

And Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus. Dan. 1: 21

Is that wonderful? It may seem so when you consider the uncertainty of Oriental politics, and the feverish haste with which favourites are raised to confidential positions and thrust back again to obscurity. In this very book we have glimpses of the virulence of hatred entertained in the court of Babylon towards Jews, and the mortification with which aspirants for the royal favour found it monopolized by Daniel and his friends. But we cease to wonder when we turn to chap 6: 10, and discover Daniel's habit of kneeling upon his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks to his God. Prayer is the secret of continuance.

To all deep lives there come moments of serious questioning: Shall I be able to hold out? Shall I always be able to withstand the virulent hate of my foes, and overcome the corruption of my heart? Will it be always possible to meet the strong and imperious demands of duty, and the appeal of those who look to me for help? Amid the changes that the years may bring, will it be possible to maintain my ground? Men are so capricious; events so fluctuating; the sea of human life so unstable. To all such suggestions there is but one reply--prayer is the secret of continuance.

It is a dangerous temptation of the adversary, so writes one of God's hidden ones, when upright minds suffer themselves to be completely cast down by the unbelieving--I had almost said proud--view of their infirmities : in the performance of God's works such ought only to humble themselves, and go forward. He who loves and exercises prayer, will in due time be translated from self unto God: from being a pitcher, filled and emptied, to a riverbed.

到古列王元年，但以理繼續還在。 但一21（另譯）[註]

希奇嗎？當你仔細思想東方政治的不確定性，受寵的人像發燒似的迅速升至機要位置，又被貶回沒沒無聞，你可能認為這是件希奇的事。就在這卷書中，我們瞥見巴比倫宮庭中對猶太人憎恨的惡毒，以及爭寵的人彼此羞辱傾軋，他們卻發現但以理和他的朋友獨得王的恩寵。但當我們讀到六章10節就不覺希奇了，我們發現但以理習慣一日三次雙膝跪下，向神禱告感謝。禱告是他「繼續還在」的祕訣。

對於一切有深度的人，都會遇到嚴重被質疑的時刻：我能堅持得住嗎？我能一直頂住敵人惡毒的憎恨，並克服己心的敗壞嗎？有可能一直都滿足職責上緊急強烈的要求，一直都能應付那些指望我幫助之人的懇求嗎？在歲月所帶來的變遷之中，還有可能維持我的立場嗎？人是如此善變；世事如此波動不定；人生之海如此動盪不安。對所有這些問題，只有一個回答——禱告是「繼續還在」的祕訣。

有一位神的隱士如此寫道，當秉性耿直的人以不信（幾乎可說是驕傲）的觀點看見自己的弱點，而全然沮喪時，這是仇敵的危險試探；在成就神的工作上，只該使他們謙卑，並往前行。那熱愛並實行禱告的人，到了適當的時候，便從自己轉移到神；從一個裝滿又被倒空的水罐，成為河床。

[註] 這裡應不是指但以理還健在。因為當我們讀到但以理書十1我們就知道，他到古列王第三年體力精神都還很好，這樣在一21告訴我們古列王元年時他還健在，就完全多餘。

這裡較可能是指但以理還在巴比倫宮中，甚至還任職。直至波斯王古列元年滅巴比倫國（即迦勒底國）。但以理在巴比倫亡國前幾小時，還被召到末代君王伯沙撒面前（但五29-30）。

我們若知道尼布甲尼撒在位第一年是605BC；古列王元年是538BC，是經過多長的時間，就較能領會邁爾在本篇信息中所說「繼續還在」的涵義了。

Then was the secret revealed in a night vision. Dan. 2: 17, 18, 19

This prayer-meeting, called hurriedly, must have been very intense. There was no knowing whether it might not be interrupted before it was completed by the guards of the palace summoning the supplicants to die. These two or three were gathered in the name of God, in rooms which never before had heard his name. But when their prayers had been offered, such serene peace resulted that Daniel was able to sleep with the utmost composure; and his mind, like a mirror, received upon its placid depths the impression of God's thoughts.

It is a test of prayer having attained its object, when the praying soul feels there is no need to wrestle longer, and the sweet assurance is borne in that God has received our supplication, and that further words are needless. This serenity of heart shows itself in the unruffled calm of the commercial man in a time of panic; in the quietness of the soul under provocation; in the stayedness of the heart on God, while storms sweep earth and sky.

It has been pointed out that there are three New Testament words for prayer to which we do well to take heed. Be sober unto prayer (1 Peter 4: 7). Do not be drunk with worldly vanity, business, or gaiety; but bring a humble, penitent, clear, and sound mind. Be at leisure when you pray (1 Cor. 7: 5). The word means that prayer is not to be hurried; that nothing should interfere with its leisurely enjoyment. Labour at prayer (Col. 1: 29; or 4: 12). As a man labours at his daily work, or strives on the battle-field, or agonizes to preserve a beloved friend from danger. It was thus that Jesus laboured in the Garden of Gethsemane. And it was thus that these faithful souls must have prayed.

這奧祕的事，就在夜間異象中，給但以理顯明。 但二17-19

這個匆忙招聚的禱告會，一定十分迫切。不知道是否中途就可能被宮中的侍衛打斷，將禱告懇求的人傳喚出去處死。這兩三個人奉神的名聚集，是在神的名從未曾被聽聞的屋子裡。然而當他們獻上禱告時，就產生寧靜平安，使但以理能夠極度鎮定地入睡；而他的心思，就如一面鏡子，領受神的思想銘刻在他心平靜的深處。

這是個禱告測試，已經達到目的，當祈求的人感到無需再掙扎，並且感受到甘甜的確據已產生，神已經垂聽我們的懇求，因此無需再多說。這內心的平靜，顯示經商的人在惶恐的時候，有從容不迫的鎮定；人在挑釁之下，有心靈的平靜；人在風暴橫掃天地時，心中堅定不移倚靠神。

有人曾指出，在新約聖經中，有三處關於禱告的經文值得我們留意。「要做醒禱告」（彼前四7）。不要沉醉在世俗的虛榮、事務、或歡愉；要存謙卑、懺悔、清明、和謹守的心。「要專心禱告」（林前七5）。專心意思是禱告不應匆忙；不讓任何事攪擾禱告中的自在隨意。「要竭力禱告」（西一29, 四12）。就像人為他每日的工作盡心竭力，或是在戰場上奮戰，或是為一位至愛的朋友免遭危險而奮力掙扎。耶穌便是如此在客西馬尼園中盡心竭力（太廿六36-38, 可十四32-33）。這些忠心的人（但以理和他的三個朋友）必然如此禱告。

Lo, I see four men loose. Dan. 3 : 25

There was no doubt about their being bound. Their turbans, mantles, and other garments had bound their limbs so tightly, that when first they reached the furnace they fell down bound in its midst. Whatever else the fire could not do, it at least freed them, so that they walked loose; and the dewy glades of Paradise were not more fragrant and delightful than were those white-hot cinders.

This is what trial has often done for us. We had become conscious of the binding effect of our own habits which we had permitted as comparatively innocent; but gradually the conviction grew that they were amongst the weights that should be laid aside. Yet they clung to us until some fiery trial befel us, and from that hour, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we were free. Do not fear the fire. It cannot hurt one hair of your head, or leave the smell of burning on you; but it will eat out the alloy, and gnaw away the iron bands that bound you.

*Beat on, true heart, for ever!
Shine bright, strong golden chain;
And bless the cleansing fire
And the furnace of living pain.*

But Jesus never allows his beloved to walk the fire alone. If it is heated seven times hotter than its wont, this is only the reason for his becoming more real, as our living and glorious Friend. There always goes beside the tried saint, though not always patent even to the eye of the spirit, another whose aspect is that of the Son of God. Reach out thy hands to Him, beloved --He is there. The Refiner not only watches the crucible, He is in it with thee. In all thy affliction He is afflicted.

看哪，我見有四個人，並沒有捆綁。 但三25

毫無疑問他們是被捆綁著的。他們的頭巾[註]、外袍和別的衣服將他們的四肢緊緊捆住，當他們剛進入火窯時是被綁著而落入其中的(21, 23節)。無論還有什麼是這火所不能作的，至少火將他們鬆了綁，使他們可以在火中自由行走；即使樂園裡含著露水的林間空地，也不比這白熱灰燼更芬芳愉悅。

這就是試煉經常為我們所作的。我們已覺察到被自己的習慣所捆綁，我們容許這些比較無害的習慣；但我們漸漸確認這些習慣形成重擔，應該被除去。然而這重擔卻緊貼著我們，直至如火的試煉臨到我們，從那一刻開始，因著聖靈的恩典，我們便得自由了。不要懼怕這試煉的火。它不會傷及你一根頭髮，也不會在你身上留下火燎的氣味(27節)；但它會除掉雜質，吞滅那捆綁你的鐵鍊。

真誠的心啊，你要跳動直到永永遠遠！
堅固的金鏈啊，你要閃耀發光；
願神賜福這煉淨的火焰，
以及使人痛苦的火窯。

然而耶穌絕不允許祂所愛的人獨自行走在火中。若窯被燒熱比平常加七倍(19節)，唯一的原因是要更顯明祂真是我們永活榮耀的朋友。在受試煉的聖徒身邊，總有另一位同行，雖然不是常向靈裡的眼睛顯明，祂相貌好像神子。蒙愛的人啊，要向祂伸出你的手——祂就在那裡。煉淨人的神不只是眼望著坩堝，祂也與你一同在坩堝裡面。在你一切的痛苦中，祂也一同受苦。

[註] 21節所記這三人的穿著，可能是巴比倫的服飾，今日並不確知其樣式。和合本修訂版譯作：「穿著內袍、外衣、頭巾和其他的衣服，...」。

All his works are truth, and his ways judgment. Dan. 4: 37

This is the confession of a heathen king; but how true it is, and how well for us, if we dare to affirm, amid all the appearances to the contrary, and all the shrinking of the natural man, that all God's works are truth and his ways righteous, not only in the wide circumference of the heavens, but in the tiny circle of our little life.

The main lesson, let us note it, which this chapter is designed to teach, and which Nebuchadnezzar epitomizes in these words, is the abhorrence with which God regards pride. We are all tempted to walk on the terrace of our palace, and say, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?" But to speak thus is to incur the displeasure of the Most High, who giveth the kingdom to whomsoever He will.

If thou hast achieved a position of wealth and independence and success, do not be proud of it, as though it were all of thy own creating. God gave thee power to get wealth; raised thee to that responsible position as his agent and trustee; and made thy name as one of the great over the earth. Give Him the glory, and be sure to consider thyself only as his steward, entrusted with his property, and continued in thy position for so long a time as thou art faithful in thine administration.

May not that illness, that suspension from active work, that serious deprivation, have been sent to thee, as this madness was permitted to come to the King of Babylon, that thou shouldest know and acknowledge that the heavens do rule? Remember that the watchers and the holy ones still walk the world with viewless footprints, and give in their account.

祂所作的全都誠實，祂所行的也都公平。 但四37

這是一個異教君王的告白。若在一一切的情形不利，天然的人完全退縮時，我們卻勇敢肯定神所作的全都誠實，祂所行的也都公平，不僅在廣闊的諸天，也在我們渺小的生命中，那是多麼真實，多麼美好。

讓我們注意，這一章所要教導的主要功課，尼布甲尼撒在這些話語中摘要敘述的，就是神對驕傲的憎惡。我們都忍不住要在自己王宮陽台上遊行，並說：「這大巴比倫不是我用大能大力建為京都，要顯我威嚴的榮耀麼？(30節)」但講這樣的話，必引起至高者的不悅；至高者要將國賜與誰，就賜與誰(17, 25, 32節)。

如果你達到一個地位，擁有財富、獨立自主而且成功，你不要以此誇耀，好像都是你自己創造出來的。神賜你取得財富的力量；祂抬舉你到擁有重大責任的位置來作祂的代理人 and 託管人；祂使你的名在全地顯赫。你要將榮耀歸給祂，而確實看自己只是祂的管家，受託管理祂的產業。只要你在所管轄的事上忠心，你便繼續在這位置上。

難道臨到你身上的病痛、停止積極參與工作、嚴重喪失權力，就像精神錯亂臨到巴比倫王，豈不是要使你明白，並承認天上的王確實掌權嗎？你要記住，守望者與聖者依然在世上行走(13, 17, 23節)[指天使]，他們雖不留下腳印，卻呈上他們的報告。

I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations and dissolve doubts. Dan. 5: 16

The perplexed world often turns to the Christian in its hours of anguish and terror. While the foe seems powerless, and the hall of life is full of light and song; while the merry feet chase the flying hours, and mirth is unrestrained; whilst the wine flows freely, and the courtiers whisper flattery--the servant of God may be left in obscurity and neglect, as Daniel by Belshazzar. At such times God Himself is an object of ridicule and scorn. But let a hand come from out the Infinite, and write on the walls of life's palace in words of mystery, then the panic-stricken worldlings cry out for one in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God, and who can decipher the mysterious hieroglyphics, which to conscience forebode only disaster.

At such hours the child of God is kept in perfect peace. How should it be otherwise? He recognizes his Father's handwriting, and can decipher his Father's meaning. Amid the crash of falling kingdoms he is sure of his Father's care. Oblivious of his own interests, he is only anxious to interpret the ways of God, to recall the sinner, and save the State.

The world has more respect for our religion than it cares to admit in its gay moods, and it is noticing us more than we dream. Some day those who treat you with least courtesy will send for you. Only be at peace, and rest in your Father's Spirit. It shall be given you in that same hour what ye should speak. In the meanwhile, do not be surprised if you are led through many mysterious and trying experiences. It is only so that you can get the key to God's secrets, or the clue to his mysteries. Above all, seek for the Spirit of God, that light and understanding and excellent wisdom may be found in thee.

我聽說你善於講解，能解疑惑。 但五16

困惑的世人常在苦惱、恐懼之時轉向基督徒。當敵人軟弱無力時，生命之殿卻充滿了光明與歌聲；當歡樂的腳追趕如飛的時光，盡情歡笑無拘無束；當人自由暢飲，朝臣阿諛奉承——神的僕人也許被遺忘無人聞問，就像但以理被伯沙撒遺忘。在這樣的時刻，神本身便是被譏諷嘲笑的對象。但讓那隻來自永恆的手，用奧祕的文字在生命之殿的牆上書寫(5節)，驚恐萬分的世俗之人，便大聲呼叫，向裡頭有聖神之靈的人求助(11節)，有神聖之靈的人能解開奧祕難懂的文字，這些文字對人的良心預告災難。

在這樣的時刻，神的孩子被保守在全然的平靜之中，不會有別的情形。他認得他天父的筆跡，並能解讀他天父的意思。在即將敗落的王國崩塌中，他確信天父的看顧。他忘記自己的利益，只是急於解釋神的作為，喚醒罪人，拯救國家。

世人對於我們信仰的尊重，多過於他們在歡樂時所承認的，並且對於我們的注意，也比我們想像的還多。有朝一日，那些對你最不禮貌的人，會派人來找你。你只要平靜，安息在父神的靈裡。到那時候，必賜給你當說的話(太十19-20)。同時，你不要訝異，如果你被帶領經過許多奧祕而艱辛的經歷。只有這樣，你才能得到解開神祕密的鑰匙，取得解開祂奧祕的線索。最重要的是尋求神的靈，使你心中光明，又有聰明智慧(11節)。

No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God. Dan. 6:23 (R.V.)

By faith they shut the mouths of lions. The lions' den is not an old-world experience merely. God's saints still dwell among lions, and fight with wild beasts at Ephesus. Like David, God's people have abundant cause to cry, "They have compassed us in our steps: they set their eyes to cast us down to the earth. He is like a lion that is greedy of his prey, and, as it were, a young lion, lurking in secret places." But still God sends his angel to shut the lions' mouths; still faith surrounds us with his unseen protection. Or, if the lion seems to triumph, it is only in appearance. Was not the martyr Ignatius more than a conqueror when he said:

"I bid all men know that of my own free will I die for God, unless ye should hinder me. I exhort you, be ye not an unseasonable kindness to me. Let me be given to the wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God. I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the wild beasts that they may become my sepulchre, and may leave no part of my body behind; so that I may not, when I am fallen asleep, be burdensome to any one. ... Now I am beginning to be a disciple. May naught of things visible and things invisible impede me, that I may attain unto Jesus Christ. Come fire, and iron, and grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings, and manglings, crushings of my whole body--only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ."

Whether faith closes the mouth of the lion, or gives the soul such an entire deliverance from all fear, it is the same in essence and operation, and shows its heavenly temper with the ease with which it overcomes the world.

身上毫無損傷，因為信靠他的神。 但六23

他們藉著信心封住了獅子的口。獅子坑並不是只在古老的世界才有的經歷。神的聖徒們依舊住在獅群之中，在以弗所同野獸戰鬥(林前十五32, 徒十九23-41)。就像大衛一樣，神的子民有充分的理由呼求，「他們圍困了我們的腳步；他們瞪著眼，要把我們推倒在地。他像獅子急要抓食，又像少壯獅子蹲伏在暗處。(詩十七11-12)」然而神依舊差遣祂的使者封住獅子的口(22節)；信心依舊用祂那看不見的保護圍繞我們。即或獅子似乎得勝，但那只是表象。當殉道者伊格那丟[註]說出以下這段話時，他豈不是遠超過一個征服者嗎：

「我要所有的人知道，為神而死是出於我個人的自由意志，除非你攔阻我。我勸勉你，不要以不合時宜的良善待我。讓我被交給野獸，藉牠們我便能到達神那裡。我是神的麥子，我被野獸的牙齒磨碎，我就能成為基督純正的餅。寧可引誘野獸，使牠們成為我的墳墓，叫我的肢體毫無遺下；這樣當我睡去的時候，我不會成為任何人的負擔。...現在我開始成為一個門徒了。但願無任何可見的或不可見的事攔阻我，好讓我到達耶穌基督那裡。來吧，火焰、鎖鍊、與野獸格鬥、割切、撕裂、粉碎我整個身體 — 只要讓我到達耶穌基督那裡。」

無論信心是封住獅子的口，或是使人徹底脫離一切恐懼，在本質和運作上都是一樣的，都顯示出信心屬天的性情輕易戰勝世界。

[註] 伊格那丟 Ignatius, 約35-107AD, 為使徒後期的教會領袖之一，安提阿教會的主教。最終被羅馬皇帝投入野獸群中殉道。在從安提阿押解至羅馬受審並處決途中，所經各地，教會多有代表來祝福他，他在途中寫了七封書信致小亞細亞七個教會。成為除了新約聖經之外，最早期的教會文獻。

There was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom. Dan. 7: 14

Jesus does rule. The kingdom of Christ is no fanciful phrase. The words He spoke, the deeds He did, have shaped the religious life and thought of the civilized world. But this is the lowest ground. He is supreme over all creation. In Him the ancient psalm is fulfilled, "Thou hast put all things under his feet. All sheep and oxen, the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and the beasts of the field." The Father hath set Him at his own right hand, far above all principality and power; all angels do his bidding; all demon-powers are beneath his feet. Joseph, our Brother, is King.

But let us never forget that the foundation of his kingdom is his Cross. We want more than the truth, more than a guide to show the way; we need forgiveness, salvation, life: and these are only possible through the death of the Redeemer. Satan offered Him the kingdom when he met Him in the wilderness, and He would not have it on such terms. With face set for Calvary, He went down the mountain to the valley of the shadow of death; and having traversed it, He came to his disciples and said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ; for Thou art the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

That kingdom is an everlasting one. "All kingdoms will pass away before Christ's as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor." The shaking of the kings and kingdoms of this world has already begun, and is destined to shake to the ground the most stable edifices of human pride; but as we are to receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us not be troubled.

得了權柄、榮耀、國度。 但七14

耶穌確實掌權。基督的國度不是想像中的空話。祂所說的話，祂所行的事，都塑造了文明世界的信仰生活和思想。但這只是最底層。祂對一切受造擁有主權。在祂裡面，那古老的詩篇得到了應驗：「你 ... 使萬物就是一切的牛羊、田野的獸、空中的鳥、海裡的魚、凡經行海道的，都服在祂的腳下。(詩八6-8)」父神叫祂坐在自己的右邊，遠超過一切執政的、掌權的(弗一20-21)；所有的天使都聽從祂；所有的邪惡勢力都服在祂腳下。我們的弟兄約瑟，他是王(創四十五4, 8-9)。[註]

但願我們永遠不忘記，祂國度的根基就是祂的十字架。我們要的不只是真理，不只是顯明道路的指引；我們需要饒恕、救恩、生命；而這些唯有藉救贖者的死才有可能實現。撒但在曠野遇見祂時，要將國度給祂，但祂拒絕依照撒但的條件得到國度(太四8-10)。祂從山上下來(太十七9-12)，面向各各他，來到死蔭的幽谷(詩廿三4)，穿過死亡，祂來到門徒這裡對他們說：「天上地下所有的權柄都賜給我了。(太廿八18)」你是榮耀的王，哦，基督；因為你是神的羔羊，除去世人罪孽的(約一29)。

那國度是永存的。「萬國都要在基督的國度面前廢去，成為如同夏天禾場上的糠粃。(但二35)」這世界的列國和君王已經開始動搖了，而且人類驕傲的堅固體系都註定要徹底動搖；但我們將要承受一個不能動搖的國度，我們不要憂愁。

[註] 約瑟在許多方面預表基督：他為父所愛，受父差遣去關切弟兄，被弟兄出賣，與二罪犯同坐監一得釋放一處死，從監牢釋放登寶座掌王權，娶外邦女子，成為世人生命的供應者，...。(創卅七3, 13-14, 28, 卅九20, 四十1-3, 20-22, 四十一14, 40-44, 45, 56-57；對照：太三17, 約六38, 太廿六14-16, 路廿三32, 39-43, 徒二24, 36, 五31, 弗五23-32, 約六35)。

Then I rose up, and did the king's business. Dan. 8: 27

Few men have been favoured with such visions and revelations as fell to the lot of Daniel. The future, in so many different aspects, was repeatedly unfolded before him, and he saw much that elated and that depressed him. But through it all he steadily did the king's business; so far as he knew, nothing was allowed to suffer or get behind. He would have counted it a great slur on his religious life if it could have been said that his visions and exercises interfered with his service to the king. Probably he did better work because his life was hid with God.

In all this there is much of suggestion and warning. We too must have our secret mount of vision. We too must look across the valley for that blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. We too must have the vision of the evenings and mornings. But that is not enough. We must do our business in the world. Not stargazing, but following the Star; not always standing at the window, but going to and fro in the King's household, seeing that everyone is at his post, and that the Royal household is properly fed; not always on the mount of transfiguration, but hastening whithersoever the uplifted hand of human need beckons us.

At the same time, it will quicken us to do our business better if we have had a vision. Nothing makes so good a workman as thorough comprehension of his master's purposes. And when Jesus calls us not servants only, but friends, we serve Him with deep appreciation of his thoughts and plans. Our service is more refined, diligent, and intelligent. Get your plan in the mount, and then build.

然後起來辦理王的事務。 但八27

很少有人像但以理蒙神恩眷，得到這樣的異象和啟示。「將來」的許多不同方面重複展現在他眼前，他看到許多令人得意的，以及令人沮喪的異象。即使經過這一切他持續辦理王的事務；只要是他知道的，一樣也不容招損或拖延。如果有人說他的異象和禮拜妨礙他對王的服事，他會視之為他敬虔生活中的大污點。可能因為他的生命藏在神裡面，所以他作更好的工作。

在这一切之中有許多的提示和警告。我們也同樣必須有我們祕密的異象山。我們也同樣必須越過低谷看到那有福的盼望 — 我們偉大的神和救主耶穌基督的榮耀顯現。我們也同樣必須有黑夜與白晝的異象。但這還不夠。我們必須作我們在這世上的工作。不是凝望星宿，而是追隨那星(太二2, 9)；不是一直站在窗邊，而是在王的家中進出，留意每一個人都在各自的崗位上，並確保王的家人都得到合適的餵養；並不一直留在變像山上，而是奔向任何有需要的人舉手召喚我們的地方。

與此同時，如果我們擁有異象，便會促使我們作更有果效的工。沒有什麼比徹底瞭解主人的目標更造就一名良好的工人。當耶穌不僅僅稱我們為僕人，也稱我們為朋友時(約十五15)，我們帶著深刻認識祂的思想和計畫來服事祂。我們的服事也就更細緻、更殷勤、更有智慧。你要在山上取得藍圖(出廿五40, 廿六30, 廿七8)，然後才建造。

At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment went forth. Dan. 9:23 (R.V.)

This is always so. Directly a God-given prayer is uttered, the commandment goes forth. There is a sense, indeed, in which true prayer is the anticipation in the human heart of the divine intention: "Before they call I will answer; and whilst they are yet speaking I will hear." Does it seem as though your prayer were like a ship lost at sea, which brings no cargo home? Dare to believe that the commandment did go forth, though as yet it has not reached you. It is operating; and before long you shall see the result. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye have received them." The answer may not have come to hand, but it has been granted. Even if you do not live to see the answer, dare to believe that it is assured.

What a tender address is this--"greatly beloved"! And the margin says "very precious." Is it really so, that we are very precious to God? To those who believe, Christ is precious; but how wonderful that they should be amongst his jewels, who were born of the first Adam, and have cost so much pain and sorrow by their sins! There is no accounting for love. Directly love begins to enumerate the reasons for its attachment, it ceases to be true love. Love knows no law except the drawing of an inward affinity. So Jesus draws near to us. We are very precious to Him. To have our love well compensates Him for all his bitter sorrow. Let us be very careful not to hurt Him, or give Him needless grief. And when we pray, let it be with the assurance that He bends over us and says, "Thou art greatly beloved; ask what thou wilt." As soon as the child of God says "Father," the whole Godhead is quick to hear his request.

你初懇求的時候，就有命令發出。 但九23（另譯）

這一直都是如此。人一說出神所賜的祈禱，命令便發出。確實，就某一面的意義來說，真正的禱告是人心對神意圖的期盼：「他們尚未求告，我就應允；正說話的時候，我就垂聽。（賽六十五24）」你的禱告是否如船隻迷失在大海中，沒有運載貨物回家？你要勇敢相信命令已經發出，雖然還沒有到達你這裡。回應正在運作中，不用多久你便會看見結果。「凡你們禱告祈求的，無論是什麼，只要信是得著的，就必得著。（可十一24）」答覆也許還沒有收到，但是已經蒙應允了。即使你在有生之年沒有見到答覆，要勇敢相信答覆已是確定的。

這是多麼親切的稱呼 — 「大蒙眷愛的(23節)」！原文直譯是「極珍貴的」。我們對於神是極珍貴的，真是如此嗎？對於信的人，基督是寶貴的；但何等奇妙，他們也在祂的珍寶之中，雖然他們以前從首先的亞當而生，他們的罪使基督極其痛苦憂傷！愛是不計帳的（林前十三5）。愛一旦開始列舉愛慕的理由，就不再是真愛了。愛不知律法，只知內在親近的吸引。同樣，耶穌親近我們（雅四8）。我們對於祂極其珍貴。得著我們的愛就足以彌補祂的一切苦痛憂傷。但願我們小心，不要傷害祂，不要加給祂不必要的傷痛。當我們禱告時，讓我們確信，祂彎下腰來對我們說：「你是大蒙眷愛的；照你所要的祈求吧。」當神的孩子開口說「父啊」，神便立即聽他的請求。

O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. Dan. 10: 19

WHY should we fear? We are loved, greatly beloved; loved to God's uttermost; loved to the gift of his Only-begotten; loved to tears; loved to blood-shedding and death. It is said that Jesus, having loved his own, which were in the world, loved them unto the end; not to the end of his human ministry, but to the uttermost of what love can be (John 13 : 1, R.V., marg.).

Why should we fear? Has God done so much, and will He not do all? Has He brought us out of Egypt to let us perish in the wilderness? Is He so careful of the soul, and so careless of all beside? There are mysteries--mysteries of life and death, of sin and sorrow, of this world and the next; but fear not: God is ours, and we are his by immutable and indissoluble ties.

Let us possess ourselves in peace. We cannot understand, but we can trust. We may not know the way we are going, but we can lean back on the heart of our Guide; standing in the cleft of the Rock we can look out in peace on dreaded evils as they pass away together, dismayed and amazed. If only we are acquainted with God, we shall be at peace, and thereby good will come to us. They fear who look at circumstances, and not into God's face.

And we shall be strong--strong to endure; strong to achieve; strong to wait; strong to carry the battle to the gate; strong to set our face like a flint, when the hour strikes for us to go to the cross; strong to be glad when the crowds ebb away from us to follow the dear Master, Christ:

*Be strong to hope, O heart ! Though day is bright,
The stars can only shine in the dark night.
Be strong, O heart of mine, and look towards the light.*

大蒙眷愛的人哪，不要懼怕，願你平安！你總要堅強。 但十19

我們為何懼怕？我們是蒙愛的，是大蒙眷愛的；蒙神莫大的愛；蒙愛得著祂的獨生子為禮物；祂愛到流淚；愛到流血喪命。耶穌愛世間屬自己的人，就愛他們到底；不是到祂肉身服事的盡頭，而是到愛所能達的極致（約十三1）。

我們為何懼怕？神已經成就這麼多，難道祂不作成一切嗎？祂將我們帶出埃及，難道是要讓我們死在曠野嗎？祂如此關注人，就不關心其他事嗎？有許多奧祕存在——生與死的奧祕，罪與憂傷的奧祕，今世與來世的奧祕；然而不要懼怕：神屬我們，我們也屬祂，這是永久不變的關係。

讓我們保持平靜。我們不明白，但我們可以信靠。我們也許不知道我們所行的路，但我們可以靠著我們嚮導胸懷；站在磐石的縫隙中，我們可以在平安中觀看可怕的惡魔在絕望和驚奇中消逝。只要我們與神熟悉認識，我們便在平安之中，神的美意必臨到我們。看環境而不看神的人就懼怕。

我們必剛強——剛強地忍耐；剛強地完成工作；剛強地等候；剛強地爭戰守住城門口（賽廿八6）；當該走向十字架的時刻來到，我們臉面剛強好像堅石（賽五十7，路九51，53）；當人群離開我們，轉去跟隨親愛的主基督，我們仍剛強歡喜（約三25-30）：

我的心啊！要剛強地盼望，
白晝雖明亮，星星卻只在黑夜中閃耀。
我的心啊，要剛強，並且期盼光明的到來。

The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. Dan. 11 : 32

Daniel probably refers to the great persecution under Antiochus, when the followers of Judas Maccabæus, knowing their God, and keeping loyal to Him amidst the general defection, refused to bow before the idols of Syria. These were strong in God's strength, and did exploits never surpassed in the annals of those who have suffered for the truth.

There are many ways of knowing God--through the Bible, in solitary meditation, and pre-eminently in the person of Jesus; but we also come to know Him by the daily experience and intercourse of life. Those who live with you in the same house know and read you in an intimacy of knowledge which no other method can rival. Learn to live with God! Summer and winter with Him! "Abide in Him!"

In the Epistle to the Ephesians there are three prayers, which the apostle was wont to offer for his converts. First, that they might know; next, that they might be strong; lastly, that they might watch unto prayer. All our knowledge of God should be turned to practical use. Few things injure us more than to seek knowledge for its own sake. Know, that you may do.

Then you will be strong to do exploits. When a man is sure of his base of operations; sure that those in the rear of his march will back him up; sure that a strong and wise friend behind him is pledged to his support--his heart is at peace, he can concentrate all his attention and energy on the work that is on hand. He has no care, the Greek word for which means division. When we really know God, and understand how utterly faithful He is to those who venture forth in faith, we can do what others dare not attempt.

惟獨認識神的子民，必剛強行事。 但十一32

很可能但以理指的是安提阿古的大迫害，猶大·馬加比的跟隨者認識他們的耶和華神，在普遍變節的人中間，對神保持忠貞，拒絕向敘利亞的偶像下拜[註]。這些人靠著神的力量剛強，行事英勇，他們的事蹟在為真理受苦的史冊中，無人勝過。

認識神有許多途徑 — 藉著讀聖經，獨自默想聖經，特別是默想耶穌自己；然而我們也藉著每日的經歷和生命的交流而認識祂。那些與你同住的人，是從親密接觸中認識你，沒有任何其他方法能與此相比。要學習與神同住！無論酷暑嚴冬都與祂同住(約十五4)！

以弗所書中，有三個禱告，是使徒保羅經常為信徒們祈求的。第一，是使他們真知道(弗一17)；然後，使他們能夠剛強(弗三16)；最後，要他們儆醒禱告(弗六18)。我們所有對神的認識都應該成為實際的應用。只為知識的緣故而求知，對我們的傷害是無比的大。知道，使我們可以實行。

然後我們便能剛強行事。當一個人確知他行事的根基；確知他的前進有後方的支持；確知背後有一位剛強而智慧的朋友保證支持他 — 他的心就有平安，他可以將所有的注意和精力專注於他手頭的工作。他沒有顧慮，沒有分心的事。當我們真認識神，明白祂對憑信心勇敢往前的人是何等信實，我們便可以去作他人所不敢作的事。

[註] 安提阿古 (Antiochus Epiphanes), 或稱安提阿古四世 (Antiochus IV), 215–163BC, 於175–163BC統治敘利亞(即希臘帝國在亞歷山大死後分為四國中的北國)，他對猶太人充滿敵意。猶大·馬加比 (Judas Maccabeus) 乃當時猶太祭司，共有五兄弟，於168BC發起馬加比革命，反抗安提阿古四世，建立猶太人的馬加比王朝 (166–142BC)。這段兩約之間的歷史記載在次經《馬加比一書》 (*Maccabees I*) 中。

Go thou thy way till the end be. Dan. 12: 13

Man becomes mystified with the great circle of God's Providence. He tries to follow it, but his eyesight fails; his heart and head grow weary. And God says, It is enough--go thy way till the end be: learn thy lesson; do thy work; tread the predetermined path: it is enough that thou shouldst fulfil thy little day; evening will be here presently, and then thou shalt rest; leave the evolution of my vast schemes to Me; I will bring all right; and "thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

THY WAY. For everyone that way is prepared; identical in the main outlines, but special for the footsteps that are destined to tread it. There are three elements, which are almost certainly present--Suffering, the strain of Toil, and Temptation. So long as the blight of the curse lingers on our earth, these will be the ingredients in our cup. But let us go on our way. It is graduated to our steps. God's grace will be sufficient for us.

OUR LOT. What will it be? As Canaan was allotted, so will heaven be. Where shall we stand? Among the overcomers, or the martyrs, or the virgin souls that follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, or those that get the victory over the Beast? Or shall our lot be amongst those who have buried their talents, forgotten their oil, and proved disobedient and self-indulgent? "Make us to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting."

THOU SHALT REST. Heaven will be to each soul what it most desires, and has missed on earth. To the lonely, Love: to those that hunger and thirst for righteousness, Holiness: to those who have dwelt amid perpetual warring and strife, Peace: to the weary, Rest--and to all the vision of God in Christ.

你且去等候結局。 但十二13

人對於神旨意運作的軌跡困惑不解。人試圖追蹤，然而他的眼力衰退，他的心力與腦力都疲憊。所以神說，夠了，你且去等候結局：學習你的功課，作你的工，走那命定的道路，完成你的本分就夠了；夜晚馬上就到，你就要歇息；將我宏大計畫的發展留給我；我會將一切處理好；「到了末期，你必起來，享受你的福分。(13節)」

你的道路。每一個人的道路都預備好了；主要的輪廓都相同，但命定要踏出去的腳步卻是獨特的。有三個要素確定是存在的 — 苦難、勞苦、以及試探。只要咒詛的病根依舊存留在地上，我們的杯中就會有這些成分。但讓我們繼續走我們的道路。這道路是按我們的腳力逐漸晉級。神的恩典夠我們用(林後十二9)。

我們的分。那會是什麼呢？就像迦南地被劃分，天上的產業也一樣。我們將要站在何處呢？列在得勝者之中(啟二7)，或在殉道者之中(啟十七6，「見證人」與「殉道者」在希臘文同字)，或在那些守童身，跟隨羔羊無論祂往哪裡去的人之中(啟十四4)，或在那些勝了獸的人之中(啟十五2)？還是我們的分是在那些埋藏自己銀子(太廿五25)、忘記預備油在器皿裡(太廿五3)、成為不順服而放縱的人之中呢？「求神使我們能夠在永恆的榮耀中，被列在你的眾聖徒中。」

你必安歇。天上必定是每個在地上的人最渴望、最思念的地方。對於寂寞孤單的人，就是愛；對於飢渴慕義的人，就是聖潔；對於住在不停爭戰中的人，就是和平；對於困倦的人，就是安息 — 對於所有的人，乃是在基督裡看見神。