

The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa. Amos 1 : 1

God does not hesitate to employ a herdman, if only his heart is pure and devoted to his service. He calls such a one out of the midst of his fellows, designating him for his sacred ministry. And when the fire of God burns within, very common clay becomes luminous and transparent. An ox-goad, a ram's-horn, a sling of stone, will serve his purpose. It is not what a man has, but what he is, that matters.

As we look through this strong book of ancient prophecy, and notice how it abounds with references and imagery peculiar to a herdman's life, we feel that a noble spirit of devotion to God may elevate the meanest employments and dignify the most ordinary subjects. The common incidents of the farm may convey the divine meaning not less than the sacred scenery of the Temple, which was familiar to Ezekiel. There is nothing which is intrinsically common or unclean. We profane things by a profane spirit. But if we view all things from the divine standpoint, we shall find that a sacred light will beat through them, like that which transfigured the coarse garments of Christ so as no fuller on earth could whiten them. The glory streamed through from his heart!

It is comparatively seldom that God calls one of the upper classes of society to conspicuous usefulness. "Behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God chose the weak things the base things and the things that are despised." Here and there a noble of great authority, a Zinzendorf, a Shaftesbury: but most often fishermen and publicans; Luther, the miner's son, Tersteegen the ribbon-weaver, Carey the cobbler.

提哥亞牧人中的阿摩司得默示。 摩一1

神毫不遲疑地使用一個牧人，只要他的心是單純並全心全意地服事。神從阿摩司的同伴中間呼召他，指定他作神聖的事工。當神的火在裡面焚燒，極普通的泥土也會變得明亮透明。一根趕牛棍(士三31)，一支羊角號(書六5)，一個甩石機弦(士廿16)，都可以為祂的旨意效勞。不是人所有的，而是人所是的，才關係重大。

當我們仔細查閱這卷語氣強烈的古老先知書，並注意到其中提及許多事物和畫面，對於一個牧人來說是奇特的，我們覺得一個愛神之人高貴的靈，可以提升最卑微的職業，使最平凡的事物有尊嚴。農場的平常小事可以傳達神的心意，並不亞於聖殿神聖的場景，這聖殿以西結很熟悉(結八章)。凡物本質上沒有俗的或不潔淨的(羅十四14)。我們用污穢的靈玷污事物。如果我們從神的觀點來看萬物，我們會發現一束神聖的光穿透他們，就像那神聖的光改變基督的粗布衣裳，甚至地上漂布的，沒有一個能漂得那樣白。榮耀從祂的心經過衣服流露出來(可九3)！

神較少呼召一個上層社會的人做顯著的用途。「弟兄們哪，可見你們蒙召的，按著肉體有智慧的不多，有能力的不多，有尊貴的也不多；神卻揀選了世上軟弱的、卑賤的、被人厭惡的。(林前一26-28)」在不同地方偶有一個權貴顯要，一個親岑道夫，一個沙甫茲布利；但最常見的還是漁夫和稅吏；礦工的兒子馬丁·路德、紡織工格哈特·特爾斯帖根、鞋匠克里[註]。

[註] 親岑道夫 N. L. von Zinzendorf, 1700-1760, 德國一貴族。在自己領地建一「主護村」，收容受迫害的新教信徒，發展成為摩拉維亞弟兄會(Moravian Brethren)運動。注重靈修敬虔，也注重海外宣教工作。影響19世紀歐洲教會。

- 沙甫茲布利 A. A. C. Shaftesbury, 1801-1885, 英國慈善家，致力勞工階級之改善。
- 馬丁路得 Martin Luther, 1483-1546, 德國神學家。16世紀歐洲宗教改革之肇始者。是教會脫離天主教成立新教的關鍵性人物。
- 特爾斯帖根 Gerhard Tersteegen, 1697-1769, 德國佈道家，以善寫詩歌聞名。
- 克里 William Carey, 1761-1834, 英國浸信會宣教士。1793年後一直在印度宣教。

Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves. Amos 2: 13

Behold! This is like the hand which occurs in the margins of old books, to attract the reader's attention. It is God's special call to our heed.

Sin is very burdensome to God: especially the sins enumerated in this context. Look at the story of oppression in the 6th verse; of licentiousness in the 7th; of ingratitude in the 9th; of drunkenness in the 12th. These sins are aggravated when committed by his own people. Just as the groaning wain creaks and cries out under its load, so does the heart of God under our sins. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" Should not we feel more as God does in this respect? Ought not we to bear the burden of sin, as Daniel did for his land and people?

What a fulfilment these words had in the life and death of our blessed Lord! The sheaves of our sins were laid on Him: for the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all. As He bore his cross through the streets of Jerusalem; as He lay crushed to the ground in Gethsemane; as He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"--surely He was like a laden wagon, groaning under an almost insupportable load.

The R.V. gives another sense, which is not so true to the Hebrew, but it should be considered: "I will press you, as a cart presseth" and cuts deep ruts in the road. A discovery is announced of a process of turning silver into gold by a pressure of eighty tons on a square inch, and in very low temperature. Yes, pressure and the chilling effects of persecution, difficulty, and disappointment are God's methods of redeeming us from destruction, and turning our silver into gold. Oh, let us forsake our sins rather than compel Him to employ such an ordeal!

看哪，我在你們以下受壓，如同裝滿禾捆的車受壓一樣。 摩二13（按英文欽定本翻譯）[註]

看哪！這就像出現在舊書頁邊上的手，吸引讀者的注意力。這是神特別呼喚我們注意。

對神而言，罪是非常難忍受的；特別是在這一章裡列舉的罪。請看第6節中的壓迫，第7節中的放蕩，第9節中的忘恩負義，第12節中的醉酒。當這些罪是祂自己的子民所犯的，就更嚴重了。就像那裝載重物的貨車發出咯吱咯吱的響聲，神的心也是因我們的罪被壓得發出哀歎。「耶路撒冷，耶路撒冷啊！（太廿三37）」在這一點我們難道不該更有神那樣的感受嗎？我們難道不該承受罪的重擔，就像但以理為他的本國和人民那樣禁食禱告嗎？（但九3-19）

這些話在我們可稱頌之主的生與死上有何等的應驗！我們的罪如同禾捆壓在祂身上；因耶和華使我們眾人的罪孽都歸在祂身上（賽五十三6）。當祂背負十字架穿過耶路撒冷的街道；當祂仆倒在客西馬尼的地上；當祂喊叫：「我的神，我的神，為什麼離棄我？（太廿七46）」——祂確實像一輛滿載的貨車，在不堪負荷的重壓下呻吟。

英文修訂本給我們另外一種意義，這就希伯來文來說不是很準確，但是也應當被考慮：「我必壓你們，如同車壓物一樣。」而且在路上壓出很深的車輪痕跡。有一個發現被公佈，是關乎在極低溫下，每平方吋加八十噸的壓力，把銀子轉成金子的過程。是的，逼迫、困難、和沮喪，這些壓力和寒冷的效果，都是神救贖我們脫離敗壞的方法，把我們的銀轉成金。但願我們拋棄我們的罪，而不迫使祂採用如此嚴酷的磨難。[銀轉成金，可能是作者的年代有人如此發表，應屬不真。]

[註] 在英文欽定本 (AV) 於1611年出版，及英文修訂本 (RV) 於1885年出版之後，大多中英聖經均採用與英文修訂本 (RV) 相近的翻譯（包括和合本），即「我必壓你們...」，可能這樣的翻譯與經文的前後文較和諧；但也有英文聖經仍採用與欽定本 (AV) 相近的翻譯，即「我在你們以下受壓...」，如1989年牛津與劍橋共同出版的 *The Revised English Bible*，這譯本較側重學術研究。

Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Amos 3: 3

This is the first of seven searching questions, to each of which there is but one answer-- Certainly not.

We are conducted, first, to the forest, to the lion's lair, where the roaring indicates that he has certainly secured his prey. There is a cause for those low roars of satisfaction. Then to the moorland, where the bird is suddenly entrapped. But there must have been an intention to entrap it on the part of the fowler, else it had not fallen to his hand. Lastly, to the city, where the panic-stricken crowds cower before some giant evil, such as pestilence, and tremble at the bugle-note of alarm. Here also, whether in the sounding of the trumpet, or the presence of the plague, there is an evident reason. Thus sorrow, causeless, does not come; and whenever it presses on the individual or the State, inquiry should be made whether God has any controversy with those who suffer beneath the stroke.

Often, in answer to such inquiry, it will be discovered that the soul is not in agreement with God; but at some almost imperceptible angle its metals have diverged from the main track of God's wise and holy procedure. And the trouble will remain until the nation or the individual have come back into agreement with God. It is worth our while to make any sacrifices, if only we may get back to God's side.

Whether in marriage, or business, or journeying together, be very sure that you are in perfect accord with your companion before you start. What sorrow might have been saved in thousands of cases, if only there had been stricter comparison of temperaments and methods before starting forth!

二人若不同心，豈能同行呢？ 摩三3

這是3-6節七個銳利質問中的第一個，對於每個質問都只有一個答案：「當然不能」。

首先，我們被引到森林，來到獅子的巢穴，在那裡咆哮表明了牠確實已經捕到了獵物。那滿足的低吼是有原因的(4節)。然後來到荒野，在那裡鳥兒突然陷入網羅。那裡一定有捕鳥者定意設陷阱，否則鳥兒不會落入他的手裡(5節)。最後，來到城市，那裡驚慌失措的人群，在巨大的災禍面前畏縮，如遇到瘟疫，以及在警報聲中顫抖(6節)。同樣，不管是角聲響起，還是瘟疫來到，都有一個明顯的因由。因此悲傷不會無緣無故來到；而每當哀傷壓迫個人或國家時，就當查問，神是否與那些受擊打的人有任何爭執。

通常，在回答這樣的查問時，就會發現這人與神的不一致；從某個幾乎不能察覺的角度看見，人的鐵軌已經偏離神智慧和聖潔程序的幹道。而且那個災難必會持續，直到這國家或個人重新回頭與神一致。這值得我們花一段時間做出犧牲，只要我們可以回到神的身邊。

無論是婚姻、事業、或一起旅行，在你開始之前，要非常確定你和你的同伴是完全一致的。在成千的案例中，只要在開始進行之前，嚴格的比對性情和處事的方法，就可以避免悲傷的事！

Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. Amos 4: 12

These words might have rung out in Paradise. When the heat of the day was over, the voice of the Lord might have been heard sounding down the leafy avenues: Prepare, O man, to meet thy God! And the summons must have filled him with ecstasy. As a child to its parent, so must those two innocent and happy beings have sped to their Creator.

We, too, hear the summons. Each morning, when we stand ready for the duties of the day, we hear the voice, Prepare to meet Me. Each Lord's Day we wake with this same summons in our heart, and prepare ourselves to meet our God. Each illness, each fluttering of the canvas of our mortality, each premonition of our end, takes up the same appeal, Prepare to meet God. And as we hear the words, we have no dread, no fear. Clothed in Christ's perfect righteousness, arrayed in his beauty, we know that we are accepted; that the love wherewith the Father loves the Son is waiting to greet us.

But there should be a preparedness of heart. We should not rush heedlessly into his presence. We should stimulate our hearts by thoughts like those suggested in the following verse. Stop and remember how great God is: He formed the mountains. How subtle his power: He made the viewless wind, and the Spirit of which it is the emblem. How omniscient his knowledge: He can declare unto man his inmost thought. How absolute his authority: the brightest morning will darken, or the darkest night brighten, as He bids. How vast the circuit of his providence, who steps from Alpine peak to peak. Let me not rush into his presence: He is my Father. But He is the Lord, the God of hosts: I must order my thoughts, and prepare to meet Him.

以色列啊，... 你當預備迎見你的神。 摩四12

這句話或許在樂園就已響起。當白日的熱氣散去後，神的聲音可能被聽見迴蕩在林蔭路徑中：人哪，你當預備迎見你的神！而且這呼喚必讓他充滿歡欣。就像孩子迎見他的父親，這樣那兩個天真快樂的人一定很快來到他們的造物主面前。

我們也聽到這呼喚。每天早晨，當我們準備承擔當天的職責，我們聽到那聲音：「你當預備迎見我」。每個主日，這同一個呼喚在心中喚醒我們，並預備我們迎見神。每次患病，我們這必朽壞的帳棚每次顫動(彼後一14)，每次我們預感死期臨近，都發出同樣的呼喚：「你當預備迎見神」。當我們聽見這句話，我們沒有懼怕，沒有惶恐。披上基督完全的公義，穿上祂的美麗，我們知道我們已被接納；父神愛祂兒子的愛正等著迎接我們。

但是還應當有個心裡的預備。我們不應當輕率匆忙來到祂面前。我們應當用第13節的經文所提示的思想，來激勵我們的心。要停下來，並記念神是多麼偉大：祂創造諸山。祂的能力何其難以測度：祂創造了那不可見的風，是聖靈的象徵。祂是何其全知：祂能將祂的心意指示人。祂有何其絕對的主權：使最明亮的晨光顯為幽暗，或照祂的吩咐使最暗的夜變為光明。祂眷顧的範圍何其廣闊：祂從阿爾卑斯山的一峰踏到另一峰。但願我不倉促來到祂面前；祂是我的父。但祂也是耶和華，萬軍之神；我應當整理我的思想，預備迎見祂。

Seek Him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion. Amos 5:8 (R.V.)

This chapter resounds with invitations to seek God. He makes the Pleiades, which usher in the spring; seek Him when life is full of radiant hope and promise, in days of love and joy. But He also makes Orion, the precursor of tempests; be sure, therefore, to seek Him when the sky is overcast and lowering, and when He presses you to enter the boat and face the storm.

He turns the shadow of death into the morning. Thank God for this. There is a turning of death-shadow into morning, when despair gives place to hope; when the dear one begins to revive from sore sickness; when circumstances begin to brighten; and when the perplexity and darkness of this mortal life, with its separations and misunderstandings, shall brighten with the eternal day. Weave thoughts of God into all these glad experiences; but not less so, when He makes the day dark with night. It may be that you will come closest to Him then; as the little child will sit on the far side of the railway carriage from her mother till they enter a tunnel, and then there will be a little startled cry and a rush to the mother's knee.

Sometimes the waters of the sea pour in on the land, engulfing the works of men, and devastating their toils. But amid all such scenes of desolation, the righteous have a secure hiding-place, suggested by the reference to the name Jehovah, with which this verse closes. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

*Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure;
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be;
Time's wheel runs back or stops--Potter and clay endure.*

要尋求那造昴星和參星的。 摩五8

這章經文充滿懇求人尋求神的聲音。祂造預告春天的昴星；當生命裡充滿了光芒四射的希望和應許時，在愛和喜樂的日子裡，你當尋求祂。但祂也造預告風暴的參星；因此，當天空昏暗陰霾的時候，當祂催促你上船，面對暴風雨的時候，你務必尋求祂。

祂使死蔭變為晨光(8節)。為此感謝神。從死蔭到晨光有一個轉折，那時絕望被希望取代；那時所愛的人從惡疾中甦醒；那時環境開始明亮；那時這必死生命的混亂黑暗及其別離和誤會，都將被永恆的白晝照亮。要把神的思想編織到這些愉快的經歷裡；當祂用黑夜使白晝變暗，也一樣要把神的思想編進這樣的經歷裡。那麼你可能會最靠近祂；就像一個小孩子，坐在火車車廂離他母親較遠的那邊，直到他們進入一個隧道，這時小孩會驚叫哭喊，並急忙衝到母親的膝中。

有時海水灌進陸地，吞沒了人的工作，毀壞了他們辛勞的成果。但在所有的廢墟中，義人卻有一個安全的藏身之處，這是此處耶和華的名所暗示的，本節也以祂的名作為結束(8節)。「耶和華的名，是堅固臺。義人奔入，便得安穩。(箴十八10)」

即使大地改變，你的心和神堅定站立；
進入你心的，
乃是昔在、今在、永在的；
縱然時間的輪子倒轉或停止 — 陶匠和泥土依然存留。

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion! Amos 6: 1

A picture is given in the following verses of the luxury and self-indulgence of the people. Stretched on couches inlaid with ivory, choosing the rarest dainties, accompanying their voices on the lute, and drinking wine from flowing bowls, they were indifferent to the wounds from which the national life-blood was pouring. "They were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph" (ver. 6).

The same behaviour is only too common amongst ourselves. Indeed, this temptation besets us all. If only we are well supplied with the comforts and luxuries of life, we are apt to become thoughtless of the miseries of poverty and misfortune. If our own heaven is secure, we are apt to enwrap ourselves with an atmosphere of satisfaction and composure, without taking sufficiently to heart the needs of the great world of sin and sorrow around.

"The affliction of Joseph" reminds us of the scene at the pit's mouth: how Joseph's brethren sat down to eat bread, whilst their brother was in the pit without water, and then sold him to the travelling merchantmen, to rid their sight of him. But human nature is prone to act thus in every age.

Are we at ease in Zion? Are we using for our own luxurious enjoyment gifts which God entrusted to our care for the world? Are we too indifferent to the fate of those who live in our homes, or pour in great streams of activity along our streets? Are we sleeping in the garden, whilst our Master sweats the bloody sweat? We have but one life to spend; let it be a life in earnest. Let us bethink ourselves of any whom we can help--any who are in affliction, the poor widow, the young wife with the sick husband, the student who is so eager to become a minister.

在錫安 ... 安逸無慮的，有禍了！ 摩六1

在接下來幾節經文，描繪一幅百姓奢華放縱的圖畫。舒身在鑲嵌著象牙的榻上，挑選最珍稀的美味佳餚(4節)，用琴瑟為他們的歌唱伴奏(5節)，用大碗喝酒，他們對那使國家流血的創傷漠不關心。「卻不為約瑟的苦難擔憂。(6節)」

同樣的行為在我們中間實在常見。確實，這樣的誘惑包圍著我們每一個人。只要我們有充足的舒適和奢華，我們就容易不關心貧窮不幸之人的困苦。如果我們的天是穩當的，我們就容易被滿足和自在的氣氛包圍，而不關心周圍這個廣大、充滿罪和憂傷之世界的需要。

「約瑟的苦難」提醒了我們在坑口的場景：約瑟的哥哥們如何坐下吃飯，而他們的弟弟卻在坑裡，裡頭沒有水，之後把他賣給了路過的商人，使他們不再看見他(創卅七23-28)。在每個世代，人的本性都傾向如此行事。

我們在錫安安逸無慮嗎？我們是否把神託付給我們照顧世人的恩賜用於自己的奢華享樂？我們是否對我們家人的結局，漠不關心？是否對那些湧入我們街道活動之群眾的結局漠不關心？當我們的主汗珠如大血點滴在地上時，我們是否就在客西馬尼園睡著了(路廿二44-45)？我們只有一生可以花費，但願它成為火熱的生命。讓我們想到，那位我們能幫助的人 — 那位在苦難裡的人，那位貧窮的寡婦，那位丈夫在病中的婦人，那位渴望將來成為傳道人的學生。

The latter growth after the king's mowings. Amos 7: 1

Our King has often to mow the grass of the inner life--the daisies and buttercups of experience of which we are so proud, the tall stalks, the flowering grasses. Were He to leave them, the entire growth would become altogether too coarse and rank for use. The lawn on which He loves to walk, with its velvet pile of grass, would become coarse and rough.

Mowing implies death. All the pretty flowers and myriads of blades lie in long swathes of death, presently to be carried away to the rubbish-heap. From myriads of dying flowers the last expiring sigh is being breathed out on the soft spring breeze. We must be prepared to die to our complacent self-content; to our blissful frames and feelings; to our complaints and consolations--if any of them come between us and our King.

But after the King's mowings there is the aftermath. It is said that the tenderest, juiciest shoots appear on lawns which are repeatedly mown. This is what the young lambs love, if they may taste it. And surely there is no such piety as that which follows on the repeated application of God's scythe. When repeated strokes have robbed us of health, friends, money, and favourable circumstances; then we put forth our tenderest shoots of love, and prayer, and consecration. Oh, do not be afraid of the scythe! The King loves thee too well to hurt thee. Be of good heart; thou shalt yet bear an aftermath!

"What do you think of your God now?" asked a well-known sceptic of Silwood of Keswick, who for twenty years suffered agonies. "Since He is able to keep me in perfect peace," was the reply, "amid sufferings like mine, I think of Him more than ever." Here was aftermath indeed!

為王割草之後，草又發生。 摩七1(小字)

我們的王經常剪割內在生命的草 — 就是我們經歷中引以為傲的雛菊和毛茛，高的莖稈，開滿花的草地。如果祂將這些留下不剪割，所有的花草都將變得太粗太茂盛而不合用。這片祂喜愛在其上漫步、長滿嫩草的草地，就變得粗野。

剪割意味著死亡。所有漂亮的花和無數草的葉片都在死亡收割的行列之中，不久就要被帶到垃圾堆去。無數垂死的花朵，在溫柔的春風中，發出最後的歎息。我們必須準備好，向著我們得意的自滿死；向著我們幸福快樂的心情和感覺死；向著我們的埋怨和安慰死 — 如果這些成為我們君王與我們之間的阻礙。

但在王剪割之後還會再長。據說最嫩的、最多汁的嫩芽就出現在反復割過的草地上。如果幼小的羊羔可以品嚐的話，這將是牠們所喜愛的。肯定沒有什麼虔誠，像神的鐮刀反復剪割之後的虔誠。當反復的打擊，奪去了我們的健康、朋友、錢財、和順境；我們就長出愛、祈禱、和奉獻的最嫩幼苗。哦，你不要害怕鐮刀！王太愛你，所以不會傷害你。你要歡喜快樂，你被剪割之後還會再長！

一個著名的懷疑論者問開西[註]的希爾伍德，「現在你怎麼看你的神呢？」希爾伍德曾遭受了二十年的苦。他回答道，「既然祂能在我受苦之中保守我完全平安，我就比以往更尊重祂。」這確實是再長出來的嫩芽！

[註] 開西(Keswick)，英國湖泊區一小鎮，從1875年起，各地教會派教會領袖參加在此舉行不分宗派的培靈奮興營會。這營會聲名遠播至北美、歐亞等地。營會每年舉辦，至今已一百四十多年。港九地區也舉辦同樣的營會，至今九十幾年。

I will send a famine in the land, . . . of hearing the words of the Lord. Amos 8 : 11

Israel will not listen to God's prophets, and their voices would be silenced. This was a just retribution. As they were not willing to have the word of God, so there should be a famine of that word. The word of God was precious in the days of Samuel, because there was no open vision; so should it be again. And perhaps this privation will one day be meted out to our beloved country. There is a much larger proportion of our population outside than inside our churches; and men proudly eschew God's Word. It may be that the message of the Gospel will almost cease from among them, and be replaced--as in so many instances is now the case--by the dry husks of morality and ceremonialism. Then they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

We may question ourselves, whether we feed enough on God's Word. If we would grow strong, we must feed, not on condiments and sweetmeats, not on tit-bits and scraps, not on versicles and pious sentences; but on the strong meat of the Word, on the doctrines, histories, types of Scripture. Oh for more hunger and thirst for these! Would you have it so? No child will enjoy its meals who is constantly being surfeited with sweets between times. Beware lest you cloy your appetite with the painted sweetmeats of the world.

It is worth notice, that if men have not God, they will find some substitute. They will swear by the sin of Samaria, and say Thy God, O Dan; thy manner, O Beersheba. This is why palmistry, spiritualism, so-called Christian science, are just now so much in vogue. Man's nature is made for God, and hungers for a substitute.

我必命饑荒降在地上，... 乃因不聽耶和華的話。 摩八11

以色列不聽神的先知，先知的聲音就止息。這是該得的報應。因為他們不肯聽神的話，所以必缺乏神的話語。在撒母耳的日子，神的話語稀少，因為沒有開啟的異象（撒上三1）；同樣情況必再次發生。而且可能有一天這樣的匱乏要臨到我們所愛的國家〔指作者的祖國 — 英國〕。我們人口更大的比例是在教會外的，不是在教會內的；而且人們傲慢地迴避神的話語。可能福音的信息在他們中間幾乎停止、被道德儀文的枯乾外殼取代 — 像許多過去的事例，現在都成了真實的情況。然後他們將往來奔跑，要尋求耶和華的話語，卻找不到。

我們可以問我們自己，我們是否吃夠神的話語。如果我們要茁壯生長，我們必須吃，不是吃調味品和甜食，不是吃精美點心和零食，不是吃短詩和金句；而是吃結實的乾糧，教訓、歷史、聖經的預表。但願更多渴慕這類的話語！你想要有這樣的饑渴嗎？沒有一個孩子在三餐之間過度吃甜點，而會喜歡吃正餐。你要當心，以免你吃這世上加色的甜品，使你的胃口生膩。

值得注意的是：人如果沒有神，他們就會找一些替代品。他們指著撒瑪利亞牛犢起誓；又說，「但」哪，你的神；「別是巴」哪，你的神道(14節)。這就是為什麼手相術、通靈術、和所謂的基督教科學會〔註〕，時下如此盛行。人的本性是為神而造的，卻渴慕替代品。

〔註〕基督教科學會。基督教旁門之一。由艾迪女士(Mary Baker Eddy, 1821-1910, 美國人)於1866年創立，1879年於波士頓建立第一間教堂。重視以精神方法治療身體疾病。既不信耶穌是基督，也不科學。

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen. Amos 9: 11, 12

These verses were quoted by the grave, white-vestured James in that memorable gathering of the Church to consider the admission of the Gentiles on equal terms with Jews (Acts 15). It is well worth noticing the special turn which the Lord's brother gave to the closing words of the quotation. He reads into it the deeper meaning of the Holy Spirit. The quickening and blessing of the chosen people has always meant the blessing of the world.

It was so, as James says, at Pentecost. The blessing which descended on the hill of Zion passed to all lands. They went everywhere preaching the Gospel, until some began to utter it also to the men of Antioch, and great numbers streamed into the Church (Acts 11); and thence the widening circles broadened out, until Ephesus, Athens, Rome, and distant Spain and Britain were included.

So will it be when the end of the present age has been reached. We, the Church, shall sit with Christ in the heavenlies, occupying the place now held by the devil and his demons, who will no longer be the prince of the power of the air; but the Jews, using that term in its strict sense, having been brought to God, shall be the evangelists and apostles of the world. Then the residue of the Gentiles shall seek unto the Lord. Ponder, specially, the promises of 13th, 14th, and 15th verses; and compare them with Rom. 11 : 15, 24, 26.

May we not appropriate them in a spiritual sense, and ask that the days may hasten when the crops shall have no sooner fallen before the sickle, than the ploughmen shall run their shares through the clods; and the vintage shall follow close on the harvest; and men shall be prepared and eager before we begin to speak!

到那日，我必建立大衛倒塌的帳幕。 摩九11-12

衣裳潔白嚴肅的雅各，在那值得紀念的教會聚集時，引用了這幾節經文，來考慮用與猶太人相同的條件接納外邦信徒(徒十五1-35)。這特殊的轉折十分值得關注，主的弟弟雅各引用這些經文(徒十五16-18)作為討論的總結。雅各讀到了聖靈在這幾節經文裡更深的含義。選民[猶太人]的奮興和祝福，總是意味著世人的祝福。

在五旬節發生的，正像雅各所說的那樣。降在錫安山的祝福傳遍各地。他們到各地傳講福音，直到有些人也開始向安提阿的人傳講，並且許多人湧進了教會(徒十一1-26)；並從那時起，那擴展的圈子開始向外拓寬，直到以弗所、雅典、羅馬，而遙遠的西班牙、不列顛都包括在內。

當這世代的末了來臨時，也必如此。我們，就是教會，將與基督一同坐在天上，佔有那現今被撒但和他的鬼魔所掌控的地方，他們就不再是空中掌權者的首領(弗二2)，但是就著嚴謹的意義來說，猶太人被帶到神面前，必作這世界傳福音的人和使徒。然後那剩下的外邦人必尋求主。要特別深思本章13-15節的應許，並與羅馬書十一章15, 24, 26節作比較。

但願我們不要把這些對猶太人的應許作靈意解[應該要按字面解]，並祈求那日子快快來臨；在那時，農作物一被鐮刀收割，農夫就要推著犁頭來耕地了；釀造葡萄酒的緊跟著收成之後(13節)[描繪土地肥沃，可以不停播種、收成的景況。]；在我們開講之前，人渴慕的心已預備好了！