiled by a bank of soft sand.

*What cannot his power accomplish for me,
Who makes of soft sand a strong bar to the sea!*

There are many illustrations of this in the history of the Church. The pride of the persecutor has been arrested by the prayers and tears of men, women, and children, who have had no more strength in themselves than a bank of sand-grains, but have succeeded in arresting the might of their foes. The persecutions of the Roman Empire were finally renounced because they actually promoted the cause they were intended to destroy. By the weak things of this world God brings to naught the things that are reckoned mighty.

What a picture of weak submission, of suffering patience, of unresisting gentleness is the sand! What a type of God's hidden ones, whom the world knows not! Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings He ordains strength: out of weakness He makes strong: out of the passive sufferers He makes his strongest ramparts.

*The race of God's anointed priests shall never pass away;
Before his glorious face they stand, and serve Him night and day.
Though reason raves, and unbelief flows on a mighty flood,
There are, and shall be, till the end, the hidden priests of God.*

用沙為海的界限，水不得越過。 耶五22

一粒沙子是多麼微小的顆粒。但是神卻選擇用沙子作的屏障阻止巨浪的前進。讓海隨意摩擦吧，卻不能越過為它設定的界限。海或許能摧毀人造堅固的石造建築，但海必被那鬆軟的沙灘阻撓。

有什麼是祂大能無法為我成就的？
祂用鬆軟的沙子作堅固的圍欄堵住大海！

在教會歷史上有很多這樣的例證。迫害者的傲慢，因著男人、女人和孩子們的禱告和眼淚，就被攔住。這些人並不比沙堤更有能力，卻成功攔阻他們敵人的勢力。羅馬帝國的迫害至終受譴責，因為這些逼迫實際上促進他們所要摧毀的信仰。神藉這世界軟弱的事物，破壞那被認為強大的事物。

沙子呈現的是何等的圖畫——軟弱的降服，受苦的忍耐，不反抗的溫柔！這是神所隱藏之人一個何等的預表，他們是世人所不明白的！祂從嬰孩和吃奶的口中建立了能力(詩八2)；祂使軟弱的成為剛強；使那無聲的受難者成為祂最堅固的城牆。

神膏立作祭司的族類將永不消逝；
他們日夜站在祂榮耀的面前事奉。
縱使理性怒吼，不信的潮流如洪水氾濫，
神隱藏的祭司現在有，將來有，直到永遠。

[出自德國奧祕佈道家及詩人特斯帖根Gerhard Tersteegen, 1697-1769, 的詩作
《君尊司的職任》*The Royal Priesthood*.]

Saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Jer. 6:14 (R.V.)

We spare ourselves, and we are willing to be spared by others. The knife must not cut to the quick; the wound must not be probed to the bottom. We are glad to attend a ministry which is not too searching, dealing with the soul rather than with the spirit; with the intellect rather than with the heart. We are quite prepared that the root and core of our trouble should not be dealt with, if only we may be made presentable to our fellow-creatures as soon as possible. The corrupt matter may still be in the wound, certain to break out again; but we are not desirous that it should be driven forth, if only we may soon regain our comeliness.

In our dealings with God let us reverse all this, and ask that He will not spare us, or give us anything less than the best. The process may be painful and protracted, but it will be sure. The pressing of the putrid matter from the wound may distress and horrify; but it will make sure work in the end.

"Alas," says Tersteegen, "some never arrive at a thorough knowledge of their inward corruption and their hidden self-love, nor of the perfect, holy, secluded, hidden life in Christ, which is the life of the new creature. Nor do they know the power of the Spirit of Christ, working in his own members, and bringing forth in them the outward life of holiness to God. For all these things are taught to the soul by God, and would never have entered into the thoughts of men; and they have limited themselves within themselves, and enclosed themselves, so to speak, within their own ideal." Let us be warned by these words, and never heal up any wound which God would keep open, till all the evil it was intended to remove has left our system.

說：「平安了！平安了！」其實沒有平安。 耶六14

我們寬容自己，也情願被人寬容。刀不必切到要害，傷口不必探究到底。我們喜歡參加一項服事，不太嚴厲，只對付人的魂而不對付人的靈，只對付理性而不對付內心。我們只預備好我們難處的根本與核心不要被處理，只要我們可以儘快在同輩面前有體面就好了。腐敗的東西還在傷口，肯定會再發作；然而我們不渴望這事該被往前推進，只要我們可以快點恢復美麗就好。

在與神來往的過程中，但願我們翻轉這一切情形，並且祈求祂不要放過我們，不要只賜給我們次好的。這個過程或許痛苦且拖長，但結果是肯定的。將腐爛的東西從傷口擠出或許痛苦甚至令人懼怕，但最終必得到確實的效果。

特斯帖根 [參前一篇的註] 歎息說，「唉！有的人從未真正完全認識他們內心的墮落和隱藏的自愛；也不完全認識那完全、聖潔、脫離世俗、隱藏在基督裡的生命，就是新造的生命；他們也不認識基督之靈的能力，這靈在祂的肢體裡面做工，從他們裡面向神顯出聖潔生命。因這一切的事都是神教導人，從前未曾進到人的思想中；人都將自己侷限在自己裡面，將自己完全封閉在自己的理想裡。」願這些話警戒我們，不要讓那些神還要它敞開著的傷口癒合起來，直到所有該被除去的惡從我們身上除掉。

The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these. Jer. 7: 4

When Jeremiah threatened Israel with the coming of the king of Assyria, the false prophets minimized the terror of his utterances by pointing to the temple and assuring the people that there was no reason to anticipate the overthrow of their city, since it was the custodian of the holy shrine of Jehovah. "Ye have the temple in your midst, surely then you are a religious people. You cannot be as bad as this pessimistic prophet alleges, and God cannot very well dispense with you."

But men may perform the most sacred rites, and yet perpetrate the grossest crimes. The presence of a temple with all its priests and rites does not necessarily denote holiness; but often the contrary. In Roman Catholic countries, brigands will seek the blessing of heaven on their plans of murder and plunder. Our safety lies not in outward rites, but in amending our ways and doings. Not in having sprung from godly parents, nor in engagedness in holy things, nor in the practice of religious rites, will help come; but in being genuinely right with God. Real religion consists not in temple-rites, but in humility, unselfishness, and godliness. Saul of Tarsus is the type of many who are zealous for religion, but destitute of its power.

*Here on earth a temple stands,
Temple never built with hands;
There the Lord doth fill the place
With the glory of his grace.
Cleansed by Christ's atoning Blood,
Thou art this fair house of God,
Where the soul, a priest in white,
Singeth praises day and night;
Glory of the Love divine,
Filling all this heart of thine.*

這些是耶和華的殿，是耶和華的殿，是耶和華的殿。 耶七4

當耶利米警戒以色列「巴比倫王[註]即將來犯」時，假先知們卻降低耶利米的話給以色列帶來的恐懼。他們指著耶和華的殿，使百姓確信他們的城必不會傾覆，因為耶路撒冷是耶和華聖殿的守護者。「你們有聖殿在你們當中，這樣你們就必然是敬虔的百姓。你們不會像這悲觀的先知所斷言的那樣悲慘，神不會完全棄絕你們。」

人可能履行最神聖的宗教禮儀，而同時犯最嚴重的罪。聖殿及其祭司並禮儀的存在，並不必定表示聖潔；但是經常恰恰相反。在羅馬天主教的國家，土匪強盜常在他們計劃謀殺搶掠的事上尋求上天的祝福。我們的安全感不是靠外在的禮儀，而是靠我們改正行動作為(5節)。幫助臨到不是因我們有敬虔的父母，不是因參與聖潔的事務，不是來自實行宗教儀式；而是因我們在神面前實在是端正的。真正的信仰不在於聖殿裡的儀式，而是在於謙卑、無私和敬虔。大數的掃羅就是許多「為信仰火熱但缺乏信仰能力」的典型。

有一殿立在這地上，
這殿並非人手所造；
神以恩典的榮耀充滿這殿，
又用基督贖罪的寶血潔淨。
你就是神美麗的殿，
你的靈魂如穿白衣的祭司；
晝夜歌頌讚美，
神愛的榮耀充滿你的全心。

[註] 英文原版作「亞述王」應該是筆誤。

Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Jer. 8 : 22

How many of God's children are discouraged! They have mourned, confessed, and resolved; but they do not expect to see any great alteration in themselves. They have lost hope. Now, it is evident that as long as this spirit prevails, there is very little prospect of improvement. Discouragement can only bring defeat. One of the first objects of a physician is always to awaken hope, for otherwise he knows that his medicines can profit but little. Now, bethink you, what is the cause of your failure? Is it in God? Is there not balm in Gilead? Is there not a physician there? Why, then, is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

O wounded, sorrowful soul, there is balm in Gilead, there is a Good Physician. No hurt He cannot heal, no bleeding He cannot staunch, no sickness He cannot cure! Why keep lamenting so bitterly, "My bad heart, my bad heart"? Why speak as though that temper, that predisposition to sin, that habit, were to be lost only in death? Why be uncomforted? Jesus can heal all sicknesses, all diseases, among the people. One touch of the King can heal the soul of whatsoever disease it has.

Why are you not in health? It is because you resort to quacks, and not to the divine Physician; or because you do not bare your pain to its roots before Him; or because you refuse to abandon yourself wholly to his prescriptions and treatment. Dare to search out and know the cause of ill health; for be sure it is on your side, not Christ's. Then let Him treat you as He will. He will prescribe diet, exercise, fresh air, change of scene. He may use the knife, but He will do his work as dexterously and painlessly as possible. "Who healeth all thy diseases."

在基列豈沒有乳香呢？在那裡豈沒有醫生呢？ 耶八22

何等多神的兒女灰心喪志！他們曾經哀痛、認罪、又下定決心；但卻不期望在自己身上看到大轉變。他們失去了盼望。很明顯的，只要這樣的靈盛行，就很難有進步的希望。灰心喪志只帶來失敗。醫生的首要目標之一就是喚起希望，因為他知道，如果沒有希望，藥物的益處就非常小。現在來想想你自己，你失敗的原因在哪裡呢？是在神身上嗎？是在基列沒有乳香呢？是在那裡沒有醫生呢？那麼我的百姓為何不得痊愈呢？

受傷悲哀的人啊，在基列有乳香，在那裡有一個好醫生。沒有一個創傷祂不能治愈，沒有一處流血祂不能止住，沒有一種疾病祂不能醫治！為什麼不斷痛苦哀嘆：「我的壞心，我的壞心」？為什麼說話，好像那性情、那犯罪的傾向、那習慣只有在死亡時才得以除去？為何不受安慰？耶穌可以醫治百姓一切的病症，一切的疾病。君王的一個觸摸就可以醫治任何困擾人的疾病。

你為什麼不健康呢？那是因為你求助密醫，而不求助這位神聖的醫生；或是因你沒有將你的痛苦徹底披露在祂面前；或是因你拒絕放下自己完全接受祂的處方治療。你要勇敢找出並知道你患病的原因；那原因一定在你這邊，而不在基督那邊。然後讓祂照祂所要的來醫治你。祂要規定你的飲食、運動、新鮮空氣、和改變環境。祂可能使用手術刀，但祂必定儘可能用靈巧、帶來最少痛苦的方式執行祂的工作。「祂醫治你一切的疾病。(詩一〇三3)」

Who is he to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that he may declare it? Jer. 9: 12

A saintly soul has translated these words into music, which expresses their inner thought:

*Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of thy tone:
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children, lost and lone.
O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart:
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.*

With such expressions of the disciples of the Lord, we should couple his sublime words: "Be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." And again He said: "What I tell you in the darkness, speak ye in the light: and what ye hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops." Often we have run before we were sent. We have spoken our own message, and it has fallen flat and powerless. We have elaborated our sentences with careful art, but they have been lighter than vanity, for want of the King's word, in which alone there is power.

Let us amend our ways, and wait on Him for his word, going forth to speak it with an authority which can only be obtained when one has the consciousness of a Thus saith the Lord. We may have to go into the darkness of pain and sorrow, or hide in the closet far from the rush of the world, and the clamour of human voices; but we shall hear Him speak, as the prophet Elijah did at Horeb, when the still, small voice filled the cave with its thrilling cadence.

耶和華的口向誰說過，使他可以傳說？ 耶九12

一位聖徒將這些話語轉換成音樂表達其中深處的意念：

主啊，請對我講話，使我可以傳講 —
用你聲調活潑的回音傳講；
像你找尋，也讓我找尋 —
你犯錯的兒女，他們失落孤單；
主啊，求你指教我，使我可以教導 —
你所分賜的寶貴事物；
為我的話語裝上雙翼，使這些話語可以達到 —
許多人心中隱密深處。

主門徒這樣的表達，應使我們聯想到祂莊嚴的話語：「不要思慮怎樣說話，或說什麼話。到那時候，必賜給你們當說的話，因為不是你們自己說的，乃是你們父的靈在你們裡頭說的。(太十19-20)」祂又說：「我在暗中告訴你們的，你們要在明處說出來；你們耳中所聽的，要在房上宣揚出來。(太十27)」我們常常在奉差之前就起跑了。我們傳講自己的信息，所以沒有果效，沒有能力。我們雖竭力在遣辭用字上注意修飾，但這些話語比空氣還輕，因為缺少至高君王的話語 — 唯獨在祂的話語中才有能力。

但願我們改正我們的作法，等候祂和祂的話語，帶著權柄出去傳講祂的話語。只有當我們感覺到這位主如此說話時，我們才得到這權柄。或許我們必須進到痛苦和哀傷的黑暗中，或隱藏在內室，遠離世界的匆忙和人聲的喧嚷；然而我們必聽見祂說話，就像先知以利亞在何烈山，那時平靜、微小的聲音帶著令人顫抖的音調充滿洞中(王上十九8-18)。

The shepherds are become brutish, and have not inquired of the Lord. Jer. 10:21 (R.V.)

This is a very solemn indictment; but the pity of it is that it is true of many shepherds of flocks in our own land. We must avoid generalizing too widely; but, on the whole, it is incontestable that a dwindling flock and waning cause point to prayerlessness perhaps on the part of the members, but almost certainly on the part of the shepherd himself. And it becomes us to search our hearts to see how far our prayerlessness may be hindering the work of God in our own church.

One of the most solemn sermons ever addressed to ministers is that of Dr. Binney's on this text; and he shows that the correlative must also be true, and that where we seek the Lord we shall prosper, our work shall become successful, and our flock increased. The old Latin motto said that to pray is to labour; and some of the best work in the world has been done by simple prayer. You may be labouring quite as effectively when you are shut within your closet doors as when going to and fro in the world in active Christian Endeavour. It is remarkable that whilst Philip was able to preach Jesus, and to bring many to Him, it was needful that the best results of the Gospel could not be realized till Peter and John had come down from Jerusalem to pray for the new converts (Acts viii. 14). Let us ponder and practice the five simple rules given by our sainted brother, George Müller, for prevailing prayer: (1) Not for our own worthiness. (2) Solely through Christ's merits, on the ground of his cross and resurrection. (3) For the glory of God. (4) No sin must be allowed, since this absolutely bars blessing. (5) Be patient: glorify God by waiting on Him.

牧人都成為畜類，沒有求問耶和華。 耶十21

這是非常嚴肅的控告；但很遺憾這是我們本國中許多羊群的牧人真實的光景。我們必須避免過度以偏概全；但就整體來看，羊群逐漸縮小，目標逐漸衰微，無疑都指出缺少禱告，或許是信徒缺少禱告，但幾乎肯定的是牧者自己沒有禱告。我們需要開始察看自己的內心，看看我們的不禱告會在多大程度上阻礙神在我們自己教會的工作。

針對牧者最嚴肅的講章之一，就是賓尼博士根據這節經文的講道。他指出這種相互關聯是真實的，我們在何處尋求神，我們便在那裡昌盛，我們的工作便亨通，羊群就增長。古代拉丁格言說過，禱告就是辛勤工作，世界上某種最好的工作是藉著簡單的禱告成就的。你將自己關進內室中作工(禱告)，與你在世界裡，穿梭於各種活躍的基督教事工，也許同樣有果效。值得一提的是，腓利很能傳講耶穌，並帶很多人歸向祂，仍然需要彼得和約翰從耶路撒冷下來，為新得救的信徒們禱告(徒八14)，福音的最好果效才得實現。讓我們來思考並操練我們德高的弟兄慕勒·喬治[註]所傳給我們的，得勝的禱告五個簡單的法則：1) 不為自己得稱讚。2) 單單藉著基督的功績，根據祂的十字架和復活。3) 為神的榮耀。4) 絕對不容許罪，因為罪必定攔阻祝福。5) 要有耐心：藉著等候祂，來榮耀祂。

[註] 慕勒·喬治 George Müller, 1805–1898, 德國人，24歲到英國。不久就在英國當傳道人，以信心及禱告聞名。建立教會及開辦孤兒院，曾同時收養2,000孤兒。傳道不支薪，辦孤兒院不公開募款，只禱告倚靠神的供應。

Then answered I and said, Amen, O Lord. Jer. 11: 5

When God recapitulated his promises in the heart of Jeremiah, even though they involved a curse on those who neutralized his words, there arose from it a deep response. He answered and said, Amen, O Lord. What a remarkable example for us all! By life and lip, by deed and word, when we can understand and when we cannot, when the words are illuminated with blue and gold, when they are as black as the old black-lettered missals, always and everywhere, let us answer, and say, Amen, O Lord. We are irresistibly reminded of our Lord's words, after He had been contemplating the doom of the cities that refused Him, and the mysterious refusal which the wise and prudent accorded to his message. He said solemnly and emphatically, "Yea, Father."

It is an awful thing to read this context, and to remark the sentence to which Jeremiah said Amen. "Cursed be the man that heareth not the words of this covenant." Is it lawful, think you, to infer that the saints will one day acquiesce in God's verdict on the disobedient and ungodly? It may be that we shall be so fully convinced of the mercy of God, which sought the salvation of the lost, and shall see so clearly all the many efforts He made for their arrest, that we shall solemnly and sadly answer and say, Amen, O Lord, to their doom.

But if these words should be read by one who is resisting and disbelieving the love of God that would fain lead him into the land that floweth with milk and honey, let him beware lest his sinful refusal to be saved, his strife against the mercy of God, will one day be so patent that his dearest friend will answer and say, Amen, O Lord.

我就回答說：「耶和華啊，阿們！」 耶十一5

當神在耶利米心中重述祂的應許時，儘管這些應許包含神對不聽從祂話語之人的咒詛(3節)，耶利米仍從內心深處向神發出回應。他回答說，耶和華啊，阿們！這是何等值得我們每個人效法的榜樣啊！透過生命和嘴唇，透過行為和話語，在我們能明白的時候與我們不能明白的時候，當這些話語以藍色或金色來裝飾，或者像那古老的彌撒書[註]的黑體字一樣漆黑，無論何時何地，讓我們回答說，耶和華啊，阿們！我們不由得想起，在主耶穌思想那拒絕祂之城的毀滅，以及聰明通達人神祕地拒絕祂的信息之後，祂所說的話。祂莊嚴且堅決地說，「父啊，是的！（太十一20-26）」

讀到這句話的上下文，並注意到耶利米說阿們的這判決，是可怕的事。「不聽從這約之話的人，必受咒詛。(3節)」試想，有一天聖徒必須默然同意神對不順服和不敬虔之人的判決，這難道不可怕嗎？或許我們必須完全確信神的憐憫——尋求拯救失喪的人，也要清楚看到神為阻止他們所做的許多努力，我們只得對著他們的毀滅，莊嚴且悲哀地回答說，耶和華啊，阿們！

但如果一個人正在抵擋、不相信神的愛，這愛樂意領他進入流奶與蜜之地，他讀到這些話語，但願他留心，免得他拒絕救恩及竭力抗拒神憐憫的罪，有一天變得如此明顯，連他最親愛的朋友也要回答說：耶和華啊，阿們！

[註]《彌撒書》是羅馬天主教規定該年度各種彌撒要使用的經文及禮儀等的典籍。

Righteous art Thou, O Lord; . . . wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Jer. 12: 1

"I would reason with Thee." Religion is often misrepresented as unreasonable. But there is nothing to warrant the charge. On the contrary, the perpetual note of the Scriptures is, "Come and let us reason together." Doubtless there are many things revealed which never could have been discovered by reason, but there is nothing which may not be apprehended and appreciated by it. Man's reason was made in the image of God's. At present, however, our reasoning faculties are probably in their earliest stage of development, and we are much as infants admitted to some scientific laboratory or library.

God demands that we should use our reason, not only on the facts of nature, but on those revealed in the Bible. He likes us to reason out things with Him. Much better this than to reason against Him. If instead of turning from Him to discuss with each other, men would only turn to Him, there would be given them either an insight into his ways, or grace to wait and trust. Job, Moses, Asaph, and Jeremiah did this; and with them all the same problem troubled them, Why do the wicked prosper?

But there is one fact which can never be questioned. We must always begin our reasoning by saying, "Righteous art Thou, O God." This is a foundation fact which underlies his throne. We cannot question it. By the very conscience which He has put within us, and by the whole trend and drift of his Providence, he has put his Righteousness beyond question. As Abraham said, the Judge of all the earth must do right. But when we grant this, we may proceed to ask how certain facts which are permitted in the world are consistent with it. He may explain: or He may say, Not now, but presently.

耶和華啊，你顯為義：... 惡人的道路為何亨通呢？ 耶十二1

「我還要與你理論。」信仰常被誤解為非理性的。但沒有什麼理由允許這個責難。恰恰相反，聖經恆久的特色是，「你們來，我們彼此辯論。(賽一18)」毫無疑問，很多已啟示出來的事，絕非藉著理性被發現，但沒有任何一件是不能藉著理性來理解領會的。人的理性是照著神的形像造的。但是，目前我們的推理能力可能還在發展的最初階，我們就像嬰孩被允許進入科學實驗室或圖書館一般。

神要求我們應該使用我們的理性，不只是在自然界的事實上，更是在聖經中所啟示的事實上。祂喜歡我們和祂一起推論事理。這比用理性抵擋祂好得多。如果人不是離開祂去與別人討論，而是轉向祂，就必蒙神賜下領悟力來認識祂的道路，或蒙神賜下恩典來等候、信靠。約伯(伯廿一7)、摩西(可能是指大衛，詩卅七1,35)、亞薩(詩七十三3-16)，和耶利米曾這樣與神理論；同樣的問題曾使他們困惑：「惡人為何亨通？」

但有個事實從不曾被質疑。我們必須總是在辯論之前說，「耶和華啊，你是公義的。(1節)」這是立定祂寶座的基本事實。我們不能對此質疑。藉著祂已經放在我們裡面的良心，隨著祂心意移動的趨向，祂使祂的公義無可質疑。誠如亞伯拉罕所說，審判全地的必定行公義(創十八25)。但是當我們這樣認同時，我們可以繼續求問，世上有些已被允許發生的事實是如何與公義相符一致。祂可能解釋，或者祂說：不是現在，但很快就會明白。

That they might be unto Me for a people, and for a name, and for a glory. Jer. 13: 11

Israel had the opportunity of becoming a people, a name, and a glory; but they would not. In their declension and refusal God has turned to the Church, largely chosen from among the Gentiles, and in which we by his grace have a part. To us their privileges are offered. Let us gladly avail ourselves of them, and become unto God the people of his inheritance, in whom He may find a welcome and a home. Oh to be a name to Him, so that men may understand and revere Him the better because of what we are! Oh to be a glory to Him, so that He may account us as his choice ornament and jewel! Oh to be as intimately united to Him as the girdle worn on the prophet's loins!

Our hearts misgive us as we write or read. How can such things be? Behold, like that same girdle we have become marred and profitless. Yet, there is one phrase here which is radiant with hope: "As the girdle cleaveth..., so have I caused to cleave." "Caused to cleave." We are not able to cleave; we have so often tried to, and failed; but now we come in humble eagerness before Him, and say, "Cause us to cleave, O God; cause us to walk in thy ways; cause us to do thy will; cause us to be a people, a name, and a glory unto Thyself."

"O man," Tersteegen said, "whoever you are, stand still for a moment, and think earnestly of the high dignity for which you were created and sent into the world by God. You were not made for time and for passing things, but for God and eternity, and to have your heart filled with God and with the things eternal. Yield yourself up fearlessly to his mighty working, and be still, and welcome Him in his gracious operation in the heart."

好叫他們屬我為子民，使我得名聲，得頌讚，得榮耀。 耶十三11

以色列曾經有機會成為子民，使神得名聲，得榮耀；但他們不願意。他們墮落且拒絕神，於是神轉向教會，教會大多是從外邦人中揀選出來的，藉著祂的恩典，我們在教會中有分。他們作神子民的特權賜給我們。讓我們欣然使用這些特權，成為神的子民，作祂的產業，使祂在我們中間可以找到一個歡迎祂的家。但願祂得名聲，這樣人們因我們所是，更加認識並敬重祂！但願祂得榮耀，這樣祂可以把我們當作祂精選的裝飾和珠寶！但願與祂緊密聯結，就像腰帶繫在先知腰間(1-11節)！

當我們閱讀這章聖經，或為它寫作時，我們的心憂慮不安。怎麼會這樣呢？看哪，就像那一條腰帶，我們變壞，毫無用處了(7節)。然而，這裡有個詞閃亮著希望：「腰帶怎樣緊貼人腰，照樣，我也使 ... 緊貼我。(11節)」 「使 ... 緊貼我。」我們不能去緊貼祂；我們時常嘗試，但都失敗；但如今我們謙卑渴慕地來到祂面前，說，「神啊，求你使我們緊貼你；求你使我們走在你的路上；求你使我們遵行你的旨意；求你使我們成為你的百姓，使你得名聲和榮耀。」

特斯帖根[參耶五章邁爾靈修短篇的註]說，「人啊，不論你是誰，先靜靜地站一會兒，認真地想一想，為著這崇高的尊嚴，你被造並被神差到這世上。你被造不是為了短暫即逝的事，而是為著神和永恆，要使你的心充滿神和永遠的事。你要毫無懼怕地把你自己交出來，讓祂大能作工，並安靜，迎接祂在你心中作祂恩典的工作。」

Why shouldest Thou be as a man astonished as a mighty man that cannot save? Jer. 14: 9

A strong man may be rendered powerless by a reel of cotton being wound around him. Each thread so brittle, yet all together is irresistible. So a large number of inconsistencies and insincerities may make God powerless to help you, or to work mightily through you to the salvation of others. He may be in the midst of you, and you may be called by his name; great issues for his kingdom and glory may seem at stake; mighty possibilities within your reach; and yet He is as a mighty man that cannot save.

There is might enough in God to save the weakest and sinfulness of his children; and you are unsaved because of the limitations you have placed upon Him. First, you are not absolutely willing to be delivered from your sins. Secondly, you do not entirely believe in his power and will. Thirdly, you have not definitely handed the whole matter over to Him, and believed that He has accepted the charge.

Or--and this is perhaps the deepest reason of all--you have formed your own ideas of divine truth, and of the possible Christian life. And having formed your own conception of the true ideal of Christianity, you have thenceforth lived within the limitations of your ideal, which is bounded by human wisdom and human thought. And so you never come to a thorough knowledge of the indwelling of Christ, or what He is prepared to do for you; or, catching a glimpse of it from afar, you are not sufficiently delivered from the reasonings and workings of your mind to give Him that opportunity for which He waits and yearns. The Lord Jesus could do infinitely more in us, and through us, if we did not hinder. Be sure that the Kingdom of God is within; but you must let it possess you.

你為何像受驚的人，像不能救人的勇士呢？ 耶十四9 [「你」指耶和華]

一個強壯的人，可能因纏繞在他身上的一卷棉紗，變成軟弱無力。每一條紗線都很脆弱，但全部紗線合在一起，就不能抵抗。所以很多的反復無常和虛情假意，會讓神變得無力救你，無法藉著你有力地使他人得救恩。祂可能在你們中間，你們可能被稱為祂名下的人；關乎祂國度和榮耀的大事可能看起來面臨危險；你們可以達到極大的發展潛力；然而祂如同一個不能救人的勇士。

神有足夠的能力拯救祂最軟弱、罪孽最深重的兒女；你沒有獲救是因為你限制了祂。第一，你沒有完全願意被拯救脫離你的罪。第二，你沒有完全相信祂的能力和意願。第三，你沒有確實把整個事情交託給祂，並相信祂已經接納所託付的。

或許這個才是「主像不能救人的勇士」最深遠的原因，就是你對神的真理，和基督徒的生活，已經建構自己的看法。對於基督信仰真正的理想，你已經有自己的觀念，從此以後就活在自己理想的範圍內，這理想是受人的智慧和人的思想所束縛的。所以你從來沒有徹底認識內住的基督，也沒有徹底認識祂預備要為你作的事；或者你遠遠瞥見這一點，但沒有充分脫離自己頭腦的推理和思考而給祂機會，這機會是祂一直等待並渴望的。如果我們不攔阻祂，主耶穌可以在我們裡面藉我們作無限多的事。要確信神的國在你裡面，也必須讓神的國掌管你。

If thou return, then will I bring thee again, that thou mayest stand before Me. Jer. 15:19 (R.V.)

What a promise for backsliders is this! Here is a soul that had gone away from God's presence, and had ceased to be as his mouth. How long it had been in this castaway condition we need not inquire. It is enough to know that it had dipped beneath the horizon, and been permitted to know the bitter anguish of seeing others do its chosen work. Have you known this? Then these words were written for you; eat them, and let them be unto you the joy and rejoicing of your heart.

Will you return to God? Do you want it to be as in the old time? Tell Him so, and He will bring you again. It will not take Him a second's space to restore you to where you were wont to stand. Dare to believe that you are there again, forgiven, cleansed, sanctified. Live there. Go no more out for ever.

Will you leave what is vile, unworthy, and unholy, casting it away as so much dross, and take forth only the gold, silver, and precious stones, of a holy character? then God will make you his mouth, through which He will speak to saint and sinner. Is not this worth whatever it may cost you? Remember how Peter sinned; but within fifty days he was speaking as the mouth of the Holy Ghost to thousands.

It was thus, also, that Mark was brought again, who forsook the apostle, in his first missionary journey; but he was honoured, as the mouth of the Holy Spirit, to write the Gospel that bears his name.

*I know not what I am, but only know
I have had glimpses tongue may never speak:
No more I balance human joy or woe,
But think of my transgressions, and am meek.
Saviour! forgive the child who sinned so--
His proud heart yields--the tears are on his cheek."*

你若歸回，我就將你再帶來，使你站在我面前。 耶十五19

這句話對墮落的人是何等的應許！這裡有一個人從神面前離開，不再作神的口說話。我們無需問他在這種被拋棄的情形有多久。知道他掉到水平線之下，並且痛苦地看見別人在作他原來蒙揀選所作的事工，這就足夠了。你能理解這種心情嗎？那麼這些話語就是寫給你的；把這些話吃了，讓這些話成為你心中的歡喜快樂(16節)。

你願意歸向神嗎？你想要如同往日一樣嗎？你要這樣告訴祂，祂就將你再帶來。不用一秒鐘的時間，祂就能將你恢復到你以前經常站的地方。你要勇敢相信你重新回到那裡，得赦免，被洗淨，被分別為聖。你要活在那裡。永遠不要從那裡出來。

你願意離開那些不道德的、卑賤的、和不聖潔的事物，把它們像渣滓一樣拋棄，只拿出聖潔品格的金、銀、寶石嗎(林前三12)？然後神就使你成為祂的口，藉著你向聖徒和罪人講話。這難道不值得你付上一切的代價嗎？要記得彼得怎樣犯罪的(路廿二54-62)；但在五十天之內，他就作為聖靈的出口，向成千上萬的人宣講(徒二14-42)。

同樣，那位馬可在第一次傳道旅行中拋棄使徒(徒十三13, 十五37-38)，也再被帶來(提後四11)；他得尊榮作為聖靈的出口，寫那卷冠上他名字的福音書。

我不知道我是何等人，只是我知道
我曾看見有人再也不能替神說話；
我不再計算人間的喜樂與禍患，
只想到我的過犯，並柔軟下來。
救主啊！請你原諒這個如此犯罪的孩子，
他淚流滿面，驕傲的心降服下來。

O Lord, my strength, and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of affliction. Jer. 16:19 (R.V.)

One of the puritans was accustomed to describe prayer as the flight of the lonely man to the only God. There is such prayer here. This man is very lonely. He is like a speckled bird, set on by all the birds of the flock. He looks right and left, but there is no man to care for his soul; then he addresses himself to God in these touching words.

MY STRENGTH. The psalmist spoke of God as the strength of his life. The apostle of love said that little children could overcome the world, because He that was in them was greater and stronger than he that was in the world. "God is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

MY STRONGHOLD. A stronghold is what holds strongly. A keep is that which keeps. We keep God's deposit, which is his Gospel: God keeps our deposit, which is ourselves. And none, man nor devil, can snatch us away.

MY REFUGE IN THE DAY OF AFFLICTION. The night darkening the sky drives the chicks to the hen's wings; so affliction drives us to God. "In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."

Do you wish to know Him thus? See that you do not burden yourself by your endeavours. God is a Spirit, and within your spirit. You need not ascend into heaven, nor descend into the deep. You need not weary yourself with the reasonings and reflections and questionings of your mind or heart. By these means you will wander further from Him and his knowledge. Be still and know. Enter into the still and peaceful land of inward spiritual fellowship. Commune with your own heart. Be a child before Him, innocent, unaffected, unrestrained.

耶和華啊，你是我的力量，是我的保障，在苦難之日是我的避難所。 耶十六19

有一位清教徒習慣將禱告描述為：一個孤單的人逃向獨一的神。這裡的禱告就是這種。這個人非常孤單。他像一隻有斑點的鳥兒，被群鳥攻擊(耶十二9)。他左右觀看，但沒有一個人關心他的性命；於是他向神發出了這感人的話語。

我的力量。詩人說神是他生命的力量。愛的使徒約翰曾說小子們能勝過世界，因為在他們裡面的比那在世界上的更大，更剛強(約壹四4)。「耶和華是我性命的力量，我還懼誰呢？(詩廿七1)」

我的保障。保障是守衛得堅強的地方。堡壘是防禦的工事。我們保守神所託付的，就是祂的福音；神保守我們所交託的，就是我們自己。不論人或魔鬼，沒有誰能夠將我們奪去(約十28-29)。

我在苦難之日的避難所。夜晚漸暗的天空將小雞趕到母雞的翅膀底下；同樣，苦難催趕我們到神面前。「我要投靠在你翅膀的蔭下，等到災害過去。(詩五十七1)」

你是否打算這樣地認識祂？務必留意不要背負自己努力的擔子。神是靈，祂就在你的靈裡。你不必升到天上，或下到陰間(羅十6-7)。你不需要用你心中的推理、反省、或質疑來使自己疲乏。這些方法只讓你更遠離祂，更遠離對祂的認識。你們要安靜，要知道我是神(詩四十六10)。要進入內在屬靈交通的安靜之境。與你自己的心對話(詩十六2, 四十二5, 六十二5, 一〇三2)。在祂面前作個孩子，純真無邪、沒有矯飾、沒有拘束。

Bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. Jer. 17: 21

In the R.V. marg., "take heed to yourselves" is rendered "take heed for your life's sake," as if the matter dealt with in this paragraph closely pertained to the conditions of the best life. And is it not so? Is it not a matter of vital importance that we should keep the eternal Sabbath in our hearts, and suffer no burden to be brought through the gates of the soul? Even if we consider this matter from the lowest aspect, how certain it is that absence of worry and fret promotes length of days! But in the deepest sense we must, like Jeremiah, set a guard at the city portals, and insist that no anxiety should cross our threshold. Do you ask what sentry is strong enough to arrest the intrusion of burden-bearing thoughts? I reply, let the peace of God keep your mind and heart. Meet every anxiety with the one short, strong, sweet answer--God ; God will see to it; God will provide.

In verse 24 we are bidden diligently to hearken to God in this matter. It must therefore be within our power. The will can direct the thoughts to what object it chooses. Do not look down, but up; not backward or forward, but God-ward. It is right to think calmly and deliberately about the issues of things; but the allowance of foreboding anxiety is a positive sin against the love of God.

The result is beautiful. Obey God in this, and the King Himself shall enter the gates of your city (ver. 25). Your life will be filled with burnt-offerings and frankincense and thanksgiving (ver. 26). And from the perfect balance and rest of your nature you will be able to look out with equanimity on the storm and change around. We which have believed do enter into the Sabbatism which remaineth.

你們要謹慎，不要在安息日擔什麼擔子進入耶路撒冷的各門。 耶十七21

英文修訂本的邊註提到「你們要謹慎」也可譯作「要為你們的生命謹慎」，好像這裡所提到的事與上好生命的情況緊密相關。不是嗎？我們應當在心中保持永遠的安息，並且不擔任何的擔子進入生命之門，這難道不是一件極其重要的事嗎？即使我們從最低層面思考這個問題，沒有憂慮和煩惱就可以增加壽命，是多麼確定的事！但在最深的意義裡，我們必須如同耶利米在耶路撒冷城的入口設立守衛，並且堅持不讓憂慮進入我們的門檻。你詢問什麼樣的警衛足夠堅強來攔阻擔重擔的思想闖入？我回答，讓神的平安來保守你的心思意念。用「神」這個簡短、有力、親切的答案來面對每一個憂慮；神必負責；神必供應。

24節吩咐我們在「守安息日」這件事上要認真徹底聽從神。因此這必定是在我們能力範圍之內。我們的意志可以指引我們的思想選定什麼目標。你不要向下看，要向上看；不要向後或向前看，乃要向神看。鎮定並謹慎地思考問題，是正確的態度；但容許「預感不祥」而產生憂慮，是一種明確「抵擋神愛」的罪。

結果是美好的。在「守安息日」這件事上順服神，這位君王自己就要進入你城的各門(25節)。你的生命必充滿燔祭、乳香、和感謝祭(26節)。從你本性完美的平靜與安息中，你必能鎮定地觀看四圍的風暴與改變。我們這些相信的人必定進入那為我們存留的安息。

He made it again. Jer. 18:4

God wants to make the very best He can of each of his children. He puts us on his wheel, and subjects us to the discipline which He deems most likely to secure our greatest blessedness and usefulness. But, alas! How often He finds a marred vessel left on his hands when he desired and sought perfect beauty and strength! This is through no failure on his part; but because some bubble of vanity or grit of self-will has hindered Him.

Alas, how many have marred his work! What might we not have been, if only we had perfectly yielded to Him! It is enough to break our hearts to recall all the wasted and misspent years, when He would, but we would not.

When this has been the case, He does not cast us utterly away; but puts us afresh upon the wheel, and "makes us again." If He cannot do what He desired at the first, He will still make the best of us; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Let God take your life which has hitherto proved a failure; He will make of what remains of it more than men could make with all earthly advantages on their side, and with nothing to hinder its regular development.

Yield yourself afresh to God. Confess that you have marred his work. Humbly ask that He should make you again, as He made again Jacob and Peter and John and Mark. Only be careful in all time to come--first, to give God sufficient opportunity by waiting before Him; and secondly, to be very prompt to obey all that He may impress upon you as being his holy will. There is simply no limit to the progress and development of the soul which is able to meet God with a never-faltering "Yes." Let the lifelike clay in the potter's hands be plastic to its Maker's touch!

他又用這泥另作別的器皿。 耶十八4

神想要盡所能製作祂的每一位兒女。祂把我們放到祂的轉輪上，讓我們受管教，這管教是祂認為最有可能使我們得到最大的福分和益處。哎！但當祂渴望得到完全的美與力時，卻常常發現祂手上的器皿損壞了！這不是由於祂這面的失敗；而是因我們身上某個「虛榮」的氣泡，或「己意」的砂礫，攔阻了祂。

哎，多少人損壞了祂的工作！只要我們完全降服於祂，我們就不會成為這個樣子！回想起那些因祂願意，而我們不願意，所浪費的年歲，就足夠使我們心碎了。

在這種情況下，祂不徹底將我們拋棄，而將我們重新放到轉輪上，「再製作我們」。如果祂不能頭一次就作成祂所要的，祂仍要把我們作成上好的；神的軟弱還比人剛強（林前一25）。讓神掌管你的生命，雖然這生命到如今仍是失敗的；祂要用所餘剩的年日，作出比人用自己一切地上優勢作的更多，並且沒有任何東西阻攔其正常發展。

將你自己重新降服在神面前。承認你損壞了祂的工作。謙卑請求祂再來製作你，正如祂重新製作雅各、彼得、約翰、和馬可。你只要在所有的來日謹慎——首先，藉著在祂面前的等候，給神足夠的機會；其次，將祂所給你的一切感動，當作祂的聖潔旨意，立即順服。一個人能毫不猶疑回應神說：「是的」，他的進步與成長就沒有限量。但願這在窯匠手中栩栩如生的泥土，對神的觸摸是柔軟的！

A potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again. Jer. 19: 11

These words were spoken first of the inevitable judgments which were to befall Jerusalem. She who had been a chosen vessel was now to be broken beyond repair.

An earthen vessel is a true emblem of human life, so frail, so brittle. But there is something frailer yet in our resolutions and efforts after holiness. And when once these have failed us, we can never be again what we were. Always the crack, the rivets, the mark of the join.

In Gideon's days there was a light within the earthen vessels; and when these were broken it shone forth. There is, therefore, a breaking of the vessel which is salutary and desirable. And it is of this that Miss Taylor sings:

*Oh to be nothing, nothing!
Only to lie at his feet,
A broken and emptied vessel,
For the Master's use made meet.*

It reminds me of a piece of pottery I saw in the mountain burn, which was in the water and the water in it. If there be in any one of us a proud and evil disposition, a masterful self-will, which frets for its own way and makes itself strong against God, then indeed we may ask to be so broken as never to be whole again. "Take me--break me--make me," is a very wholesome prayer for us all.

The apostle speaks of the heavenly treasure in the earthen vessel. How wonderful it is that God should put so much of his spiritual ointment into such common and ordinary receptacles! No one detects what is in the saints till they are broken by sickness, pain, trouble; then the house is filled with the odour of the ointment.

正如人打碎窯匠的瓦器，以致不能再囫圇。 耶十九11 [囫圇：修復、回復完整。]

這些話最初是指著不可避免的審判要臨到耶路撒冷說的。耶路撒冷曾經是被揀選的瓦器，現在要被打碎，無法修復。

一個泥土做的瓦器，是人生命的真實象徵，很脆弱易碎。然而在我們追求成聖的決心和努力裡，還有更脆弱的情形。一旦我們的決心和努力都失敗時，我們就不可能再如起初一樣。總是有裂縫，鉚釘，接合的痕跡。

在基甸的日子，瓦器裡有火光(士七16-20)；當這些器皿破碎時，光就照出來。因此，打碎瓦器是有益並值得做的事。泰勒小姐為此歌唱：

但願成為無有，無有！
只俯伏在祂腳前，
一個破碎並倒空的器皿，
為著合乎我們主使用。

這使我想起在山中小溪見到的一件陶器，它在水中，水也在它裡面。如果在我們當中任何一個人的裡面，有驕傲和邪惡的性情，固執地想要控制別人，焦躁地行自己的路，並使自己大大地違抗神，那麼我們確實可以求主破碎這器皿，直到不能再復原。「接納我 — 破碎我 — 塑造我。」是一個對我們所有的人都非常有益的禱告。

使徒保羅說到天上的寶貝放在瓦器裡(林後四7)。何等奇妙，神竟將如此多的屬靈膏油，放在如此普通、平凡的容器裡！沒有人會發覺聖徒裡面的東西，直到他們被疾病、痛苦、苦難所破碎；然後房間裡就充滿了膏油的香氣。

I am weary with forbearing and cannot contain. Jer. 20:9 (R.V.)

The prophet had looked for marvellous results from his preaching. So great was his consciousness that God's word was on his lips, and his power with him, that he expected by his ministry to arrest the decay of his people. And when, instead of the success he sought, he found himself in the stocks, he was tempted to feel that God had excited hopes which were not destined to be realized. He did not give sufficient weight to man's awful power of resisting and neutralizing God's best designs. We say this reverently, and use human methods of speech.

Yet, on the other hand, as he reviewed the steps by which he had come to act and speak as he did, he felt that he could not have done differently. And though he were suddenly to repress himself, the divine inward impulse would sweep away all his constraints, and assert itself in irresistible might. It was of no use placing the bushel over the light, for the light would burn the bushel; useless to shut in the fire, for the fire would burn through every obstacle to its flames.

What a glorious state of heart to be in! We have sometimes been weary in God's service; but oh, it would be a greater weariness if we were dismissed from it. To speak is an awful responsibility and weight; but not to speak would be impossible. Have you the burning heart? Do you know what it is to feel unable to contain yourself, since the love of Jesus constrains? If not, daily pray that God may light a burning fire in your bones.

*O God! make free
This barren, shackled earth, so deadly cold;
Breathe gently forth thy spring, till winter flees
In rude amazement!*

我就含忍不住，不能自禁。 耶二十9

這位先知曾經期待他的傳講會產生驚人的果效。因他很強烈地感受到神的話語在他嘴上，神的能力與他同在，所以他期待他傳講的事奉可以阻止百姓腐敗。但當他發現自己被上了枷鎖，而不是他所想要的亨通，他忍不住覺得神所燃起的希望，註定不會實現。先知對人的反對及抵銷神美好計畫的力量，沒有給予足夠的重視。我們恭敬地做這樣的解釋，是用人所能理解的話。

然而，另一方面，在他回顧過去說話行事的每一步時，他覺得他不能有別的作法。即使他突然克制自己，神在他裡面的衝擊也會掃除所有的約束，並用不可抗拒的力量宣講出來。將量器罩在燈上是沒用的，因為燈會把量器燒壞；將火圍住也是沒有用的，因為火會燒掉任何阻擋火苗的障礙。

人的心將要在何等榮耀的光景中！有時我們對服事神感到疲憊；但如果我們從那裡退去，將更加疲憊。為神傳講是一個令人畏懼的責任與重擔，但不傳講卻是不可能的。你有沒有火熱焚燒的心？你知道因為耶穌的愛在催逼，而情不自禁的感覺嗎？如果沒有這樣的感覺，就每天禱告，求神可以在你的骨頭中點起焚燒的火。

神啊，求你釋放
這貧瘠、禁錮、冰冷的大地；
溫和地呼出你的春天，
直到寒冬在突然的驚愕中逃去！

Peradventure the Lord will deal with us according to all his wondrous works. Jer. 21 : 2 (R.V.)

IT was during the last extremity of the siege that Zedekiah sent this message to Jeremiah. His people and he had postponed their compliance with the warnings and invitations of God's love till the last possible hour, and now they were more eager for immunity from the consequences of their sins than to repent and return to God. The answer was immediate-- that matters must now be allowed to take their course. It was, however, added that even now all who dared to act in faith and go out to the besiegers would save their lives.

What a test of faith was here! It seemed as though it were worth while to risk everything and stay in the city rather than venture out to those terrible hosts that were gathered around. But there was no alternative. To stay in the city was certain death; to go forth into what seemed certain death would secure life. Men may reach a certain point in wrongdoing when the disasters their sins have courted are inevitable. As they have sown, they must reap. They have set the rocks rolling, and they must see the devastation wrought on their homes. Yet, even then, there is a way of escape.

Still God pleads with men, as in the 8th verse: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword; he that goeth out and falleth away to the Chaldeans shall live." This surely is the exact counterpart of the words which our Lord is recorded as having spoken on four different occasions: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, the same shall save it." There is a strange reversal of human imaginations at the cross of Christ!

或者耶和華照他一切奇妙的作為待我們。 耶二十一2

這是在耶路撒冷城被圍困的最後一個窘境中，猶大王西底家將這信息傳給耶利米。王和他的百姓拖延遵行神愛的警戒與勸導直到最後一刻，並且這時他們迫切想要避免他們犯罪的後果，而不是想要悔改轉向神。神即刻回答他們——事情必須順其自然發展下去。然而，又補充說：即使現在，所有勇敢靠信心行事而投降圍困他們的，都可以保全他們的性命。

這是信心一個何等的考驗！看起來好像值得付上任何代價留在城裡，而不是冒險出去到聚在周圍的可怕敵軍那裡。但沒有其他的選擇。留在城裡肯定死；出去到如同必死之地的，卻保全性命。人可能犯罪到一個地步，他們的罪所招來的災難成為不可避免的。照著他們所種的，他們必須收割。他們使石頭開始滾動，就必定看見毀壞臨到他們的家園。然而，即使在那時，還有一條路可以逃脫。

神依然向人懇求，正如第8節的經文：「你要對這百姓說：『耶和華如此說：看哪，我將生命的路，和死亡的路，擺在你們面前。住在這城裡的必遭刀劍、...而死。但出去向...迦勒底人投降的，必得存活。』」這些話的確如同我們的主在四個不同場合所說的話：「愛惜自己生命的，就喪掉生命；為我喪掉生命的，必救了生命。」在基督的十字架前，有一種與人的想像奇妙顛倒之處！

Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness. Jer. 22: 13

This denunciation was probably against the king himself. But it has a much fuller reference. He was the godless son of a godly father, whose character is sketched in three particulars. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; it was well with him; it was to know God. But the son had reversed all this. He built his palace of unrighteousness, his chambers of covetousness; but its width of space could not obliterate the memory of the forced and unpaid labour by which it had been reared. And God would plead and avenge the cause of those oppressed labourers.

When we see the splendid piles of business buildings reared by monopolists who thrive by making existence impossible to smaller but industrious tradesmen; when we hear of the vast fortunes made out of strong drink; or the manipulation of the market by millionaires, that make honest business impossible--we recur to these terrible words. God still arises to avenge the cause of the poor and needy. There is a God who judges in the earth.

In our vast cities it is not easy to trace the incidence of the divine displeasure on a family of wrongdoers. Those who reside in our villages and country towns, and have long memories, could tell of many corroborations in their own knowledge. But there is another side to this. God's children can afford to be generous and openhanded to their employees, because their Father is rich. "He is able to make all grace abound towards us... that we may abound." Let us maintain his honour, and his family name, by fair dealing. They who know God, judge the cause of the poor and needy; and for those who do this it is well (ver. 16).

那行不義蓋房... 的，有禍了。 耶二十二13

這個公開的譴責可能是針對猶大王約雅敬本人。這譴責提及更詳盡的事。他是敬虔的約西亞王一個不敬虔的兒子，約西亞王的品格有三個特點：為困苦和窮乏人伸冤、得福樂、認識神(16節)。但這個兒子把所有這些特點都顛倒了。他建不義的宮殿、貪婪的房屋；但寬敞的樓房不能塗掉使用不付工資強迫勞工造樓房的記憶(13-14節)。神要為那些被欺壓的工人伸冤。

當我們看見那些壟斷的商人所建成堆的商業大樓，這些商人致富是靠著扼殺勤勞的小生意人，使其無法生存；當我們聽到人靠著烈酒賺取大量財富；或是百萬富翁操縱市場，使誠實的事業無法經營 — 我們就重新想到這可畏的話語。神仍然興起，為困苦和窮乏的人伸冤。有一位神在地上施行審判。

在我們廣闊的城市裡，不容易看到神的怒氣臨到一個行惡的家族。那居住在我們村莊或鄉下城鎮，並有著較長久記憶的人，可以訴說許多他們自己所知確實的例證。但這還有另一面。神的兒女能夠慷慨大方地對待他們的雇員，因為他們的父神是富有的。「神能將各樣的恩惠多多的加給你們，使你們凡事常常充足。(林後九8)」但願我們藉著公平待人，來維護祂的尊榮以及神家的名譽。凡認識神的人，就當為困苦和窮乏人伸冤；如此行的人，就得了福樂(16節)。

If they had stood in my council, . . . Jer. 23:22 (R.V.)

Here is the cause of so much failure in Christian work--God's servants do not stand in God's council. The previous words explain what is meant by not standing in God's council: "I sent not these prophets, yet they ran; I spake not unto them, yet they prophesied." Alas! these words write our own sentence. Too often we run without being sent, and prophesy because the hour has struck, rather than because the message of God has been given! We do not stand in God's council.

"But if they had stood." . . . We gather, therefore, that the stream of prophetic teaching was not limited to Jeremiah alone. There was no necessary exclusiveness in the divine arrangements. He was chosen, and used as God's agent and medium, because he stood in his council. And the others might have had the same privilege if they had conformed to the same conditions.

Let us claim the positive assurance of this promise. We see where we have fallen short of God's ideal but we can retrace our steps; we can renounce our fussy activities; refrain from the desire to be always to the front; and wait more absolutely on God for his thoughts, and words, and messages. A Christian worker once complained to George Müller that he had not time enough for the study of the Word and prayer; and the veteran saint asked in reply, whether an hour's less work, with the soul dwelling in the full light of God, and therefore actuated by his impulses, would not be more prosperous and effective than five hours spent under the perpetual fever of our own will and way. Be right with God, and the people shall be caused to hear, and shall be turned.

他們若是站在我的會中，... 耶二十三22

這就是基督信仰的事工有很大失敗的原因——神的僕人沒有站在神的會中。前文(21節)解釋了「沒有站在神的會中」是什麼意思：「我沒有打發那些先知，他們竟自奔跑；我沒有對他們說話，他們竟自預言。」哎！這些話語描述我們自己的刑罰。太多時候我們奔跑卻沒有受差遣，發預言因為時間已經到了，卻不是因為神已經賜下信息！我們沒有站在神的會中。

「他們若是站在...」。因此我們推測：預言教導的水流並不局限於耶利米一人。在神的安排裡面，沒有必然的排他性。耶利米被揀選，被使用作為神的代表與媒介，因為他站在神的會中。如果其他的人符合同樣的條件，他們也可以有同樣的特權。

讓我們取用這應許的確實保證。我們看到我們在哪裡構不上神的標準，我們可以折回原路；我們可以放棄過分講究細節的活動；克制總想出風頭的慾望；並且更多全心等候神的意念、話語和信息。有一位基督的工人曾向慕勒·喬治[請參：耶十章邁爾靈修短篇註]抱怨他沒有足夠的時間研讀神的話及禱告；這位老練的聖徒反問他，減少一小時的事工，而停留在神充足的光中，受祂的感動激勵，是否比按我們的定意與方法，不斷發熱心五個小時，更興旺更有果效呢？你要與神有正確的關係，人們就必來聽，並轉向神。

And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. Jer. 24: 7

An heart to know! We know God with our heart, the seat of our moral life, and specially of our affections. As the apostle puts it, it is needful that the eyes of our heart should be opened that we should know. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. He that loveth knoweth God, and is known of Him. If there is anything unloving in your nature, it will blur your knowledge of God, as condensed breath on a window-pane will shut out the fairest landscape. But the heart which knows God is his dear gift. Be willing to have it; ask for it, and it shall be yours.

The special aspect in which we are led to know God is as Jehovah--that He is the I AM, the unchanging, ever-loving one; the God who comes down to deliver and save. This is the aspect that we need most. When overcome with failure and sin; when thoroughly discouraged with abortive efforts; when overtaken by some sudden gust of temptation--we need to know that our sin cannot surprise God, or staunch his love, or wear out his patience.

But what a word is this, that we shall be his people and He our God! Oh, infinite God, how canst Thou take such as we are--nay, I will not speak of others, but of myself--such as I am, to be thy own peculiar treasure! I dare not look back on my past, or in upon my heart, but only out and away to thy great mercy; for I am most weak and unworthy. But I will for ever adore Thee for choosing me--not because of aught in myself, but for thy love and mercy's sake. Moreover, Thou hast given me Thyself. What can I want beside Thee? Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

他們要作我的子民，我要作他們的神。 耶二十四7

一顆要認識的心！我們用我們的心認識神，心是我們道德生命的所在，特別是我們「愛慕」的所在。正如使徒保羅所說，我們心眼需要被開啟才會認識。沒有愛心的，就不認識神；因為神就是愛（約壹四8）。有愛心的就認識神，神也認識他。如果在你的性情中有任何無愛的事物，就會使你對神的認識變模糊，如同在窗戶玻璃上濃縮的霧氣會遮蔽最美麗的風景。但「一顆認識神的心」是祂寶貴的禮物。要願意擁有這禮物；要為這禮物向神祈求，你就必得著。

在一個特別的方面，我們受帶領認識神是耶和華 — 認識祂是「我是」的神，永不改變，永遠慈愛的神；祂是那位下來施拯救的神。這是我們最需要的一面。在被失敗和罪打倒時；在努力失敗而徹底灰心時；在被某個突然來的試探襲擊時 — 我們需要知道我們的罪不會讓神驚訝，不會制止祂的愛，也不會耗盡祂的忍耐。

我們要作祂的子民，祂要作我們的神，這是何等的話語！無限的神啊，你何竟接納像我們這樣的人 — 我不是說別人，而是說我自己 — 像我這樣的人，成為屬你的奇特珍寶（出十九5，此處「子民」希伯來文作「珍寶」，詩一三五4亦同）！我不敢回顧我的過去，也不敢往裡看我的內心，只是向外並向遠處看你偉大的憐憫，因我極其軟弱不配。但我必永遠因你揀選我而尊崇你 — 不是因任何在我裡面的，而是因你的愛與憐憫的緣故。不僅如此，你已經將你自己給了我。除你以外我還要什麼呢？你是我心裡的力量，又是我的福分，直到永遠（詩七十三26）。

Should ye be utterly unpunished? Jer. 25:29 (R.V.)

This is a terrible chapter, in which the disasters that were to befall all the surrounding nations are described as a potion presented to each for drinking. If any refuse, the answer is to be given in the words before us, which suggest those of Peter: "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4: 17).

God always begins with his own people, because their sins traduce his character and bring it into contempt; and because sinners might otherwise establish a just charge of favouritism against Him. Besides, He loves them so dearly that He is eager to see them rid, as soon as may be, from the blight and parasitism of evil. It is a terrible thing to be an inconsistent child of God; for just in proportion to his love for you will God put forth the most strenuous and unremitting efforts to bring you back to Himself. This thought may arrest you, when you are being led into sinful ways. You will have to come out of them, sooner or later, if you are truly God's child. But the anguish of your extrication will be in proportion to the sinful delight of your self-indulgence.

But if the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Even though Babylon had done God service, as the instrument of his chastisement to his own people; yet, because in performing thus she had grossly sinned, she must drink the cup of his wrath. O disobedient and ungodly soul, thou mayest serve God's purpose, yet He will not let thee be unpunished. Your condemnation now for a long time lingereth not.

你們能盡免刑罰嗎？ 耶二十五29

這是可怕的一章經文，其中描述將要臨到四圍所有列邦的災禍，乃是給各國喝神忿怒的一杯酒。如果有任何人拒絕，答案就是上述的「你們能盡免刑罰嗎？」。這讓人想到彼得的話：「時候到了，審判要從神的家起首。若是先從我們起首，那不信從神福音的人，將有何等的結局呢？（彼前四17）」

神總是從祂自己的百姓開始，因為他們的罪行使祂的品格被譏謗、受藐視；也因為若不這樣做，罪人可能會對神提出「偏袒」的控訴。除此之外，祂深愛祂的百姓，渴望看到他們儘快脫離邪惡的病害和寄生。作為一個反覆無常的兒女是一件多麼可怕的事；因為按祂給你愛的比例，神要用同樣強勁、不懈的努力將你帶回到祂那裡。當你被引入犯罪的路徑時，這個意念可以阻止你。如果你真是神的兒女，遲早你必要從這些犯罪的路徑出來。然而「脫離罪」的痛苦，將會與你沉溺在罪中的快樂成正比。

但若是義人僅僅得救，那不虔敬和犯罪的人，將有何地可站呢？（彼前四18）。儘管巴比倫作為神懲罰祂百姓的工具，完成了神的使命；然而因為巴比倫執行這使命時，嚴重地犯罪，就必須自己也喝下神忿怒的杯。叛逆、不敬虔的人啊！雖然你可能為神的旨意效勞，然而祂不會使你免去刑罰。既然你的刑罰已定很久，就不會拖延了。

The Lord sent me to prophesy . . . Therefore amend your ways and your doings. Jer. 26: 12, 13

Naturally, Jeremiah was constituted with a very nervous and sensitive disposition. He compares himself to a child that cannot speak; he laments that he had been born into such troublous times. But at the moment of his call it was distinctly promised that he should be made from that day "a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the kings, princes, priests, and people of the land." Though they should fight against him, they should not prevail (Jer. 1: 18, 19).

What an admirable comment on that promise is presented by this chapter! Here is this timid man standing alone for God against this surging multitude, in which priest and people are merged. Though his life is in the balance, and it might seem necessary to purchase it by absolute silence, he refuses to hold his peace; he insists that God has sent him, and calls on the maddened crowd to amend their ways and return unto Jehovah. Had John the Baptist spoken thus, or John Knox, we had not been surprised. But for this sensitive, retiring man to speak thus is due to the transforming power of the grace of God.

There is hope here for those who are naturally reticent and backward, reserved and timid. Take your nature to God, and ask Him to encrust it with iron and brass. Above all, seek a vivid realization that God is with you. Then open your mouth and speak. Greater is He that is in and with you, than he that is in the world. To have a conviction that God has sent; to know and feel his inspiration thrilling the soul--is utterly essential to strength of purpose and action. When we know that the living Father hath sent us, and is with us, we can stand as a brazen wall.

耶和華差遣我預言，... 現在要改正你們的行動作為。 耶二十六12-13

耶利米天生具有非常緊張敏感的性格。他將自己比作一個不善說話的孩子(耶一6)，並哀嘆自己生在這樣動亂的時代。但當他蒙召的那一刻，就清楚得到應許，他要成為「堅城、鐵柱、銅牆，與... 君王、首領、祭司，並地上的眾民反對。」雖然他們要攻擊他，卻不能勝他(耶一18-19)。

這一章經文對於那個應許，呈現出一個多麼卓越的註解！這個膽怯的人在這裡獨自為神站住，抵擋洶湧而來的群眾，其中混雜著祭司和百姓。儘管他的性命危在旦夕，看來有必要用絕對的沉默來保住生命，但他拒絕保持緘默；他堅持神差遣他，要求這忿怒的人群改正他們的行為，並回轉歸向耶和華。如果施洗約翰或約翰·諾克斯[註]說這樣的話，我們並不會感到驚訝；但這位敏感、害羞的人這樣說話，乃是因為神恩典改變的大能。

對那些天生寡言畏縮、拘謹膽怯的人，這裡有個希望。把你的生性帶到神那裡，請求祂用鐵和銅作外殼覆蓋它。首先要尋求神與你同在那活的真實感。然後才開你的口說話。在你裡面與你同在的這一位，祂比那在世界上的更大(約壹四4)。確定神已經差遣你；認識並感受祂的啟示激動你的心——這是你的決心和行動不可或缺的力量。當我們知道永活的天父已經差遣我們並與我們同在，我們就可以站立如銅牆。

[註] 約翰·諾克斯 John Knox, 1514-1572, 蘇格蘭最重要的宗教改革家之一，是一位思想敏捷、口才流利、剛強精明、不屈不撓的人。一生事奉歷程轟轟烈烈，其講道、著述及事奉，均對他那一代人影響甚廣。

The nation.., which will not serve the king of Babylon, will I punish. Jer. 27: 8

It may be that, like the people of Israel, you have grossly sinned and violated the bonds of holy fellowship and relationship with God. The result of this not improbably has been some form of chastisement and disaster, which lies heavily on your life. This is what the invasion of the king of Babylon was to Israel and the surrounding nations. Now learn from these striking words that your best attitude is one of humble and reverent submission. Put your neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon. When Samuel told Eli the inevitable results of his negligence to correct and restrain his son, the old man said, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good." Through the infliction of his troubles he discerned the right-ordering and permissive providence of God.

So let it be with you. Accept the deserved chastisement, remembering that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Look beyond the pride and cruelty of man to the permissive providence of your heavenly Father. Set yourself to learn and take well to heart the lessons of the present discipline. It is for a limited period. Do you feel that men meanwhile are going beyond their rights? Avenge not yourself; give place before their wrath; leave the matter with God; vengeance is his--He will recompense.

"To confess ignorance," says a great preacher, "to confess wrong, to admit incapacity, to decline a reputation to which we have no right--these things, and others of the same kind, are often hard and painful, but they are always of the greatest possible value in bracing the character."

無論哪一邦，... 不肯服事這巴比倫王，... 我必 ... 刑罰那邦。 耶二十七8

你可能如以色列民一樣嚴重地犯罪，而破壞與神聖潔交通及與祂關係的約束。其結果不無可能是某種形式的懲罰和災難，沉重壓在你身上。這就是巴比倫王的入侵以色列和周圍列國。現在從這些不尋常的話語中學習，你最好的態度就是謙卑、恭敬的順服。把你的頸項放在巴比倫王的軛下(8, 12節)。當撒母耳告訴以利，因他沒有改正並禁止他兒子的惡行，而帶來不可避免的後果時，這位老人說，「這是出於耶和華，願祂憑自己的意旨而行。(撒三11-14, 18)」通過他所遭遇的苦難，他看清了神公義的命令，和神許可的安排(撒四1-11)。

但願你也是如此。接受該受的懲罰，記住「主所愛的，祂必管教，又鞭打凡所收納的兒子。(來十二6)」謙卑服在神大能的手下(彼前五6)。你的眼光要越過人的驕傲與殘暴，看到天父所許可的安排。努力學習當下受管教的功課，並存記在心。懲罰只是暫時的。同時你感受到人正在越過他們的權限嗎？不要為自己伸冤；容讓人發怒；將這事交給神；伸冤在神 — 祂必報應(羅十二19)。

一位偉大的傳道人說道：「承認無知、承認錯誤、承認無能，拒絕我們不該得的美名 — 這些事，以及其他同類的事，通常艱難且痛苦，但在堅固品格的事上，總是有最大的價值。」

Amen! the Lord do so; the Lord perform thy words. . . . Nevertheless. Jer. 28: 6, 7

The prophecy of Hananiah of the speedy return of the exiles and the break-up of the power of the king of Babylon was evidently dictated by the desire to win popularity with the people. He spoke in the name of Jehovah, and may even have supposed that his message was divinely given; but his soul was filled with human voices and reasonings, which made him unable to distinguish the still small voice of inspiration. Jeremiah was quite as anxious as he was that his country should be spared further suffering. He uttered a fervent Amen to Hananiah's predictions. Nothing could have given him deeper pleasure than their realization; but standing as he did in the counsels of God, he knew it could not be.

So is it still. Men who follow simply their own thoughts, or are deeply dyed with the spirit of society around, are apt to prophesy smooth things to such as live selfish and worldly lives. "There is no such place as the outer darkness; no such experience as the second death." So they speak. But we know it cannot be. Earnestly as we might wish for it, and say Amen, we know, nevertheless, that it cannot be immaterial how men live, and that wickedness must bring infinite anguish and pain. How terrible will their position be at last, who cried Peace, Peace, when there was none, and encouraged rebellion against the Lord.

There are false prophets still who encourage men in their evil ways, as they paint roseate views of the future, and encourage them to believe that though they sin, the future will not be so dark as they have been led to fear. Hard as it will be for all who perish out of Christ, for these there will be an additional anguish. See Matt. 5: 19.

阿們！願耶和華如此行，願耶和華成就你所預言的話，... 然而 ... 耶二十八6-7

哈拿尼雅預言被擄的很快就要歸回，並且巴比倫王的權勢要被折斷，顯然是由於他想要在百姓中間得名聲。他奉耶和華的名說話，也許甚至以為他的信息是神給的；但他的心充滿了人的聲音和推理，這讓他無法分辨神啟示的微小聲音。耶利米也像哈拿尼雅一樣切望他的國家免受更多的苦難。他對哈拿尼雅的預測，發出了強烈的「阿們」(6節)。沒有什麼比哈拿尼雅所說的得應驗，能使耶利米有更深的喜悅；但當他如同先前站在神的會中(耶廿三22)，他就知道事情不是這樣。

現今的情況依然如此。單單跟隨自己的思想，或深深被周圍社會風氣影響的人，很容易向過自私屬世生活的人預言事事順利。他們說：「沒有叫作『外面的黑暗』的地方(太八12, 廿二13, 廿五30)；也沒有叫作『第二次的死』的經歷(啟廿6, 14, 廿一8)。」但我們知道，事實並非如此。可能我們真心希望如此，並說阿們；然而我們知道，人的行事為人如何，並非不重要；惡行必定帶來無盡的痛苦。當沒有平安時，他們喊著平安了、平安了(耶六14)，並鼓勵人與耶和華對抗，這樣的人最終的下場將何等可怕啊。

現在依然有假先知鼓勵人行惡，他們描繪未來幸福的美景，並鼓勵人相信：即使他們犯罪，未來並不會那麼黑暗，像他們過去受教導要懼怕的。所有在基督以外死的，都必有艱難；而假先知必有額外的痛苦。請看馬太福音五章19節。

Seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives. Jer. 29: 7

For seventy years the captives must make themselves at home and happy in Babylon. It was of no use to scheme and plot a speedier return. They must work out the predicted seventy years; and in the meanwhile let them seek the peace of the great heathen city to which they had been borne, and pray, not only for Jerusalem, but for it.

How many who read these lines are captives in positions against their will and choice. Servants and governesses in worldly homes; apprentices and clerks amid uncongenial associates; travellers in distant towns and commercial hotels; people in all kinds of positions in which they would not choose to be.

The natural tendency of all such is to fret, and begin endeavouring to secure their emancipation and removal. "Let me get away from this as soon as possible." Or, at least, if unable to get free, they take as little interest as possible in their immediate associates, making themselves cold, and stiff, and inaccessible. This is not God's way. Wherever you find yourself, seek the peace and comfort of those about you. Jesus bade us salute those who do not salute us, and lift our voices in intercessory prayer for our oppressors and persecutors.

God had a special purpose in allowing the captivity of his people into Babylon. It was to scatter synagogues and the Old Testament, in preparation for the Gospel. The transportation of Stundists to Siberia will affect the religious life of that great tract for all the future. You are carried into captivity to bring the Gospel to many who would otherwise never hear of it. Wherever God shall open the door, leave behind the bright and genial impression of a holy, loving personality.

我所使你們被擄到的那城，你們要為那城求平安。 耶二十九7

七十年之久這些被擄的人必須在巴比倫安然定居。企圖策劃更早歸回是沒有用處的。他們必須過完所預告的七十年；同時要為他們出生的那個異教的城市求平安，不僅為耶路撒冷祈禱，也為他們所在的城市祈禱。

多少讀到這幾節經文的人，處在被擄的境遇中，違背自己的意願與選擇。在非信徒的家庭中當僕人或家庭教師；在志趣不投的同事中當學徒或職員；在遙遠城市和商業旅館裡作遊客；在各種不是自己所選擇的處境中。

所有這樣的人，他們自然的傾向就是焦慮，並且開始努力要取得解脫、遷移。「讓我儘快離開這個境遇」。或者如果不能得到自由，至少他們盡可能對身邊的同事表示缺乏興趣，讓自己顯得冰冷、拘謹、不易接近。這不是神的路。無論你在哪裡，都要為你周圍的人求平安和安舒。耶穌吩咐我們要向那些不向我們問安的人問安(太五47)，要為逼迫我們的人揚聲禱告(太五44)。

神允許祂的百姓被擄到巴比倫，祂有一個特別的用意。那就是為了散播會堂和舊約聖經，為福音作預備[註1]。斯頓德教派[註2]被遷移到西伯利亞，就影響了那廣大區域的人以後的信仰生活。你被擄是為了將福音帶給許多人，否則這些人沒有機會聽到福音。無論神在哪裡開門，你要留下一個聖潔、有愛心的品格所產生那明亮、可親的印象。

[註1] 猶太人的會堂就是在被擄之地才開始有的，並且到處成立；舊約聖經也是因著被擄才帶到外邦。

[註2] 斯頓德教派Stundists, 俄羅斯新教徒的一教派。是德國的浸信會宣教產生的，約創立於1860年代，靠近黑海的港口奧得沙。他們因注重定時讀經禱告而得名(德文stunden意:鐘點)，也拒絕神職人員的控制，不注重敬拜神的外在儀文。

But I will not make a full end of thee. Jer. 30:11 (R.V.)

There is a great difference between the punishment of the ungodly and the chastisement of God's children. In the former case there is destruction. The sirocco passes over the grass, and there is nought left but burnt and withered stubble. In the latter case there will be restoration and an aftermath.

Are you just now passing through a season of chastisement and pain? Take to heart these tender words: God will not make a full end of you. It may seem as though nothing will be left: the furnace is so hot; the stock is cut down so near to the ground. But God knows just how much you can bear, and will stay his hand. "I will not make a full end of thee."

He will correct us with judgment. There is need for Him to correct us; so much requires pruning away, and refining. But if He were not to exercise great judgment, the soul would fail before Him. This is why we are told that the Father is the Husbandman. To no other hand could He entrust this delicate and sacred work: and while his eye and hand are full of eagerness to accomplish his purpose, they always move at the dictate of his judgment. His hand is always on our pulse.

Chastening also anticipates a blessed restoration. This chapter has many tender gleams of hope in it. "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord." "I will turn again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have compassion on his dwelling places." Look forward, poor suffering one! Beyond the dark clouds light is shining on the hills. When the discipline is over the Lord will take you to his care, wash your stripes, restore comforts to you, and give harvests of joy.

卻不將你滅絕淨盡。 耶三十11

懲罰不敬虔之人(羅一18)與管教神的兒女，有很大的不同。不敬虔之人的懲罰是毀滅。西羅科風[從撒哈拉沙漠吹來的熱風]颳過草原，除了燒焦枯萎的殘梗之外，沒有留下什麼。然而神兒女的管教必有恢復和再生。

你現在正經過管教和痛苦的時期嗎？要將這句慈愛的話語存記在心：神不會將你滅絕淨盡。雖然看起來好像沒有留下什麼：火爐那麼熱；樹幹被砍到接近地面。但神知道你能承擔多少，而停下祂的手。「我不會將你滅絕淨盡。」

祂用審判改正我們。我們需要祂來改正；需要許多的修剪和煉淨。如果祂不施行大的審判，人就會在祂面前失敗。這就是為什麼聖經告訴我們，天父是農夫(約十五1直譯)。祂不將這樣精巧、神聖的工作交託給任何人：當祂的眼和手滿了期盼要完成祂的旨意時，祂的眼和手還是按照祂審判的指示行動。祂的手總是按在我們的脈搏上，隨時把握情況。

管教也預期一個蒙福的恢復。這一章經文有很多盼望的慈愛光輝在裡面。「耶和華說，我必使你痊癒，醫好你的傷痕。(17節)」「我必使雅各被擄去的帳棚歸回，也必顧惜他的住處。(18節)」可憐受苦的人啊，往前看吧！越過烏雲，亮光正閃耀在山頭上。在管教結束後，主必照顧你，洗你的鞭傷，重新安慰你，並給你喜樂的豐收。

I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Jer. 31: 3

We who by faith are the children of Abraham may claim and muse upon these sweet and tender words.

God's love to us is not of to-day or yesterday. It did not originate in any movement of our heart towards Himself, or even on that day of days when Jesus died. You must go back beyond your birth, beyond Calvary and Bethlehem, beyond the fall of man and the Garden of Eden, and as you stand looking out into the immensity of eternity, dare to believe that you were loved and chosen in Christ, the object of God's most tender solicitude and pity.

Does the thought overpower you? Notice the divine asseveration. Yea, there can be no doubt about it. Beyond this divine asseveration it is impossible for us to go. By word and oath God, who cannot lie, has given us strong assurance that it is even so.

But now see what comes out of this long, long love. God must have known the worst about us before He set his love on us; then He cannot be surprised as, in the work of education, He comes across evils that horrify and dismay us. He knew all this, and worse. Only let that love have its way. It is a universal and invincible solvent. It will yet rid you bit by bit of these hard and evil elements. The very rocks shall flow down at his presence.

The R.V. marginal reading gives a further thought. The fountains of God's love rise in eternity, and therefore cannot be exhausted by the demands of time. He will continue his loving-kindness. Resisted, disappointed, disregarded, his compassions will not fail until they have overcome and expelled our selfishness, and filled us with the love of God.

我以永遠的愛愛你。 耶三十一3

我們因信成為亞伯拉罕子孫的人，可以領受並默想這些甜美、仁慈的話語。

神對我們的愛不是來自今日或昨日。這愛並不由於我們的心歸向祂的任何舉動而產生，甚至也不是在耶穌受死的那一天開始的。你必須回溯越過你的出生，越過各各他山[耶穌釘十字架]和伯利恒[耶穌出生]，越過人的墮落和伊甸園，並且當你站著向永恆的無限觀看時，要勇敢相信，你在基督裡已蒙愛且被揀選，成為神最親愛掛念與憐惜的對象。

這個思想是否征服了你？請注意神這個鄭重聲明。是的，這是無可置疑。我們不可能越過神這鄭重聲明。神不說謊，祂藉著言語和起誓，給我們堅定的保證。

但現在，請看從這久遠的愛產生什麼。神必定在開始愛我們之前，就已經知道最壞的情況；因此在教育我們的工作中，遇到那些使我們驚嚇不安的邪惡，祂並不驚奇。祂知道這一切，甚至更糟的情形。我們只要讓祂的愛隨意而行。這愛是全面且無敵的溶劑。祂的愛要把那些頑固邪惡的成分，一點點從你身上除掉。就是石頭也必在祂面前流下去。

英文修訂本的邊註提供了更深的思考。神愛的泉源發自永遠，因此不會被在時間裡的需求所耗盡。神必持續祂的慈愛。雖遭抵擋、失望、輕視，祂的憐憫必不停止，直到勝過並除去我們的自私，並用祂的愛來充滿我們。

I bought the field. Jer. 32: 9

What could better manifest the heroic audacity of faith? The Chaldeans infested the land, and Jeremiah knew by the word of the Lord that they were destined to hold both it and the city. And yet at the divine command he bought a piece of land which was in possession of the foe, with as much formality as though he were at once to enter upon its possession.

He obeyed the divine command, and then poured out his soul in prayer; nourishing his faith by the contemplation of the might of God in creation, for which nothing was too hard. Surely if God could make the heavens and the earth by his great power and by his stretched-out arm, He could easily bring it to pass that the Chaldeans should recede from the land, Israel again inhabit it, and the purchase and tenure of property be unhindered. Faith made the unseen visible, and the distant near; and enabled the prophet to take them into his calculations, and regulate his action in view of them. Herein the man of faith differs from others. They base their calculations and actions upon certain facts and considerations which are within view of their senses; while he takes into his estimate a number of other facts and considerations of which they have no knowledge, and which can only be recognized through the revelation of God's Spirit.

As that land was purchased, though still in the enemy's possession--so Israel is God's possession, though under the bondage of unbelief; so the bodies of God's saints are his purchased possession, though now under the reign of corruption; so does this world belong to Christ. O man of faith, count on these things as facts.

我便 ... 買了 ... 那塊地。 耶三十二9

有什麼能更充分表明信心的英勇膽量呢？迦勒底人侵襲這地，耶利米藉著耶和華的話語，知道迦勒底人註定要掌管這地和耶路撒冷城。然而照著神的命令，耶利米買了一塊地，當時這地在敵人的佔領之下，他依照正式手續購買，就好像立刻可擁有這塊地。

他聽從神的命令，之後在禱告中傾吐他的心意；藉著默想神創造的大能培養他的信心，在神創造的大能之下，沒有難成的事(17節)。如果神能藉著祂的大能和伸出來的膀臂創造天地，祂當然可以輕易讓巴比倫人退出這地，讓以色列人再居住在其上，而地產的購買和擁有就不受到妨礙。信心使「未見之事」顯明，使遠處的變近；信心使先知耶利米將這些都納入他的估算，根據這樣的眼光，規範他的行動。在這裡這位有信心的人與別人不同。別人的估算和行動，根據他們感覺得到的確定事實和考量；然而先知將許多別人所不知的事實和考量納入他的評估，這些事實和考量只有透過神的靈開啟才能辨認。

在購買那塊地的時候，雖然地仍在敵人的佔領之下 — 如同以色列是神的產業，雖然還在不信的捆綁之下；又如同聖徒的身體是祂買來的產業(參:林前六19-20, 多二14)，儘管如今還在敗壞的轄制之下；又如同這個世界是屬於基督的。有信心的人啊，要將這些事當作事實來仰賴。

Call unto Me, and I will answer thee. Jer. 33 : 3

We must learn the sacred art of prayer. God says, "Call unto Me." He likes us to address Him in prayer. We may surely believe that He will do the best, but this may degenerate into a subtle excuse for lethargy; and therefore we must be stirred by the invitation to call upon Him. There is no assurance that He will show us these great and difficult things, unless we obey the injunction of our text to call on Him. But be sure and wait before Him until He teaches you what to pray for. The prayer which is born of God rises to God from whom it came with the certainty of an answer.

GOD SEEKS INTERCESSORS. He longs to dispense larger blessings. He longs to reveal his power and glory as God, his saving grace, his comfort and peace. But He is limited by the smallness and fewness of our prayers. He cannot do what He would for the Church in the world, because of our unbelief. He cries to us, Call unto Me, call unto me. Little prayer, little blessing; more prayer, more blessing; much prayer, much blessing.

But what a promise is here ! We long to see great things done for God in our churches and mission halls, in the hearts and lives of our friends. We long to see the difficult things unknotted, so that the crooked may be made straight, and the rough smooth. But all these things shall be. The impossibilities of your life are possible to God. The mysteries of your life can yield their secrets at the summons of God. The iron gates shall open, the sea divide, the sepulchres yield their dead. Only get right with God; only let God have unhindered way through your life; only dare to believe that you have already obtained your petition, and go forward in faith.

你求告我，我就應允你。 耶三十三3

我們必須學習禱告這神聖的技巧。神說，「求告我」。祂喜歡我們在禱告中向祂說話。我們可以確實相信祂必盡力而為，但這也可能成為我們退步懶散的微妙藉口；因此我們必須被激動向神求告。除非我們聽從這經文的命令求告祂，否則就沒有把握祂要將又大又難的事指示我們(3節)。要確實等候祂，直到祂指教你為何事禱告。從神起意的禱告，上升到神那裡，從祂那裡賜下確實的回應。

神尋找代禱的人。祂渴望施行更大的祝福。祂渴望啟示祂的能力和榮耀、祂拯救的恩典、祂的安慰與平安。但祂因我們氣度狹小，又很少禱告而受限制。因我們的不信，祂不能為在世上的教會作祂所願的事。祂向我們呼喚：「求告我，求告我。(3節)」少禱告，少祝福；多禱告，多祝福；更多禱告，更多祝福。

這是一個何等的應許！在教會和宣教的廳堂中，在我們朋友的內心和生命中，我們渴望看見有大事為神成就。我們渴望看見難題被解開，使彎彎曲曲的被修直，高高低低的被剷平(路三5)。這一切的事都要成就。你生命中不可能的事，在神都是可能的。你生命中的祕密，在神的召喚之下，都要交出來。鐵門要開啟，海要分開，墳墓要交出它們的死人(啟廿13)。只要你與神關係正確；只要讓神在你生命中有亨通的道路；只要勇敢相信你已得到你所祈求的，並在信心裡向前行。

The words of the covenant which they made before me. Jer. 34: 18

These are suggested, borrowed from an old saint's memoirs, as suitable words for a covenant before God. My Jesus--I own myself to be thine, my only Saviour and Bridegroom, Christ Jesus. I am thine, wholly and eternally. I renounce from my heart all right and authority that Satan unrighteously gave me over myself, from this day henceforward.

From this sacred hour, remembering how Thou through thy precious blood didst purchase me for Thyself agonizing even unto death, and praying till thy blood fell as sweat to the ground, I desire that I may be thy treasure and thy bride.

From now and onward, I offer to Thee my heart and my love, my intellect and my thoughts, my choice and my purpose, my spirit, soul, and body, to be absolutely at thy disposal.

Let thy will henceforth be done in me. Command, rule, and reign in me. I yield myself up without reserve; and I desire, with thy help and power, rather to give up the last drop of this my blood, than knowingly and willingly, in my heart or life, to be untrue and disobedient to Thee. Behold, Thou hast me wholly and completely, sweet Friend of my soul. Thy Spirit be my keeper; thy death my assurance of salvation; thy life my inspiration.

I desire to hold my friendships, my possessions, my gifts and talents at thy disposal, accounting them thy gift to help me fulfil my life-course with better success. Accept me and them, and show how best all may be used in Thee and for Thee. Enable me by thy Holy Spirit to be true to this holy covenant while life shall last; and may I be presented at last, faultless, in thy presence, with exceeding joy.

在我面前立約 ... 的話。 耶三十四18

參照一位古聖[註]的回憶錄，以下這些話提示在神面前立約合適的話語：
我的耶穌 — 我承認自己屬於你，基督耶穌，你是我獨一的救主和良人。我完全屬你直到永遠。從今以後我從心裡放棄撒但用不正當方法給我的一切權利與權力。

從這神聖的時刻起，我記念你如何藉你的寶血將我買贖，因你自己受苦直到死亡，禱告直到汗如血點滴在地上，我渴慕可以成為你的珍寶、你的新婦。

從今以後，我獻上我的心和愛、我的才智和思想、我的選擇和決心，獻上我的靈、魂、體，完全歸你使用。

願你的旨意從今以後行在我身上。求你在我裡面命令、治理、掌王權。我將自己毫無保留交出來；我渴慕，藉著你的幫助與能力，寧願捨棄我鮮血直到最後一滴，而不要故意甘願在我的心裡或生命裡，對你不忠、悖逆。看啊，我心甜蜜的朋友啊，你全然擁有了我。願你的靈保護我；願你的死作我救恩的確據；願你的生命感動我。

我渴望將我的友誼、我的財產、我的恩賜與才能交給你使用，我把這些當作你的禮物，為要幫助我更順利完成一生的路程。請收納我和我的所有，並指示我如何在你裡面也為你盡力善用這一切。在我的生命還存留時，藉你的聖靈使我能夠忠於這神聖的盟約；使我最終顯在你面前，沒有瑕疵，充滿無盡的喜樂。

[註] 特斯帖根Gerhard Tersteegen, 1697-1769, 德國注重內裡生命派的佈道家，著名聖詩作者。曾用自己的血寫《愛的盟約》*Covenant of Love*。本短篇自第二行起的全文，就是邁爾參照該盟約而作的。

Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before Me for ever. Jer. 35: 19

The point here is the contrast between the strict obedience of the Rechabites to the directions of their ancestors, and the disobedience of Israel to Jehovah. How often is this contrast repeated still! We find men so eager and devoted to the customs and traditions of their families, and so regardless of the yet higher claims of God. It is very wonderful! We should have thought that the temper of mind which bound men to their family traditions would have secured their allegiance to the Almighty. But it is not so, as daily experience proves.

Let us also notice the obvious inference from this chapter. If, because of their obedience to the regulations of Jonadab, the Rechabites should never want a man to stand before God, how much more will obedience to the promptings of God's Spirit secure, through his mercy, a perpetual standing before his face; not only of ourselves, but of our children. Christian parents, you have a perfect right to go to God with this fair deduction from his own words, and say: Give us grace to obey thy commandments, and keep all thy precepts; and do according to all that Thou commandest; and then grant to us to stand before Thee for evermore in thy presence-chamber; and not us only, but our children and children's children. Let them be a godly seed on earth, ever maintaining sweet recollections of our character and life; and let us be a united family in the presence of thy glory with exceeding joy. How blessed that man is who, like Elijah, stands before God!

*Jesus protects: my fears, be gone!
What can the Rock of Ages move?
Safe in thy arms I lay me down.
Thy everlasting arms of love.*

利甲的兒子約拿達必永不缺人侍立在我面前。 耶三十五19

這裡的重點是：對比利甲族的人嚴格遵守他們祖先的吩咐，而以色列人卻不聽從耶和華。這樣的對比依然時常重現！我們發現人是很熱切專心守著他們家族的習慣傳統，卻不顧神更高的要求。我們想到人的情緒受他們家族傳統的約束，使他們得以向全能神效忠，這是何其美好！但日常生活的經驗證明，其實並不是這樣。

讓我們也注意從這章聖經推演出來的明顯結論。如果利甲族的人永不缺人侍立在神面前，是因他們聽從先祖約拿達的規定，那麼人藉著祂的憐憫順服神之靈的催促，更得以永遠侍立在祂面前；不只是我們自己，而且是我們的子孫。作父母的基督徒啊，你們有十足的權利，將祂的話語推演出來的這個美好結論，帶到神面前並對祂說：求你賜下恩典，使我們聽從你的誡命，守你一切教訓，並且照你一切的吩咐去行；然後允許我們在你同在的殿中，侍立在你面前，直到永遠；不僅是我們，而且是我們的兒女，以及我們兒女的兒女。願他們在地上作敬虔的後代，永遠記住我們的品格和生命；願我們聯結成一個家族，在你的榮耀裡歡呼喜樂。一個人像以利亞一樣站在神面前，這是何等有福啊！

耶穌保護，懼怕無蹤影！

永久磐石豈能挪移？

我安穩躺臥在你懷中，

在你愛的永久膀臂裡。

The king cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire. Jer. 36:23 (R.V.)

It was an audacious and foolish act. Only a fool or a madman could have trifled thus. He did not relish the prophet's words, and so he cut them to pieces; but though he destroyed them, he could not in this way arrest the penalties which they foretold. Indeed, he increased them: "There were added besides unto them many like words." The criminal may tear up the warrant for his arrest; but it will not help his case. The captain may destroy the map which indicates the rocks in his course; but that will not rob them of the cruel fangs with which they will pierce the timbers of his ship. Men may deride and destroy the Bible; but this will not empty the future of hell, or hell of its bitter remorse.

We are all tempted to use the penknife to God's Book. There are passages in it which we do not like; those that cross our favourite notions, our cherished sins. Practically, we eliminate them. We never read them, or we explain them away, or profess to doubt their inspiration. We have no right to set certain passages of Scripture aside because they conflict with our notions of truth or system of theology. The scientific man will not adopt a law while one fact refuses to be included in it. The commercial man will not close his books while a shilling is unaccounted for. Blessed as the habit is of listening for God's voice within, we must never forget the absolute necessity of its corroboration from the words of Scripture.

It is wise, therefore, to read the Scriptures with an open and unbiassed mind, not bringing our preconceptions, like penknives, to cut out what we do not agree with, but meekly inquiring what it may please the Lord our God to speak.

王就用文士的刀將書卷割破，扔在火盆中。 耶三十六23

這是一個大膽又愚昧的舉動。只有愚昧人或瘋子才會這樣輕舉妄動。他不喜愛先知的話，所以就把書卷割破；雖然他把先知的書卷銷毀，他卻不能用這方式阻止這些話語所預告的刑罰。其實他使刑罰更增添：「另外又添了許多相仿的話。(32節)」罪犯可以撕碎逮捕他的令狀；但這對他的案情並無幫助。船長可以銷毀指示航道中之岩石的地圖；但那樣作並不會除掉岩石的利齒，這些尖銳的石頭將刺破他船隻的肋材。人可以嘲笑並銷毀聖經；但這並不會把將來的地獄倒空，也不會把地獄苦毒的悔恨倒空。

我們都想用小刀割破聖經。聖經裡有許多經節是我們不喜歡的；那些經節反對我們所喜愛的觀念，反對我們不肯割捨的罪。實際上我們常把這些經節剔除。我們從來不讀這些經節，或者照我們的意思解釋這些經節，或者質疑這些經節是否出於啟示。我們沒有權利不理會某些經文，只因為這些經文與我們對真理的見解不一致，或與我們的神學系統有衝突。研究科學的人不會接受一條定律，當它與事實不合。商人不會漏記一先令就結帳[先令是英幣單位，約合美金7分。]。傾聽神在我們裡面的聲音是蒙福的習慣，同時我們絕不可忘記從聖經的話語得印證的絕對必要。

因此，用敞開沒有偏見的心來讀聖經是智慧的，不帶著我們的成見，如同小刀想要切除我們不同意的經文；而是柔軟地求問主：我們的神想要說什麼話。

They gave him daily a loaf of bread out of the Bakers' street. Jer. 37:21 (R.V.)

This was God's way of caring for his child. His life was secured to him from the hatred of his foes, and his daily bread, as long as there was any to be had. If you do God's work, you may freely count on Him. He will not fail. In the most unlikely ways your bread shall be given you, and your water shall be sure.

But it may be objected that it is not always so, and that many of God's children are at this very hour suffering the need of many things which are absolutely necessary. But, first, we should have to decide what is really necessary. We might all be deprived of many of the comforts and luxuries of life without detriment. Indeed, it might be better for all of us to undergo something of the weaning and detaching process. But Matt. 6: 32, 33 is always true.

And, moreover, we should have to inquire whether faith had been exercised to seek and obtain their contents. We have God's promises; but we too often fail to plead them. We know that we can only receive the benefits of Christ's Redemption by faith; but we do not see that the same faith is requisite to bring into our hands those other boons which are included in God's guarantees to his children. You have not, child of God, either because you ask for things that would minister simply to appetite and sense; or because you do not exercise the child's privilege of prayer. Perhaps your present privation is intended to teach you the blessedness of prayer. Ask and receive, that your joy may be full.

*Can it be true, the grace He is declaring?
Oh, let us trust Him, for his words are fair!
Man, what is this, and why art thou despairing?
God shall forgive thee all but thy despair.*

每天從餅舖街取一個餅給他。 耶三十七21

這是神看顧祂兒女的方法。耶利米的性命得以保全，脫離仇敵的憎恨，並且得到每天的口糧，只要城裡還有糧食。如果你作神的工，你可以放心倚靠祂。祂必不失誤。祂以最不可能的方法將糧食賜給你，而且肯定有飲用的水。

但是人可能提出異議說，事實並不總是如此，而且許多神的兒女此刻正缺乏各種必需品。然而我們首先必須判斷什麼是真正的必需品。我們可能被剝奪不能享用好些生活舒適的奢侈品，而不受傷害。的確，我們每個人最好稍微經歷放棄舒適享受的過程。無論如何，馬太福音六章32-33節的話永遠是真實的。

此外我們一定要質問：我們是否運用了信心，尋得馬太六章32-33這兩節經文所講的內容。我們有神的應許；但我們常不照著應許祈求。我們曉得只能憑著信心領受基督救贖的益處；可是我們沒有看見，使我們得到神保證要賜給祂兒女一切其他的恩惠，也需要同樣的信心。神的兒女啊，你得不著，是因你所求的事物只為滿足你的慾望和感覺；或是你沒有運用作為兒女禱告的特權（雅四2-3）。也許你目前的缺乏，是為著教導你禱告的福分。你們求，就必得著，使你們的喜樂可以滿足（約十六24）。

祂宣告的恩典，是否真實？
但願我們信靠祂，因祂話語美好！
人啊，你為何感到絕望呢？
神饒恕一切，卻不寬容你的絕望。

Obey. . . . So it shall be well with thee, and thy soul shall live. Jer. 38 : 20 (R.V.)

Of many Christians it can hardly be said that their souls live; they exist, but do not thrive. The food of the soul is in part the Word of God; but in part it is obedience. As we obey we are fed; for our Master said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish his work" (John 4: 34). The same truth is suggested here; if we obey the voice of the Lord, it is well with us, and our soul thrives.

The voice of God speaks from the page of his Word. Let us not accept that to be his voice which does not come to us through Scripture, or is not corroborated by Scripture. But let us be very careful to obey God's Word, so far as we know it, even when, as in Zedekiah's case, it seems to contradict all the suggestions of prudence and common sense. Better be with God in a minority of one, than have the plaudits of an immense host of godless men.

How well I remember, years ago now, entering the bed-chamber of an eminent saint, one autumn morning, whose diminishing candles told how long he had been feeding on the Word of God. I asked him what had been the subject of his study. He said he had been engaged since four o'clock in discovering all the Lord's positive commandments, that he might be sure that he was not wittingly neglecting any one of them. It is very sad to find how many in the present day are neglecting to observe to do the Lord's precepts--concerning his ordinances, concerning the laying-up of money, the evangelization of the world, and the manifestation of perfect love. They know the Lord's will, and do it not. They appear to think that they are absolved from that "observing to do," which was so characteristic of Deuteronomy. As though Love were not more inexorable than Law!

聽從，... 這樣你必得好處，你的命也必存活。 耶三十八20（「命」或作「靈魂」）

對於許多基督徒，幾乎不能說他們的靈魂活著；他們存在，卻不健壯。靈魂的糧食一部分是神的話；但一部分是聽從。當我們聽從時，我們就得餵養；因為我們的主說：「我的食物就是遵行差我來者的旨意，作成祂的工。（約四34）」在這裡提示同樣的真理；如果我們聽從耶和華的話，我們必得好處，我們的靈魂也必健壯。

神的聲音發自祂話的字裡行間。但願我們不接受不是藉著聖經臨到我們的話語，也不接受沒有聖經印證的話語，那些都不是祂的聲音。但願我們十分謹慎的聽從神的話，就著我們所知道的，甚至像西底家的情形，神的話好像與常理判斷相背。寧可孤單一人有神同在，勝過擁有一大群不信神之人的讚揚。

我清楚的記得多年前，在一個秋天的早晨，我進到一位著名聖徒的房間，他那漸漸縮短的蠟燭，顯示他已經花很長的時間，從神的話語得餵養。我詢問他一直在研讀什麼主題。他說從四點鐘起，他一直忙著發掘所有主正面的命令，使他可以確定沒有故意忽略任何一個命令。很可悲的現今有多少人正忽視遵行主的教訓——關於祂的條例、關於積攢錢財、向世人傳福音、以及彰顯完全的愛。他們知道主的旨意，卻不去行。他們似乎以為他們已經免除「謹守遵行」的義務了，「謹守遵行」正是申命記的特點。好像「愛」不如「律法」那麼不通融。

Because thou hast put thy trust in Me. Jer. 39: 18

What will not trust do? It will draw out of God for us the most wonderful exhibitions of his tender and mighty provision on our behalf. Who can put a limit on what God will do for the man who trusts Him? Here was the whole city given up to bloodshed and fire. The utmost confusion prevailed. No quarter was shown to the hapless Jews, pursued from house to house, from street to street, by the brutal soldiery. Yet because Ebed-melech trusted in God, and because he evidenced his faith by his loving care for the prophet, he was not given into the hand of the men of whom he was afraid.

Some who read these words may be greatly afraid. They dwell among lions, among men whose words are a sharp sword. But let them trust in the living God; and, in the meanwhile, go on each day ministering as well as they can to God's Jeremiahs. It is not enough to let down ropes to help them; it is a great sign of the love of God to put some rags to keep the ropes from chafing the tender skin. When God comes to help us, He always combines the strong rope with the old clout. Let us resemble Him in this.

Let us trust Him more. Too many resemble the stone-breaker who came into a vast estate, but was content to live in the lodge. When an old friend came to congratulate him, and see over the property, he said: "There! It is all in those parchments; but I have never been to see for myself what there is." Let us possess our possessions, and learn how much God will do for those who trust Him.

Oh, could I tell, ye surely would believe it!

Oh, could I only say what I have seen!

How should I tell, or how can ye receive it--

How, till He bringeth you where I have been?

因你倚靠我。 耶三十九18 [倚靠，或作：信靠]

什麼是「信靠」不能做的呢？信靠會從神那裡為我們取得奇妙展示祂慈愛大能的供應。誰能限制神為信靠祂的人所做的是呢？在這裡整個耶路撒冷城已被交付屠殺、焚燒。四處極其混亂。對不幸的猶大人沒有寬容，殘忍的軍隊挨家挨戶、一條街過一條街地追捕。然而因以伯·米勒信靠神，也因他以慈愛看顧先知耶利米顯出信心的憑據，他就不被交在他所怕的人手中(17節)。

有些人讀到這聖經的話語，可能大大的懼怕。他們居住在獅群當中，住在說話如同利劍的人當中。但願他們信靠這位永生神；同時每日盡可能地服事像耶利米這樣屬神的人。用繩子縋下去救他們還不夠；還要用碎布破衣服，使繩子不磨破他們細嫩的皮膚，這就是神愛的重要記號(耶卅八11-13)。當神來幫助我們時，祂總是用堅固的繩子和舊的破布結合在一起。但願我們在這點上像祂一樣。

讓我們更加信靠祂。太多人像那個碎石工人來到一個廣大的莊園，卻以住在臨時住處為足。有位老友來祝賀他，並察看這產業，碎石工人說：「在那裡！全部都在那些羊皮紙的文件裡；但我從未去看裡面寫了有什麼要給我的。[註]」但願我們都擁有我們的產業，並且認識神為信靠祂的人所要做的何其多。

但願我能述說，你必定會相信！
但願我能陳述我所看見的！
我該如何述說，使你能接受它 —
直到祂帶領你到我所在之處？

[註] 作者的意思「羊皮紙的文件」可能寓指聖經，「碎石工人」寓指信徒，他雖有聖經，卻不留心去查考其中神所賜給信祂之人的產業。

The captain of the guard gave him victuals, and a present, and let him go. Jer. 40:5 (R.V.)

This captain seems to have had a remarkable insight into God's dealings with Israel. In verse 3 he speaks quite prophetically; and in this treatment of the prophet he gives every sign of having been admitted into the secret councils of the Most High. He is a comrade of the centurions of the New Testament.

But the interesting matter is the care exercised by God over his servant. During the siege his bread had been given him, and his water had been sure. And now, in spite of all the plottings and devisings against his life, he was the one man of Israel who was treated with respect and provided with an honourable maintenance.

God is able to supply the need of his servants in very remarkable ways; now through ravens, or a widow, and again through a captain of Nebuchadnessar's guard. If we will be all for God, God will be all for us. In the present instance the men who were so eager to save themselves perished in the capture of the city; whilst the one man who sought to do God's will, with a single purpose, not only saved his life, but found all things else added to him.

God would have us live free from care. He made the spirit, and will see that it gets its allowance of sustenance. He made the soul, and knows how much love and culture it requires. He made the body, and will provide for its food and clothing. Do not fear the rough servants whom He employs as the distributors of his gifts. Under the mailed armour a warm heart is beating.

*Give me to trust Thee, Lord,
In the dark and stormy night,
When morning seems so slow to come,
And the stars are hid from sight.*

護衛長送他糧食和禮物，釋放他去了。 耶四十5

這護衛長好像有了不起的見識，知道神對待以色列人的作為。在第3節他說話很像預言；而在處理先知耶利米的事上，顯示他得以進入至高者隱密的會中(耶廿三18)的跡象。他與新約聖經裡的那幾個百夫長是同志(太八5-10, 徒十章等)。

但神施行在祂僕人身上的眷顧是很有趣味的。在耶路撒冷被圍困時，仍賜給他糧食和飲水。雖然有各種要害他性命的陰謀，耶利米是以色列人中唯一受尊重並得到體面供應的人。

神能用很了不起的方法供應祂僕人的需要；有時藉著烏鴉、或寡婦，有時藉著尼布甲尼撒的一個護衛長。若是我們全然為著神，神也必全然為著我們。在眼前的實例中，耶路撒冷被攻佔，人們急切要救自己免於被殺；然而這一個人(先知耶利米)專心尋求遵行神的旨意，他不只救了自己的性命，而且其他一切所需用的也加給他。

神要我們生活沒有掛慮。祂造人的靈，並且留心使人得到靈裡所需的供應。祂造人的魂，並且知道魂需要多少的愛和培養。祂造人的身體，並且供應食物和衣服。不要害怕祂用來派送禮物的僕人粗糙的外表。在盔甲之下有顆溫暖的心在跳動。

主啊求你使我信靠你，
在這充滿風暴的黑夜，
當早晨姍姍來遲，
衆星也隱匿不放光。

Then arose Ishmael . . . and smote Gedaliah . . . with the sword. Jer. 41 : 2

This chapter is full of horrible atrocities. Blow on blow befell the already decimated remnant of Jews. Had it not been for Ishmael's ruthless vandalism, the vine of Israel might yet have struck her roots downwards and borne fruit upwards.

We must ask for more of that profound faith which, through all blinding mystery, sees the divine purpose, weaving events and men into its plans, and compelling all to work together for the discipline or aid of his children. "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps; fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word." "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee; the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain" (Psalms 148: 7, 8; 76: 10).

What a comfort it is to know that all things in heaven, earth, and hell; all demons and men; all Nebuchadnezzars and Ishmaels--are under the control of our heavenly Father! They may hate us with all the power of their evil natures, but they cannot hurt us beyond his permission; and as soon as they have fulfilled what He deemed necessary, they will be withdrawn. There are no second causes for us. We are always dealing first-hand with God, though He may employ many strange servants to bring us his messages.

"A God-inspired Expectation, a Holy Patience, has always been the mark of a true believer, at the most critical periods in the history of the Church and of the individual. She first made hope vocal in the soul of Isaiah; fasted and prayed with Anna in her long widowhood; was at the cross with the mother; at the grave with the Magdalene; and hired the room for Pentecost."

以實瑪利 ... 起來，用刀殺了 ... 基大利。 耶四十一2

這一章充滿了可怕的殘暴行為。一再的打擊落在遭毀滅所剩無幾的猶太人身上。如果不是因為以實瑪利殘忍的野蠻行為，以色列的葡萄樹可能已經往下扎根，向上結果了(王下十九30)。

我們必須祈求更多有深度的信心，這信心可以穿過所有眼睛看不見的奧秘，看到神的旨意，將事與人編進祂的計畫，並使一切為管教幫助祂的兒女而效力。「所有在地上的，大魚和一切深洋，火與冰雹，雪和霧氣，成就祂命的狂風，... 都當讚美耶和華。(詩一四八7-8, 12)」 「人的忿怒要成全你的榮美；人的餘怒，你要禁止。(詩七十六10)」

所有在天上、地上、和地獄的事物；所有的鬼魔和世人；所有的「尼布甲尼撒」和「以實瑪利」— 都在我們天父的掌管之下，這種認識是何等的安慰！他們可能會用盡他們邪惡本性的一切力量來恨我們，但他們不能越過神的許可來傷害我們；並且一旦他們完成祂認為必需的，就被撤走。沒有再來傷害我們的因由。[餘剩的猶太人因沒有這個看見，所以逃往埃及，反而是死路一條。] 我們總是直接與神交往，儘管祂可能會差派許多奇怪的僕人將祂的信息帶給我們。

「一個從神啟示而來的盼望，也是神聖的忍耐，在教會和個人歷史中最關鍵的時刻，一直是真信徒的標記。這首先在以賽亞的心裡說出了希望(賽七14)；又與亞拿一起在長久寡居的日子裡禁食禱告(路二36-38)；也與耶穌的母親一起在十字架旁(約十九25)；與抹大拉的馬利亞一起在墳墓旁(可十六9)；並在為五旬節租用的房子裡(徒一13-14)。」

We will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee. Jer. 42 : 6

Whilst the people said this with their lips, they had already set their faces to go into the land of Egypt (vers. 15, 17). It is useless to profess our desire to know God's will, whilst in our secret heart we are determined to follow a certain course, come what may. Indeed it is worse than useless; it is blasphemous. How often do believers ask for prayer that their course may be made clear, when in point of fact they have already decided on it, and are secretly hoping to turn God to their own side!

But what a solemn responsibility devolves on those who are sent to and fro between God and man, as Jeremiah was. He realized that he was sent by the people unto the Lord, and that he was sent back again by the Lord unto the people (ver. 21). He knew, too, that their faces were set on having their own evil way. But he never flinched from declaring the will of God, nor turned to the right or left, to curry favour from man. By nature very timid and sensitive, see how God made him a defenced city, an iron pillar, and brazen walls. Verily he stood in God's council, and caused the people to hear his words. What a contrast to the false prophets of ch. 23!

Compare this statement concerning Gerhard Tersteegen: "His service was always marked by a diffident and retiring spirit, though ever by a courageous valour for the truth. It is recorded that on one occasion, in going with a friend to a meeting where he was expected to give an address, he said, 'I would rather hide myself from all the world than let myself be seen and heard.' But he never swerved a hairbreadth when the honour of God and the testimony of the truth was concerned."

我們現在請你到耶和華我們的神面前，祂說的... 我們都必聽從。 耶四十二6

當這百姓用他們的口說這些話的時候，他們早已定意要進入埃及地(15, 17節)。無論發生什麼事，當我們內心定意跟隨某條路時，我們還聲稱要認識神的旨意，乃是無益的。其實這比無益更糟；這是褻瀆。信徒常常請求代禱使他們的道路可以明確，事實上他們已經決定了，而且暗地裡盼望把神轉向自己這一邊！

何等嚴肅的責任交給那些被差遣來往於神與人之間的人，如同耶利米一樣。他意識到他是被百姓差遣到耶和華那裡，又被耶和華差遣到百姓那裡(21節)。他也知道他們定意走自己邪惡的道路。但他從來沒有退縮而不宣告神的旨意，既不轉向右也不轉向左，為要奉承人。按著天性，耶利米是非常膽小、敏感的，請看神怎樣使他成為堅城、鐵柱、和銅牆(一18)。他實在站在神的會中(廿三22)，並讓百姓聽他的話語。這與二十三章的假先知形成何等的對比！

請對照這段關於特斯帖根[請參耶三十四章邁爾靈修短篇的註]的陳述：「他的服事總是具有一種羞怯退縮的特質，儘管為著真理總是藉著一股激勵人的勇氣。曾經記載著在一個場合，他與一位朋友一起去參加一個會議，要在那裡發表一篇演講，他說，『我寧願把自己藏起來，也不讓自己被世人看見或聽見。』但在關乎神尊榮和真理的見證時，他從不曾有一絲偏差。」

Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us. Jer. 43: 3

When men do not like the Word of God, they imagine that someone has set the speaker on against them. A poor woman came to us a few weeks ago, in a terrible condition. She had induced her husband to come to a service, and the address seemed so exactly adapted to him, dealing with his sins in the plainest terms, that nothing could convince him that she had not given the preacher a full and detailed account of his life, and had set the speaker on against him. When they got home he ill-treated her with great cruelty. But that service and her patient suffering were ultimately overruled to work a great change in him.

How strange it is that ungodly men always think the Word of God is against them, whereas they are set against it! The wind would not be so keen in their teeth, if they were not steaming so quickly against it.

But there is a solemn lesson here for us all. Whenever the Word of God makes us wince, or God's messenger presses sorely on us, we are apt to turn aside the point by some superficial and unreasonable excuse. We catch up the first foil we can lay hands on, in order to ward off the missile. We find some excuse to blunt the edge of the sword. It is easy to impute a bad and personal motive. There is always a Baruch the son of Neriah in the question. It is not we who are wrong, but the prophet who is prejudiced against us. As Ahab said of Micaiah, "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." We can only grow in the divine life by exposing ourselves to the reproofs and searchings of the divine Word; and allowing them their due weight.

尼利亞的兒子巴錄挑唆你害我們 ...。 耶四十三3

當人們不喜歡神的話語時，他們就猜想有人挑唆傳講神話語的人來反對他們。一個可憐的婦人幾週前在一種很糟的景況下來找我們。她曾說服她丈夫來參加一次禮拜，證道的內容似乎恰好適用於他，用最淺白的話語論及他的罪，以致他無法相信他的妻子沒有給講員詳細講述他的生平並挑唆講員攻擊他。他們回家後，他極殘酷地虐待她。但這次禮拜和她忍忍受苦，最終在他裡面造成了很大的改變。

這真是奇怪，不敬虔的人總是以為神的話是反對他們的，其實是他們被挑起來抵抗神的話！如果不是他們這麼急速對著風哈氣，風就不會那樣強烈地刺他們的牙。[意思是：人認為神的話反對他，都是因他對神的話先存著敵意。]

但這裡有一個嚴肅的功課為著我們每一的人。每當神的話讓我們畏縮，或神的使者極力的催促我們，我們很容易用一些膚淺無理的藉口將重點擱置一邊。我們急忙拿起第一支隨手可得的鈍頭劍來避開投射的兵器。我們找到某個理由使神話語的銳利變鈍。歸咎於一個不好的、個人的動機是很容易的事。總責怪有一個尼利亞的兒子巴錄有問題。不是我們的錯，而是那一個先知對我們有偏見。正如亞哈提及米該雅的話，「只是我恨他，因為他指著我所說的預言，不說吉語，單說凶言。(王上廿二8)」我們只有藉著向神聖言的指責與鑒察敞開自己，才能在靈命上長進；並且承認神話語有其應有的份量。

Ah, do not this abominable thing that I hate. Jer. 44: 4

There is a personal element in sin. It is not simply a violation of law, the law of the moral universe. It is against our own soul (ver. 7), and, above all, it hurts the holy, loving nature of God, so that his Spirit cries out as in agony, "Oh, do it not!" There is something very pathetic in this cry, extorted by the sin of man from the heart of God. It reminds one of that cry of Jesus, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?"

If any one suffers very keenly from nervous exhaustion, it seems sometimes almost impossible for him to bear the noise of a child who persists in running heavily overhead. He will adopt a pleading rather than an angry tone: "My child, do not do this again; I cannot bear it." Let us think of God's holy nature as more sensitive to sin than the most highly-strung nerves to noise, and hear Him saying, whenever we are on the point of committing sin, "Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate."

How greatly God hates sin is taught us in the Cross. In order to put it away He spared not his only-begotten Son, but yielded Him to the bitterness of Calvary.

And how greatly the blessed Son hates it is evident from the bloody sweat of Gethsemane, when the shadow of the great burden of a world's guilt lay upon Him.

And how greatly must the Holy Spirit, whose temple is our body, hate any sin that defiles it! Thus the Holy Trinity, with one voice, pleads with thee, who meditate evil. Beware of bringing pain into the heart of Infinite Love; but ask that some of God's hate for sin may be yours.

你們切不要行我所厭惡這可憎之事。 耶四十四4

在罪裡面有一種個人的因素。罪不只是違背律法，就是道德領域的律法。罪也傷害我們的性命(7節)，並且最重要的，罪傷害神的聖潔與愛的本性，使祂的靈在痛苦中呼喊，「切不要行！(4節)」這呼喊中有件非常可憐的東西，就是人的罪從神心裡榨取的。這使人想起耶穌的一個呼喊，「噯，這又不信又悖謬的世代啊，我在你們這裡要到幾時呢？我忍耐你們要到幾時呢？(太十七17)」

如果一個人深受精神疲憊的折磨，有時似乎他無法忍受一個孩子在樓上跑個不停的噪音。他會採取一種請求而不是生氣的語氣：「我的孩子，不要再這樣做了；我忍受不了。」讓我們來思想神聖潔的本性對罪的敏感度，比最神經過敏的人對噪音的敏感度還要高，每當我們要犯罪的時候，就聽見祂在說，「哦，不要做這個我所厭惡可憎的事。」

神在十字架裡教導我們祂何等厭惡罪。為了除掉罪，神不吝惜自己的獨生子，把祂交出來受各各他的痛苦。

當世人罪惡重擔的陰影壓在祂身上的時候，這位可稱頌的聖子在客西馬尼禱告汗如血滴，很明顯看出祂何等厭惡罪。

聖靈必定極其厭惡污穢我們身子的任何罪，因我們的身子就是聖靈的殿(林前六18-19)！聖三一神同聲向你這思念罪惡的人發出請求。你要提防，不使無限之愛的神心中受苦；但要祈求神賜你些許祂恨罪的心。

Thou didst say, Woe is me now! . . . , but thy life will I give thee. Jer. 45: 3, 5

Trouble is an inevitable part of human experience. "Man that is born of a woman," we are told, "is of few days and full of trouble." In addition to their share in the common heritage of man, it often falls to the lot of God's saints to suffer specially in connection with his kingdom and glory. They know the fellowship of his sufferings. They sigh and cry for all the abominations which are being wrought in their midst. The very association of Baruch with Jeremiah extorted the groan, "Woe is me now! for the Lord hath added sorrow to my pain."

But out of our sorrow and pain, when borne patiently and trustfully, comes the more abundant life. "Behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh; but thy life will I give unto thee." Pain casts a vail on all our pleasant earthly things, so that we take no further interest in them, and turn our thoughts to the unseen and eternal. Sorrow drives us to the God of all comfort. By the fire our dross is consumed. Through travail of soul the characteristics of godliness are born. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

God often reveals ourselves to ourselves till we cry, Woe is me now! When God's light discovers our sins of appetite, of avarice, meanness, and niggardliness; of temper, fretfulness, and peevishness; of lack of conscientiousness, the partial fulfilment of promises, unfaithfulness, and misunderstandings. When we think of the want of constancy, truth, prayer, faith, and love, we are plunged in despair. Woe is me now! But out of all this there springs abundant life, and we rejoice that the great Revealer did not spare.

你曾說：「我有禍了！」... 我必保全你的性命。 耶四十五3, 5（另譯）

苦難是人生經歷中不可避免的一部分。經上說，「人為婦人所生，日子短少，多有患難。(伯十四1)」除了人類共同承受的苦難之外，神的聖徒常常命定要特別為祂的國與榮耀受苦。他們經歷與祂一同受苦(腓三10)。他們為所有在他們中間發生的惡行歎息呼求。巴錄與耶利米間的這種交往，迫使他發出這個哀歎，「我有禍了！耶和華將憂愁加在我的痛苦上。(3節)」

但當我們忍耐並充滿信心承受悲哀與痛苦，我們就從中得到更豐盛的生命。「我必使災禍臨到凡有血氣的。但 ... 我必保全你的性命。」痛苦遮蔽所有地上我們喜歡的事物，因此我們對這些不再感興趣，我們的思想就轉向那不可見的永恆事上。憂傷驅使我們來到賜諸般安慰的神那裡(林後一3)。藉著火燒盡我們的渣滓。藉著心的痛苦生出敬虔的品格。「一粒麥子不落在地裡死了，仍舊是一粒。若是死了，就結出許多子粒來。(約十二24)」

常常到我們呼喊「我有禍了」時，神才向我們顯明我們自己的本相。神的光顯明我們的罪：貪食、貪婪、卑鄙、吝嗇；怒氣、煩躁、惱怒；沒有感覺、只履行部分承諾、不忠、誤解。當我們想到缺乏堅貞、真誠、禱告、信心、愛心時，我們就陷入了絕望。我有禍了！然而從這一切的情況中卻湧出豐盛的生命，我們歡欣這位偉大的啟示者未曾吝嗇。

Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord; for I am with thee. Jer. 46: 28

This chapter is full of the clash and crash of war. In the most graphic and stirring words, the prophet describes the tide of Egyptian invasion, as its waters toss themselves upon the iron phalanxes of Babylon, like a rockbound coast; to recoil, defeated and broken, into myriads of foam-drops. The result to the great empire of Egypt is disastrous; her gods and kings are not able to save her from her justly-deserved punishment; she drinks the cup of indignation and wrath to her destruction.

But, amid it all, God remembers his people. They, too, are suffering from the results of their sins. And as they hear of all that has befallen greater nations than themselves, they may well fear that their own fate will no less be irremediable and final. If the great kingdom of Egypt has received its death wound, from which it must slowly bleed to death, what hope can there be for Israel, captive in Babylon, while Canaan lies waste? To such fears God speaks words of tender comfort and reassurance. "Fear not thou, neither be dismayed; I will make a full end of all the nations, but I will not make a full end of thee; I will not leave thee unpunished, but will correct thee in measure; I will save thee from afar."

Oh, blessed words! If we have become the children of God by faith in Jesus; if God has ever entered into covenant with our souls; if He has taken us to be his and to give us his best--then, though we suffer chastisement, we shall not be overwhelmed by it: though we are corrected, diminished, and brought low, God will not make a full end of us: though we are pruned, we shall not be cut down to the ground. We may even look out with a quiet mind on the irretrievable disasters which overtake the ungodly.

我的僕人雅各啊，不要懼怕！因我與你同在。... 這是耶和華說的。 耶四十六28

這一章充滿了戰爭裡撞擊和墜毀的聲音。先知用最形像、激動人心的言語，描述埃及侵略的浪潮(2節)如同大水翻騰向著巴比倫鋼鐵般的方陣，這方陣就像岩石包圍的海岸；埃及人被擊倒、破碎成無數泡沫退回來。埃及大帝國的結局損失慘重；埃及的諸神和君王不能救她脫離該受的懲罰；她喝下了忿怒的杯以致毀滅。

但在這一切之中神記念祂的百姓。他們也同樣因自己罪的後果受苦。當他們聽見臨到比他們強大的國家這一切的事，他們很可能害怕自己的結局將同樣是確定無法挽救的。如果大埃及國還受到了逐漸流血致死的創傷，以色列還有什麼希望，被擄到巴比倫，而迦南地已經荒涼。針對這樣的恐懼，神說了這些使他們放心安慰的話。「不要懼怕，不要驚惶；我要將列國滅絕淨盡，卻不將你滅絕淨盡，倒要從寬懲治你，萬不能不罰你；因我要從遠方拯救你。(27-28節)」

哦，有福的話語！如果我們因著信耶穌成為神的兒女；如果神曾與我們的靈魂立約；如果祂把我們當作屬祂的，並賜我們上好的 — 那麼，儘管我們受責罰，我們也不會被壓倒；儘管我們被懲治，人數減少，成為卑微，但神不會將我們滅絕淨盡；儘管我們被修剪，我們不會完全被剪除。我們甚至可用平靜的心，觀看那不可挽回的災禍吞滅不敬虔的人。

O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Jer. 47: 6, 7 (R.V.)

O sword of the Lord; thou hast wounded us sore! Like a two-edged sword, the Word of God has pierced to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow. How deeply it has penetrated; how sharply it has cut! And even now it cannot rest. The work of discrimination and separation is still going on within us. We are constantly seeing new depths of our own utter worthlessness and evil. Possibilities of our own bad hearts, of which we had not dreamt, arise to confront us; and immediately the divine sword sets itself to hack and hew and cut away the evil growth of selfishness, of which we have caught a glimpse.

There are times in our lives when we cry, "O thou sword of the Lord, how long ere thou be quiet: rest and be still." Will the process of purification and deliverance never be complete? Will not the destructive work of God soon end? The operation has lasted months and years; when will the divine Surgeon lay down the knife? O knife of God, rest thee!

But how can it be quiet seeing that the work is not done? We are not yet rid of the last remains of sin. The wound is not yet probed to the bottom. The roots of the cancerous growth of selfishness have not yet been entirely removed; and if any one of them remains, all the work will have to be done again. How can it be quiet, seeing that God loves us too well to allow us to bear with us into eternity aught that will hinder our perfect fruition of bliss? How can it be quiet, seeing that this is the only world where pain can reach his saints? and He must do his work quickly, ere we reach the land where the sword is placed in its scabbard, and stilled for ever.

耶和華的刀劍哪，你到幾時才止息呢？ 耶四十七6-7

耶和華的刀劍哪；你已經嚴重地傷了我們！神的話如同兩刃的劍，將魂與靈、骨節與骨髓刺入剖開（來四12）。這劍刺入得多麼深；切得多麼銳利！甚至到如今不能停歇。區別與分開的工作依然在我們的裡面進行。我們不斷看到在自己新的深處全然不配、邪惡。我們自己的惡心可能達到的情形，出現在我們面前，連我們自己做夢都沒想到的；神的劍立刻出手砍下、劈開、切除邪惡生長的自私，這自私我們已經瞥見了。

我們在人生中有許多時候呼求：「耶和華的刀劍哪，你到幾時才止息呢；你要安靖不動。（6-7節）」難道煉淨與拯救的過程永遠不會完畢？神拆毀的工作難道不會很快結束？這手術已經持續許多歲月了；這位神聖的外科醫生何時才會放下手術刀？神的刀啊，停下來吧！

但工作還未完成怎能止息呢？我們還沒有除掉最後殘留的罪。傷口還沒有徹底檢查。自私如惡性腫瘤般成長的根還未徹底切除；如果任何一個根還存留，整個切除的工作將需要重新執行。當看到神深愛我們，以致祂不允許我們把攔阻我們結出祝福完美果實的任何東西帶入永生，刀劍怎能止息呢？當看到唯有在今生，痛苦可以改變聖徒，刀劍怎能止息呢？在我們抵達那地之前，祂必須快速作祂的工作，在那地刀劍被收入鞘，並安靜直到永遠。

Moab hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel. Jer. 48 : 11 (R.V.)

This beautiful and appropriate imagery, borrowed from the vineyard, speaks for itself. It would be readily appreciated by the peasant populations that toiled amid the terraced hills of Moab. To prevent scum and sediment, the newly-made wine was emptied from one vessel to another until it reached the condition of perfect fluidity. In Moab's case there had been nothing comparable to this, and therefore the rank, coarse taste remained in him, and he had settled on his lees.

What an insight this affords of God's method with the souls of men! Why these constant removals from town to town; from church to church; from situation to situation? Why this perpetual change and revolution in our plans? Why this incessant going into captivity to irksome and trying circumstances? All this is part of God's manufacture of the wine of life. We must be emptied from vessel to vessel, else we should settle on our lees, and become thick and raw and unpalatable. When the next change comes in your life, do not fear it. The blessed God will see to it that no drop of the precious fluid shall be spilt on the ground. With the tenderest care He conducts the whole operation.

Perhaps there is a counterpart to this incessant change from place to place in the perpetual flux of our emotions. We never feel the same for long together. We are constantly being emptied from one blessed frame into another, not quite so joyous or peaceful. We have to hold the most heavenly emotions with a light hand, not knowing how soon they may have passed. And it is well. Otherwise we should never lose the taste of our proud self-complacency.

摩押 ... 沒有從這器皿倒在那器皿裡。 耶四十八11

這個美麗又貼切的畫面，借用自葡萄園，畫面本身很清楚，不用再說明。在摩押山地梯田辛勤工作的農民很容易明白。為了除去浮渣和沉澱物，新釀的酒從一個器皿倒到另一個器皿，直到完全清澈流動。摩押的情形再沒有別的可與這倒酒的畫面相比，因此那惡臭、粗劣的味道留在他裡面，他已經在渣滓上面澄清不動了。

這畫面在神對付人心的方法上，提供了何等深刻見解！為什麼不斷地從這城搬到那城；從這教會到那教會；從這個境遇到那個境遇？為什麼在我們的計畫裡總有改變和革新？為什麼不停地進入令人厭煩、難以忍受的環境受束縛？這一切都是神製造生命之酒的一部分。我們必須從這器皿倒到那器皿，否則我們會在渣滓上面澄清不動，變得愚蠢、不成熟、且令人厭惡。當下一個改變來到你的生命，你不要懼怕。可稱頌的神必留意不使任何一滴寶貴的酒濺到地上。祂用最溫柔的關切執行著整個倒酒的過程。

或許在我們情緒不斷的變換中，有與「從一個地方到另一個地方不斷的流動」產生相同的效果。我們絕不會長時間有相同的感覺。我們常常從一個蒙福的模式倒到另一個的模式，不是那樣喜樂安寧。我們需要小心敏捷地把握屬天的感動，不知道這感動多久就會消逝。變動是好的。否則我們驕傲自滿的味道就永遠不會消失。

Dwell deep. Jer. 49: 8

As originally spoken, these words summoned the people of Edom to seek the shadows of impenetrable forests, and retire into the secrecy of the caves and dens of the rocks. The deeper their hiding place, the better it would be when the storm of invasion swept across the land.

DWELL DEEP IN THE PEACE OF GOD. God's peace is so deep and blessed that it cannot be fathomed or explained; the fugitive into its sacred secrets cannot be followed or dragged forth to perish by the merciless pack of the wolves of care. Men of the world cannot understand that mystery of peace; but the believer knows the way into it, and makes it his hiding-place and pavilion. He sleeps like his Master in the stern, while storms sweep the waters.

DWELL DEEP IN COMMUNION WITH GOD. Hide in God. Get away from the rush and strife around, and go alone into the clear, still depths of his nature. The Rhone loses all its silt in the deep, clear waters of Geneva's lake. A few hasty words of prayer will not avail for this. A day's climb is often necessary before one can reach the heart of the mountains.

DWELL DEEP IN STILLNESS OF SOUL. DO not live on the outside of life, in the outer courts of the temple of the soul. Get within. God awaits thee there. Centre thyself. When the world is full of alarm and harassments, study to be quiet. The soul's health cannot be maintained apart from the observance of times of waiting on God in solitude. The great importance of perseverance in the exercise of prayer and inward retirement may be sufficiently learnt, says one, next to the experience of it, merely from the tempter's artifices and endeavours to allure us from it, and make us neglect it.

住在深密處。 耶四十九8

按著原意，這些話召喚以東人在不易穿過的森林尋找庇護，退隱在不為人知的岩石洞穴。當入侵的暴風席捲這地時，藏身之處越深就越有利。

住在神平安的深處。神的平安是那樣的深且有福，以致無法測度或解釋；進入神聖隱密處的逃命者，不能被無情狼群般的憂慮跟蹤，被拉出來殺害。屬世的人不能理解平安的奧祕；但信徒知道進入平安的路，並使這平安成為他的藏身之處。他安睡，如同他的主在海上起了暴風的時候依然安睡在船尾上(可四37-38)。

住在與神相交的深處。藏在神裡面。離開周圍的匆忙與爭吵，獨自進入祂本性清澈、安靜的深處。隆河在日內瓦湖深且靜的水裡除掉所有的淤泥。幾句急忙的禱告不會達到這樣的境界。在一個人能到達群山中央之前，常常需要花一天攀登。

住在心靈平靜的深處。不要住在生命的外層，靈魂之殿的外院，要進入殿內。神在那裡等你。你要集中精神。當這世界充滿了驚恐與擾亂的時候，你要學習安靜。除了守住花時間單獨等候神之外，心靈的健康無法得到維持。有人說，持續操練禱告與內在退隱的重要性，可能就夠學習了，接著這經歷之後，只要擺脫試探者的詭計與努力，防止他來引誘我們離開並忽視這操練。

They have forgotten their resting-place, their place to lie down in. Jer. 50:6 (marg.)

These words may often be said of us. A time of emergency arises; the necessity for instant and vigorous action seems overpowering; we fail to see what course to adopt--and immediately we get flurried and excited; we run from one to another; we lose our sleep. All our earnest resolutions to abide in Christ and live in his fellowship are forgotten. We have forgotten our resting-place.

Or we are in the midst of a great campaign of work. From morning to night we are plunged in a mass of calculations and activities. There is no time to take our meals, much less to obtain opportunities for prayer and fellowship with God. Our rooms without, our souls within, are littered with the symptoms of the many absorbing interests which are monopolizing our attention. We have forgotten our resting-place.

Or, perhaps, it is a time of great temptation. Hour after hour the foe returns to the attack. We have done our best to withstand him; but have hit out without precision, have fired at random. Again, we have forgotten our resting-place.

The place where we lie down to rest is under the shadow of the Cross. Whilst we remain there, we are perfectly safe and blessed. Return unto thy rest, O straying sheep! Back to the arms of Jesus, where only such frail ones as thou art are safe.

I knew a man, who had to bear a thousand crosses belonging to others, and who grieved himself into an illness because others did not love God as He deserves, till all at once his own foolishness and sinfulness struck him to the heart. He could do nothing then but cast himself and them into the endless depths of the love of God; and he ended by having rest in his heart, and a song on his lips.

他們 ... 竟忘了安歇之處，他們躺下的地方。 耶五十6 [後半句是根據英文欽定本的邊註加上的]

這些話語常常是講到我們。當緊急的時刻來臨；似乎無法避免需要採取緊急強而有力的行動；我們看不清應採取哪條道路 — 我們立刻就慌張激動；我們從這裡跑到那裡；我們不能睡覺。我們所有熱切要住在基督裡，並活在祂交通中的決心，都忘記了。我們竟忘了我們的安歇之處。

或者我們在一個偉大事工的運動中。從早到晚落入一大堆的打算與活動中。沒有時間吃飯，更沒有機會禱告與神相交。我們外面的房間，我們裡面的靈魂，零亂地堆滿許多有趣吸引人的事務，佔據我們的注意力。我們竟忘了我們的安歇之處。

或者可能是一個大試探的時刻。每時每刻仇敵回來攻擊我們。我們已經盡力抵擋他；但出擊不精確，又隨意射擊。再一次，我們竟忘了我們的安歇之處。

我們躺下休息的地方是在十字架的蔭下。當我們停留在那裡的時候，我們十分安全、蒙福。迷路的羊啊，歸回你的安息吧！回到耶穌的膀臂中，像你這樣脆弱的人，只有在那裡才是安全的。

我認識一個人，他必須擔負一千個屬於別人的十字架，他悲傷成疾，因別人不能照神所配得的來愛祂，直到突然間他想到自己的愚拙和罪污。他什麼都做不了，只能將他自己和他們都投進神愛無窮盡的深處；最終他心裡得到了安息，並且口中歌唱。

Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of Hosts. Jer. 51 : 5

Yes, indeed, our life has been filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. We see it now. As we look back upon the past with the light of the present reflected upon it, we see how every day has added its quota of transgression. How bitterly we must have grieved the Holy Ghost! How terribly have we made the Holy One suffer! Do you wonder that Jesus still appears in heaven as a Lamb as it had been slain!

But He has not forsaken! As again we review our life, how abundant is the evidence that we have not been forsaken. Forsaken!--Then God's right hand would lose its cunning. Forsaken!--Then the tides that flow through the heart of God would have to leap backward. Forsaken!--Then the eternal purposes would have to be frustrated. Forsaken!--Then the divine word would be forfeited, and the divine Son would go without his meed. Sin is mighty; but there is one thing it cannot do, it cannot make God forsake those whom He has adopted into his family. Sin dragged the archangel to the pit; but can never wrench the believer out of the hand of God. Sin brought Christ from the throne to the cross; but it can never cause God to leave, or cease to care for, his own.

Does this lead you to presumption? Do you say, Then I may do as I like? Ah, beware! Those that talk thus have not the mark of his children. The child loves with the love that fears to grieve God, more than to be forsaken of Him. "The love of Christ constrains me to forsake these things. I have long enough crucified my beloved Saviour with my sins. His love constrains me to renounce all that grieves Him, and live for Him alone."

以色列和猶大，... 沒有被他的神萬軍之耶和華丟棄。 耶五十一5

是的，我們的生命的確充滿罪，違背以色列的聖者。我們現在看見了。當我們藉著現今的亮光回顧過去時，看到我們過犯的數量每天都在增加。我們必定讓聖靈極其憂傷啊！我們何等使這位聖者受苦啊！你希奇耶穌在天上出現，仍然像被殺的羔羊嗎(啟五6)？

但是祂沒有丟棄！當我們再回顧我們的生命，我們沒有被丟棄的證據是何等的多。若丟棄！— 那麼祂的右手將忘記技巧(詩一三七5)。若丟棄！— 那麼經過神心中湧流的潮水就要倒流。若丟棄！— 那麼神永恆的旨意就遭受阻擾。若丟棄！— 那麼神的話就要被廢去，聖子就沒有得到祂工作的報償了。罪是強而有力的，但有一件事情罪做不到，罪不能使神丟棄那些祂所收納進入祂家的兒女。罪把天使長拖入坑中；但罪永遠無法將信徒從神的手中奪去(約十29)。罪使基督離開寶座，來到十架；但罪永遠無法使神離開屬祂的人，也不能使神停止看顧屬祂的人。

這就使你膽大冒昧嗎？(彼後二10)。你就說，那麼我可以隨己意而行嗎？啊，你要小心！凡是這樣說的人，都沒有神兒女的印記。神的兒女都有這個愛，這愛使他害怕讓神傷心，過於害怕被神丟棄。「基督的愛使我們放棄隨己意行事。我用我的罪將我心愛的救主釘在十字架上已經夠久。祂的愛迫使我拋棄一切使祂痛心的事，而單單為祂活。」

Every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life. Jer. 52: 34

If the King of Babylon did thus for a captive king, his prisoner, will your heavenly Father do less for you? He created you to need the daily portion, and cannot be oblivious of his own constitution of your nature. You wind up your watch each day, because you know that otherwise it will stop; and God will not be less thoughtful of your constant need of reinforcement. "He knoweth that ye have need of all these things." His faithfulness guarantees that there always will be the portion of good for the body; always the portion of love and light for the soul; always the portion of Holy Spirit quickening for the spirit.

It is easier to die once than to live always. It is not easy to meet the continual demand of recurrent duty; not easy to live a full and strong life, that never dips below the horizon, or sinks in the fountain-basin. But it is possible, when the soul has learnt to leave all care with God, waiting on Him for the supply of all its needs, and esteeming that He is the only really satisfactory portion we need.

"Neither prison-walls, nor locks, nor the cruelty of man," said some imprisoned suffering souls, "can obstruct the issues of the Lord's love nor the manifestation of his presence, which is our joy and comfort, and carries us above all sufferings, and makes days and hours and years pleasant to us; which pass away as a moment, because of the enjoyment of seeing Him with whom a thousand years is but as one day."

Those who can trust God in these directions are not only abundantly satisfied of his great goodness, but are able to send portions to others. Like the disciples, they share out their slender supplies and get twelve baskets full in return.

日日賜他一分，終身是這樣，直到他死的日子。 耶五十二34

如果巴比倫王都能這樣對待他的囚犯，一個被擄的君王；難道你的天父待你比這更少嗎？祂創造了你，讓你需要每日的一分供應，祂不會忘記你的本質是祂所制定的。你每天會給手錶上發條，因為你知道，不上發條，錶就會停止不動；神對你每日所需要的補給品也不會不留心。「祂知道你需要這些東西。(太六32)」祂的信實保證總有一分美物為著你的身體；總有一分愛和光為著你的魂；總有一分聖靈的激勵為著你的靈。

「一次為主死」比「持續為主活」還容易。要應付重複不斷的責任，是不容易的；要活出一個豐滿有力的生命，永不掉到水平線以下，也不沉入深水潭，是不容易的。但當人學會將一切的憂慮卸給神，等候祂來供應一切的需要，並尊崇祂為我們所需真正唯一令人滿足的福分時，這些不容易的事就成為辦得到的。

有被囚禁的人說：「無論是監獄的高牆、鎖鍊、人的殘酷，都無法攔阻神的愛流露，也無法攔阻祂同在的顯現。祂的愛和祂的同在是我們的喜樂和安慰，使我們超越一切的苦難，使我們的時光變得愉悅；因為看見祂的喜樂，年日過去如同一轉眼之間。祂看千年如一日。(彼後三8)」

凡能照這些指示信靠神的人，不僅充分地因祂的美物滿足，還能夠分給別人。就像門徒們，他們將自己微少的食物與人分享，而得到的卻是滿滿十二籃的回報(太十四13-21)。