



溪邊的樹

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神保守的能力

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摘錄自十二藍

讀經：帖撒羅尼迦前書五章二十三節，民數記十三章二十五至三十三節，十四章四至十節，約書亞記十四章六至十二節。

一件令人困擾的事，就是有的基督徒能相信神拯救的能力，但是不能相信神保守的能力。他們得著了神拯救的恩典，但是好像沒有得著神保守的恩典。他們不知道給恩典的是神，保守這恩典的也是神。現在我們要來看我們得救之後如何得蒙神的保守。

約書亞記十四章十一節：『我還是強壯，像摩西打發我去的那天一樣；無論是爭戰，是出入，我的力量那時如何，現在還是如何』。這裡說到迦勒的事。出入是平常的生活，爭戰是特別的生活。無論是平常的生活或者特別的生活，迦勒都像當初與摩西講話的那一天一樣。雖然過了四十年那麼久，但是那一天是如何，今天還是如何。這就給我們看見神保守的能力。那時候迦勒的力量如何，到今天他的力量還是如何；那時候他是如何剛強，到今天他還是如何剛強。他到八十五歲的時候與四十歲最強壯的時候一樣，還是那麼剛強，一點沒有減少力量。這沒有別的，就是因為神保守他。我們如果要靠自己來保守在神面前所得的恩典，我們是沒有法子保守的。不要說別的，只要說到初步的相信，過了五年你還信主不信主，你不能擔保。有許多的故事能告訴我們，保守這恩典在我們身上的是神，不是我們自己。

迦勒蒙神的保守，有什麼條件呢？我們來看一看。

約書亞記十四章十四節：『因為他專心跟從耶和華以色列的神』。迦勒如何專心跟從耶和華呢？我們看民數記十三至十四章。十三章三十節說：『迦勒在摩西面前安撫百姓，說，我們立刻上去得那地吧，我們足能得勝』。哦！我們足能得勝！一個專心跟從主的人，就是相信神的應許是靠得住的人。一個專心跟從主的人，就是相信因為神與我們同在的緣故，我們就能夠得勝的人。弟兄姊妹們，你到底相信不相信？許多人相信是相信，但是發抖的相信，他的膽子小得很。好像唱詩一樣，字句是對的，但是音調不對。迦勒呢，不只字句對，音調也對。他說：『我們立刻上去得那地吧』。一個專心跟從主的人，一個以主為靠得住的人，遵行神的旨意都是立刻的。

那十個人如何說呢？他們是看那地的居民身量高大，城邑也堅固寬大，看自己就如蚱蜢一樣。他們的眼睛所看見的就是他們面前的難處。許多信徒所以不能蒙保守，就是因為他們的眼目一直看

難處。你如果一直看難處，當然你就沒有辦法。但是神沒有要我們的眼睛一直看那擋在前面的高山。神是要我們對山說，你挪開此地投在海裡。眼睛一直看山是沒有用處的。你如果看山，就越看山越高。許多人沒有辦法，就是因為他一天到晚在看他自己的失敗。許多人自己已經預備好了要失敗，許多人自己已經預備好了要受試探。你如果一直這樣的話，你必定要失敗。許多失敗的經歷就是你自己預備好了而臨到你的。你想，別的事情你有辦法，這一件事情可是沒有辦法；因為你這樣想，所以這一件事情臨到你身上，你必定不能得勝。你的眼睛一直看你自己，你就必定失敗。如果神救你，神就要救你的眼睛不是看你自己，而是仰望祂的應許。如果你能看祂的應許對於你是如何的，你的膽就大了，你就立刻看見我們能夠得勝了！

可惜許多人就是沒有迦勒這一種信心。許多人所注意的，就是他的疾病有多麼重，傷痕有多麼深，難處是多麼沒有辦法。哦！有幾個人的眼目是一直看神的應許呢？那些能夠得勝的人，他們的眼目一點不在亞衲人身上。迦勒要約書亞將希伯倫分給他；希伯倫是亞衲族中很有名的城，亞衲族中最尊大的人就是住在希伯倫。〔書十四 12～15。〕迦勒不怕亞衲族人的大，不怕希伯倫城牆的高，所以他得勝。你能不能得勝，問題是在到底你是靠自己呢，或者是靠耶和華。如果是靠你自己，那麼你就不得不考慮亞衲族的人是強大還是軟弱，城牆是寬大還是狹小；可是，如果是靠著神，那麼，人大也吧，城高也吧，都沒有問題，都不怕，都能得勝。

迦勒還有一件事是很有意思的。民數記十四章九節記著他對以色列全會眾說的話：『但你們不可背叛耶和華，也不要怕那地的居民，因為他們是我們的食物』。他告訴以色列人，為什麼可以立刻上去，為什麼我們能夠得勝，為什麼我們不要怕他們，因為他們是我們的食物。食物就是你所吃的東西。食物是叫你吃下去之後，能增加力氣，能更有力量。從迦勒的眼光看來，這些人雖然身量高大，但是我們吃得消。他不只重看神的應許，並且還輕看所有的難處。一切真有信心的人，總是一面重看主的應許，另一面輕看所有的難處。〔但這並不是說人可以驕傲。人需要在神的面前先謙卑，然後他才會站在主的得勝上面。〕

所以，你每一次碰著難處，每一次碰著沒有辦法的事，你就得問說，我這一次要餓呢，或者是要吃呢？你在那一件事上，如果靠著基督的能力得勝，讓基督得勝的生命顯出來，你就多得一次滋養，你的力量又加增一次，你又吃了一頓。請你記得，沒有一個人是能不吃而長大的。我們的食物，不只是神的話，不只是遵行神的旨意，我們的食物也是亞衲人——我們所遇見的難處。許多人吃了神的話，許多人把遵行神的旨意當作他們的食物，但是許多人沒有吃亞衲人，許多人吃亞衲人吃得太少了。越多吃亞衲人，你就越剛強。迦勒是一個好例子，因為他吃亞衲人，所以到八十五歲還是頂剛強。他在四十歲的時候力氣是如何，到了八十五歲還是如何。許多亞衲人在迦勒的裡面造出一個不老的迦勒來。

在屬靈的事情上，都是如此。許多弟兄姊妹，在他們的生活中難處頂少，但是你能很明顯的看見，在他們的生活中軟弱卻是不少。他們在神的面前沒有力量，因為亞衲人吃得太少了。另一面，你看見有的人碰著一個難處就勝過一個難處，碰著一個試探就勝過一個試探。他們很剛強，因為他們多吃亞衲人。所以我們要吃我們的難處和試探。撒但所給我們的每一個難處和試探，都是我們的食物。這就是神所給我們的長進的辦法。沒有信心的人，一看見難處，就說不得了了。

但是一個有信心的人，就要說這是我的食物。感謝讚美神，沒有一個放在我們面前的難處是不能吃的，沒有一個難處吃了之後是不能叫我們長進的。你多得一次的難處，你就多得一次的滋養。

現在我們要看，在實行上應該怎麼作。我們要記得，神保守我們是有條件的。如果我們不信神，神就不能保守我們。我們要得著神的拯救，我們要得著神的保守，就必須有一個專一的信心來相信神的應許。如果你得著拯救之後，又有一個疑問說，不知道這一個得勝的經歷能經過多少時候。你有這樣的心，基本上就不相信神保守的能力。你要信神保守的能力。你每天早晨起來的時候，就要對神說，神，我感謝你，你昨天保守了我，今天你還是照舊保守著。今天我也不知道多少試探要臨到我身上，我也不知道我怎樣能得勝，我自己沒有辦法，但是我相信神要保守我。彼前一章五節說：『你們這因信蒙神能力保守的人』，這就給我們看見，神是保守那些相信祂的人。你如果以為所有的試探臨到你身上，非你自己去對付不可，你就錯了。你必須相信神保守的能力。你要相信神能保守你脫離所有的罪。如果你這樣信，你就能看見一件希奇的事情發生。當你看見許多突如其來的試探臨到你的時候，不知道什麼緣故，有一件東西（就是聖經所說的藤牌）擋在那裡，這一切的火箭就都回去了。藤牌是擺在你和撒但之間的。撒但的火箭射過來的時候，只能達到藤牌，不能達到你的身上，就仍回到撒但那裡去了。

保羅說：『我深信祂能保全我所交付祂的，直到那日』。〔提後一12。〕保羅在這裡作一件事，就是交託給祂。你相信祂了，就應該交託給祂。主只能保守那已經交託祂的人。許多人不能得著神保守能力的好處，就是因為他從來沒有把自己放在神的手裡，說：『神，我把自己放在你手裡，托你來保守』。弟兄姊妹們！你有沒有把自己放在神的手裡呢？你如果真能交給祂，你就要像保羅一樣的說，我深信祂能保全我所交付祂的，直到那日。

我們如果真是交託了，猶大書第二十四節的應許就要應驗在我們身上：『保守你們不失腳，叫你們無瑕無疵』。失腳就是滑了一下；失腳就是在不知不覺之間碰到一件東西，就顛了一顛。感謝神！祂不只保守我們不跌倒，並且保守我們連滑一下都不會。感謝讚美神，祂保守的恩典，是在我們不知不覺之中顯出來的。弟兄姊妹們！你如果把你自己完全放在主的手裡，你就能很希奇的過去。當你受試探的時候，連知道都不知道，你的愛就發出來了；當你受試探的時候，連想都沒有想，你的忍耐就出來了。感謝神！亞當所給我們的如何是很自然的，基督所給我們的也如何是很自然的。發脾氣是亞當所給我們的；完全不用我們立志發脾氣，我們就會發脾氣。驕傲是亞當所給我們的；完全不用我們立志要驕傲，我們就會驕傲。照樣，每一個得著基督作生命的人，每一個蒙神能力保守的人，不用立志溫柔，就會溫柔，不用立志謙卑，就會謙卑。亞當所給我們的一切是在不知不覺中發出來的，基督所給我們的一切也能在不知不覺之中發出來。主耶穌所給我們的，不要你自己去作出來，只要你相信祂的應許，你把自己完全交在祂的手裡就好了。主要保守你，從今天一直到祂來的日子。祂要保守你到完全無可指摘的地步。感謝神，今天我們有了一個靠得住的救恩，有了一個經得起試煉的救恩。

GOD'S KEEPING POWER

Watchman Nee

Excerpted from Twelve Baskets

Scripture Reading: Numbers 13:25-33; 14:4-10; Joshua 14:6-14

It is a distressing fact that some Christians can believe in God's saving power, but they cannot believe in His keeping power. They do not realize that He who is the Giver of grace is also the One whom maintains us in His grace. Let us see from the Scriptures how we whom have been saved by God can be kept by Him.

In Joshua 14:11 Caleb says: "I am as strong this day as in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, and to go out and to come in." "To go out and to come in" refers to everyday life; "for war" refers to life under exceptional circumstances. As Caleb's strength was in the day when Moses sent him to spy out the land of promise, so it was in the day when he uttered these words. He was able to cope with the ordinary demands of daily life and also with the demands of life under conditions of special stress. Though forty years had elapsed in the interval, he was as strong as he had been in his earlier days. Here we see God's keeping power. As Caleb was in the prime of manhood, so he was in old age. He was no less vigorous at eighty-five than he had been at forty. There is only one explanation for this; he had been kept by God. We are totally unable to keep ourselves in the grace of God. There is no guarantee that even five years after we have been saved we shall be found in the measure of faith which we had in our earlier Christian life. We cannot by our own effort abide in the grace of God; it is He alone who can maintain us in His grace.

How did Caleb come to experience God's keeping power?

Joshua 14:14. : "Because that he wholly followed the Lord, the God of Israel" has answered the question. How did he wholly follow the Lord? We are told in Numbers 13 and 14. After the ten spies had brought back an evil report of the promised land, Joshua 13:30: "Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." "We are well able to overcome" is the declaration of a person who wholly follows the Lord. He believes that victory over every foe is assured because the promises of God are trustworthy and because the Lord is with His people.

Brothers and Sisters, do you believe? Many people believe, but their faith is a vacillating faith. They sing their song of praise, but though the words are right there is something wrong with the tune. In Caleb's case it was otherwise. He sang the right words in the right tune. Listen to the clear notes: "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome." "Let us go up at once!" A person who wholly follows the Lord and reckons Him to be trustworthy is one who does the will of God and does it at once.

What about the ten spies? They looked at the inhabitants of the land and saw that they were "men of great stature" and their cities were "fenced and very great." They looked at themselves too, and in their own sight they were "as grasshoppers." Their eyes were fixed on the difficulties that challenged their advance. And herein lays the reason why so many Christians fail to experience God's keeping power - difficulties fill their vision.

God does not want us to gaze at the mountains obstructing our path. He wants us to say to the mountains: "Remove hence!" (Matthew 17:20). Many people are all the time thinking of their failures, and by so doing they pave the way for further failure. Defeat is certain if we are constantly contemplating defeat. If

we keep thinking there is no way through, that thought blocks the way through. We are courageous only as we keep God's promises in view. Alas that so many of God's people lack the virile faith that characterized Caleb and concentrate their thoughts on the intensity of their sufferings and the insurmountable nature of their difficulties! But those who do not fear "the sons of Anak" -- the giants that inhabit the land of promise -- are "well able to overcome." Caleb was so unafraid of the Anakim that he actually requested Joshua to appoint as his portion in the land of promise the mountain in which they had their stronghold (Joshua 14:12-15). He was not dismayed by the fact that they were "men of great stature," nor by the fact that their cities were "great and fenced," so he overcame them without any strain.

The whole question in relation to overcoming is: do you trust in yourself or do you trust in the Lord? If you are relying on yourself then of course you have to consider whether the Anakim are strong or weak, and whether their cities are well fortified or not; but if your reliance is on God, then the question of human resources does not even arise. If you are trusting in God there is no ground for fear since victory is assured to all who put their trust in Him.

There is another noteworthy matter in connection with Caleb. He exhorted the whole congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "Rebel not against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us." He sought to show the children of Israel that in the land itself there were resources upon which they could draw in order to possess it. "The people of the land ... are bread for us," he declared. What is bread? Bread is something you eat. Bread is something that brings increased strength. The inhabitants of the land were admittedly "men of great stature," but Caleb proclaimed that they were food for God's people. He not only honored God's promises, he despised the difficulties that stood in the way of their realization. And every true believer, like Caleb, honors God and lightly esteems all obstacles. But this leaves no room for pride, for only they who humble themselves before God are able to take their stand on His side.

Every time you meet a difficulty, every time you find yourself in an impossible situation, ask yourself this question: Am I going to starve here, or am I going to eat the food that is set before me? If you are relying on the Lord for victory and let His overcoming life be manifested in you, you will find fresh nourishment and increased vitality in accepting as "bread" those Anakim that are contesting your progress. Do bear in mind that people who do not eat well cannot grow into maturity. Many people take the Word of God as their meat and the doing of His will as their meat, but they reject the Anakim as unpalatable food. The more we eat such food the stronger we shall become. Caleb is a grand illustration of this. Because he accepted the Anakim as "bread" he was still full of vitality at the age of eighty-five. So many Anakim had been assimilated by him over the years that he had developed a constitution which showed no trace of age.

So it is in the spiritual realm. Some brothers and sisters have met few difficulties, but they are spiritually feeble. The explanation is that they have not consumed enough Anakim. On the other hand there are those who have met and overcome difficulty after difficulty, temptation after temptation; and they are full of vigor. The reason is they have fed well on Anakim. Every difficulty and every temptation Satan puts in our way is food for us. This is a divinely appointed means of spiritual progress. The sight of any great trouble strikes terror into the heart of those who do not believe God, but those who trust Him say: "Praise God, here is some more food!" All our trials, without exception, are bread for us, and as we accept one trial after the other, we are more and more richly nourished and the result is a continuous increase of strength.

Let us now look into the practical outworking of this. We must not forget that there is a condition attached to God's keeping power. If we do not trust Him He is unable to keep us. In order to know His keeping

power we must believe wholeheartedly in His promises. If we are harboring doubts about our ability to overcome, then we are discrediting His ability to keep us. Every morning when we rise we should say to Him: "I thank Thee for keeping me yesterday and today Thou wilt still keep me. I do not know what temptations may befall me, and I do not know how I can overcome; but I believe Thou wilt keep me." 1 Peter 1:5 makes it clear that God keeps those who have faith in Him. It reads: "who by the power of God are guarded through faith." It is not we who have to grapple with temptations and try to overcome them; it is the keeping power of God that will get us through, and we must believe in His ability to save us from giving way to sin. Provided we rely implicitly on Him, even when we are unexpectedly assailed by temptations an amazing thing happens. In a way we cannot account for something wards off "all the fiery darts of the evil one." It is "the shield of faith." It comes in between us and Satan, so that his fiery darts cannot reach us. Instead of hurting us they beat upon the shield of faith and rebound on Satan himself.

Paul said, "I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). The Lord was able to keep Paul; but Paul did something that enabled the Lord to keep him. Paul committed himself to the Lord. If you believe in Him, then you must commit yourself to Him. He can only keep what has been handed over to Him. Many people fail to experience the blessedness of His keeping power because they have never put themselves into His care. They have never said to Him: "Lord, I hand myself over to Thee and commit to Thee the keeping of my life." Brothers and Sisters, have you placed yourselves in His hands? If you truly have, then you will be able to say with Paul, "I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

If your life is truly in His hands then God will fulfill in you the promise "to guard you from stumbling and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy" (Jude v.24). We stumble if we strike against something in a moment when we are unconscious of any obstruction in the way. Praise God, His preserving grace operates beyond the realm of our consciousness. Brothers and Sisters, if you commit yourselves unreservedly into His care, you will marvel at the way you are kept even when you have been unaware of danger.

When temptation suddenly assails and love is required, you will find love welling up from within and flowing out spontaneously to meet the challenge. Or if a sudden temptation demands patience, without your giving it a moment's thought patience will rise up to meet the need. Praise God, as the life we receive from Adam expresses itself spontaneously, so also does the life we receive from Christ. We inherit our bad tempers from Adam and can get angry without the slightest effort of will. We inherit pride from Adam and we can be proud without any deliberate decision. In the selfsame way, all who have received the life of Christ, and have committed themselves into His keeping, can be meek without making up their minds to be meek and can be humble without any attempt to be humble. The same spontaneity of manifestation that characterizes the life we have received from Adam also characterizes the life we have received from Christ. His life expresses itself unconsciously and without effort on our part. Provided we trust in His promises and commit ourselves utterly to Him, we shall be kept from this day to the day of His return, and kept without blemish. Thank God, the saving grace into which He has brought us today is worthy of our trust and will carry us triumphantly through every trial that lies ahead.