

# God Uses the Least and the Lost to Reveal His Purpose

神使用卑微和迷失的人，彰显祂的旨意

Sermon 5 1 Samuel 10:17-27

Series The God Who Frames the Stories of Our Lives

第五篇讲道 撒母耳记上 10:17-27

讲道系列：《那位编织我们人生故事的神》

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We are continuing our reflections on the stories of 1 and 2 Samuel, where God works through seemingly unimpressive people to shape Israel as a nation. In our last message, Israel asked for a king. They wanted someone to go before them and fight their battles. They wanted to be like the other nations. As we saw last week, beneath that request lay a question of trust. If God was their King, why did they believe their security depended on having someone else?

我们继续思想《撒母耳记上、下》的故事，看见神怎样借着一些看起来并不起眼的人，塑造以色列这个民族。上一讲我们看到，以色列人要求立一个王。他们希望有一个人走在他们前面，替他们争战；他们想要像周围的列国一样。我们上星期也看见，这个要求背后，其实隐藏着一个关于信靠的问题：如果神真是他们的王，为什么他们还觉得，自己的安全必须靠另一个人来保障呢？

Yet God has not abandoned them. Even in this difficult turn in their story, He is at work. In chapter 9, He tells Samuel that He has heard His people's cry and will send someone to deliver them from the Philistines. Israel has rejected God as King, but God has not stopped caring for Israel. I encourage you to read chapter 9 and the beginning of chapter 10 on your own for the details of what we will reflect on today. For now, let me give you a quick sketch of the story leading up to our text this morning.

然而，神并没有撇弃他们。即使他们的故事走到了这样一个艰难的转折点，神仍然在工作。在第九章，神告诉撒母耳，祂已经听见百姓的呼求，要差遣一个人拯救他们脱离非利士人。以色列虽然拒绝神作王，神却没有停止关爱他们。我鼓励大家自己读一读第九章和第十章的开头，看看今天我们要思想的故事细节。现在，让我先简单讲一讲今天经文之前发生的事。

You would think that, like the stories of kings in other nations, the story of Israel's first king would begin in a palace, with important people making important decisions. Instead, it begins with some lost donkeys. A father sends his son on an errand. The son cannot find what he is looking for. A servant offers a suggestion. And somewhere along that frustrating journey, God brings this young man to Samuel.

照我们所想，以色列第一位君王的故事，应该像其他国家的君王一样，从王宫开始，由一些重要人物作出重大的决定。可是，故事竟然从几头走失的驴开始。父亲差儿子出去办一件事，儿子却怎么也找不到要找的东西；一位仆人提了个建议。就在这段令人沮丧的旅程中，神把这个年轻人带到了撒母耳面前。

What a strange beginning for a king. But perhaps that is what we need to notice. God's purpose is unfolding through someone from the smallest tribe, through a search that seems to be going nowhere, and through a quiet ceremony on the road home.

一位君王的故事，竟然有这样奇特的开始！但也许，这正是我们应该留意的地方。神的旨意，借着来自最小支派的人、一段似乎毫无结果的寻找，以及回家路上一场安静的膏立仪式，逐渐展开。

This takes us back to Hannah's song. God raises the poor from the dust. He lifts those who have been brought low. The story of Saul begins with another glimpse of that great reversal. The question is whether Saul will continue to live in dependence on the God who raises him. Let me offer a few observations from our text. Before I do, I want to remind you that these are my own reflections. They are not infallible; only God's Word is infallible. But these are some of the things I believe the Lord is impressing upon my heart.

这让我们再次想起哈拿的颂歌。神从灰尘里抬举贫寒的人，使卑微的人升高。扫罗的故事，让我们再一次看见这种奇妙的翻转。但问题是：扫罗被神高举之后，会不会继续倚靠那位高举他的神呢？今天我想和大家分享几点观察。不过在分享之前，我要提醒大家，这些是我个人对经文的领受，并不是绝对无误的；惟有神的话语才是无误的。但这些是我相信主放在我心里、要我去思想的事。

## 1. God reaches into the story of the least 神进入那些卑微者的故事

Before we follow Saul through the countryside, we need to consider where he comes from. Saul belongs to the tribe of Benjamin. When Samuel speaks to him about the place he will have in Israel, Saul objects. In 1 Samuel 9:21, he reminds Samuel that Benjamin is the smallest tribe and describes his own clan as the least within it. Why would Samuel speak to someone like him in this way?

在跟着扫罗走遍乡间之前，我们先来看看他的出身。扫罗属于便雅悯支派。当撒母耳向他提到他将来在以色列中的地位时，扫罗十分惊讶。在撒母耳记上 9:21，他提醒撒母耳，便雅悯是以色列最小的支派，自己的家族又是其中最微小的。撒母耳怎么会说这样的话呢？

Now, Saul is not insignificant in every respect. His father, Kish, is a man of standing. Saul himself is handsome and taller than the people around him. He has the appearance of someone people might notice. But his tribal heritage tells another story.

当然，扫罗并不是在每一方面都毫不起眼。他的父亲基士是个有地位的人，扫罗本人相貌俊美，身材也比周围的人高大。从外表看，他是一个很容易引人注意的人。但他所属支派的历史，却诉说着另一段故事。

Benjamin carries the memory of a terrible past. In Judges 19–21, an act of horrific violence in Gibeah leads to civil war. The other tribes turn against Benjamin and wage a war that nearly wipes it out. They kill its people and burn its towns; only six hundred men escape to the rock of Rimmon. Israel later grieves that one of its tribes could disappear altogether. This is more than a story about being small. It is the story of a tribe brought to the edge of extinction by its own brothers. That history gives weight to Saul's words.

便雅悯支派背负着一段可怕的往事。士师记 19 至 21 章记载，基比亚发生了一宗骇人听闻的暴行，结果引发内战。其他支派起来攻打便雅悯，几乎把这个支派灭绝。他们杀害百姓，焚烧城邑，最后只有六百个男人逃到临门磐。后来，以色列人也为一个支派可能从此消失而哀伤。这不只是一个支派人数稀少的故事，而是一个支派几乎被自己的弟兄彻底消灭的故事。明白这段历史，我们就更能体会扫罗为什么那样说。

And later, where does Samuel gather Israel to present their king? At Mizpah. This is the same gathering place named in Judges 20, where Israel assembled before the war against Benjamin. Now, at that place, a man from Benjamin is brought forward as Israel's first king.

那么，后来撒母耳在哪里召集以色列人，向他们介绍新王呢？在米斯巴。士师记第二十章告诉我们，以色列人当年正是在这里聚集，准备与便雅悯争战。如今，在同一个地方，一个便雅悯人竟然被带到众人面前，成为以色列的第一位君王。

Who would have imagined that? The smallest tribe, which the other tribes had nearly eradicated, now gives Israel its first king. At the very place where Israel had gathered against Benjamin, Israel now gathers to receive a Benjamite as king. What a reversal. The people once threatened with being erased from Israel's story are given a remarkable place within it.

谁能想得到呢？那个几乎被其他支派除灭的最小支派，如今竟然出了以色列的第一位君王！过去，以色列人在这里聚集，要攻击便雅悯；如今，他们又在这里聚集，迎接一位便雅悯人作王。这是何等奇妙的翻转！那些曾经差点从以色列历史中被抹去的人，如今在这个故事里竟然有了如此重要的位置。

We should not think that this erases the past or makes its violence less serious. But Benjamin's history does not prevent God from working through a Benjamite. God is able to open a future where people might see only a painful past.

当然，这并不是说过去的伤害就此被抹去，或当年的暴行就不再严重。然而，便雅悯的过去，并没有拦阻神使用一个便雅悯人。在人只看得见伤痛的地方，神仍然能够开启新的未来。

I think the story of Benjamin has something to say to you and me. Some of us carry a story that makes us feel small. Perhaps it is our family background. Perhaps it is a failure we cannot seem to put behind us. Perhaps we have lived so long with disappointment that we no longer expect much from our lives. We may not say it aloud, but we wonder: Why would God use someone like me? Could He?

我想，便雅悯的故事对你我也有话要说。我们有些人，心里背负着一段让自己觉得很渺小的故事。也许是我们的家庭背景，也许是某个一直放不下的失败，也许是我们经历了太多失望，以致对自己的人生不再抱什么期望。我们也许不会说出口，但心里会想：神为什么会使用我这样的人？祂真的能使用我吗？

Saul's beginning invites us to reconsider that question. Our past matters, and sometimes we must face its consequences and make things right. But our past does not have the final word over what God can do with us today.

扫罗故事的开始，邀请我们重新思想这个问题。我们的过去当然重要；有时候，我们也必须面对过去造成的后果，尽力把事情纠正过来。但过去并不能决定，神今天还可以怎样使用我们。

God can restore dignity to those who have lost it. He can give us courage where shame has silenced us. He can invite us into service when we have assumed we have little to offer.

神能够恢复失去尊严之人的尊严；当羞耻使我们不敢开口时，祂能够赐我们勇气；当我们以为自己已经没有什么可以献上的时候，祂仍然能够邀请我们去服事。

This does not mean that everyone who feels small will be given a prominent position. God's grace is not measured by how important we become in other people's eyes. It means that our smallness does not place us beyond His attention or His purpose.

这并不是说，所有觉得自己渺小的人，将来都会得到显赫的地位。神的恩典，并不是用我们在别人眼中有多重要来衡量的。真正的意思是：我们的卑微，并不会使我们落在神的关注和旨意之外。

Hannah knew something about that. And now, in a different way, Saul is being invited to discover it too. But he is not setting out to become king. In fact, when we first meet him, he is busy with something much more ordinary.

哈拿对此深有体会。如今，扫罗也以另一种方式受邀去认识这件事。但扫罗这次出门，并不是为了寻找王位。事实上，我们第一次看见他的时候，他正忙着一件再平凡不过的事情。

## **2. God finds us in our searching** 在我们寻找的时候，神也在寻找我们

Saul does not begin this journey looking for a calling. He is looking for his father's donkeys.

扫罗踏上这段旅程，不是为了寻找自己的呼召。他是在找父亲走失的驴。

These animals are valuable to the household, and they have wandered off. Kish sends Saul and a servant to find them. They travel through several districts, but the search is unsuccessful. By the time they reach the district of Zuph, Saul thinks they should return. His father, he reasons, may have stopped worrying about the donkeys and started worrying about them.

这些驴对家里来说很值钱，却走失了。基士便派扫罗和一位仆人出去寻找。他们走过好几个地区，仍然一无所获。到了苏弗地，扫罗觉得应该回家了。他想，父亲现在可能已经不再担心那些驴，反而开始担心他们两个人了。

That is an understandable concern. The passage does not tell us that Saul is lazy or that he has made no effort. He has been carrying out the responsibility his father gave him. But he has reached the end of what he knows to do.

这实在是人之常情。经文并没有说扫罗懒惰，也没有说他不肯尽力。他只是忠心地做父亲交托他的事。可是走到这里，他已经想不出还能做什么了。

Then the servant suggests that they consult a man of God in a nearby town. Perhaps he can tell them which way to go. Saul agrees, and this seemingly small suggestion brings them to Samuel.

这时候，仆人建议他们去附近的城里，请教一位神人。也许这位神人能够告诉他们下一步该往哪里走。扫罗同意了。就是这样一个看似微不足道的建议，把他们带到撒母耳面前。

Here the storyteller lets us see something Saul cannot see. The day before Saul arrives, God has already told Samuel that He will send him a man from Benjamin. Saul thinks he is following a suggestion about lost donkeys. Samuel is waiting for the man God has promised to send.

说故事的人在这里让我们看见一件扫罗自己不知道的事。就在扫罗到达的前一天，神已经告诉撒母耳，祂会差一个便雅悯人来到他面前。扫罗以为自己只是听从仆人的建议，去打听丢失的驴；撒母耳却已经在等候神答应要差来的那个人。

Saul is searching, but he is also being sought. He cannot find the donkeys, yet God knows where to find him.

扫罗正在寻找，可与此同时，他自己也是神所寻找的人。他找不到那些驴，神却知道在哪里可以找到他。

Eugene Peterson draws attention to this surprising turn in the story: the man looking for what is lost discovers that he himself is the one being found. Saul has no idea how much more is happening around him than the errand he has been given.

尤金·毕德生提醒我们注意故事里这个出人意料的转折：那个出去寻找失物的人，最后发现自己才是被寻找的人。扫罗完全不知道，在他这一趟平凡差事的背后，竟然有一件更大的事正在发生。

Sometimes, perhaps more often than we realize, our calling finds us before we discover it. Saul, looking for donkeys, is unaware of the larger story into which God is bringing him. He knows his immediate task. He does not yet know what God has prepared.

有时候，甚至比我们想象的更常见，呼召先来找到我们，然后我们才逐渐认出它。扫罗忙着找驴，根本不知道神正把他带进一个更大的故事。他只知道眼前要完成的事，却还不知道神已经为他预备了什么。

And that is often how we live, isn't it? We can see what needs to be done today. We cannot see how today fits into the years ahead.

我们的人生不也常常如此吗？今天该做什么，我们看得见；可是今天所做的事，将来会怎样连在一起，我们却看不清楚。

The changing of diapers, the washing of dishes, the drudgery of repetitive work, the caring for someone whose needs never seem to end—these can feel far removed from anything we would call a divine purpose.

给孩子换尿布、洗碗、日复一日地做着重复的工作，或照顾一个需要似乎永远没有尽头的人——这些事情，离我们心目中所谓的“神圣使命”，好像相当遥远。

Yet Saul's story asks us not to despise the ordinary responsibilities of life. God can work through the very things we are tempted to call insignificant. A routine task brings Saul into a conversation that changes his life.

然而，扫罗的故事提醒我们，不要轻看生活中那些平凡的责任。神能够借着我们以为毫不起眼的事来工作。一件日常的差事，竟然把扫罗带进一段改变他一生的对话。

This does not mean that every inconvenience conceals a dramatic calling. Sometimes lost donkeys are simply lost donkeys, and a difficult day remains a difficult day. We cannot read God's intentions from every turn of events. But we can trust that the ordinary places of our lives are places where He can meet us.

当然，这不是说每一次不顺利的经历，都隐藏着一个轰轰烈烈的呼召。有时候，走失的驴就只是走失的驴；难过的一天，仍然是难过的一天。我们不能从每一件事情的转折，都推断神究竟有什么特别安排。但我们可以相信，就在我们平凡的生活中，神也能够与我们相遇。

There is another thing worth noticing in this story. Saul does not reach Samuel by himself. He needs someone else's suggestion. It is a servant, whose name we never learn, who points Saul in the direction that will change his life.

故事里还有一件事值得留意。扫罗不是单凭自己就找到撒母耳的，他需要别人的提醒。而那位我们连名字也不知道的仆人，竟然为扫罗指引了一条改变他一生的路。

Sometimes God's help comes through someone we might easily overlook. Are we willing to listen? Can we receive a word of wisdom from a person who may not have our position, our experience, or our education?

有时候，神的帮助正是借着那些我们容易忽略的人来到。我们愿意聆听吗？当一个人的地位、经验或教育程度都不如我们，我们是否仍然愿意接受他所提出的智慧和提醒呢？

Saul's search for the donkeys is unsuccessful, but the journey is not without purpose. Even though God's larger purpose is the last thing on Saul's mind, Saul has not been forgotten by God.

扫罗虽然没有找到驴，这趟旅程却不是毫无意义。即使他心里完全没有想到神更大的旨意，神也没有忘记他。

That is a comfort for those of us who feel bogged down by endless searching. You may not know where your story is going. That does not mean you have slipped beyond God's care. And this brings us to another surprising moment in Saul's story.

对那些觉得自己一直在寻找、却总找不到方向的人来说，这是一个安慰。你也许不知道自己的人生故事将往哪里走，但这并不代表你已经走出了神的眷顾。而接下来，扫罗的故事还有一个令人意想不到的时刻。

### 3. God speaks in a quiet moment 神在安静的时刻向我们说话

When Saul arrives, Samuel reassures him in 1 Samuel 9:20 that the donkeys have been found. The matter that has occupied Saul's attention is already resolved. But Samuel now has something else to speak to him about. 扫罗来到撒母耳面前时，撒母耳在撒母耳记上 9:20 告诉他，那些驴已经找到了。他一直挂心的事情，原来早已解决。但现在，撒母耳有另一件事要对他讲。

He welcomes Saul, gives him a place of honour at the meal, and spends time with him. Then, the following morning, as Saul prepares to leave, Samuel walks with him toward the edge of town. He asks Saul to send the servant ahead and to remain for a moment to hear a word from God.

撒母耳接待扫罗，在宴席上给他一个尊贵的座位，也花时间与他相处。第二天早上，扫罗准备离开时，撒母耳陪他走到城边。他叫扫罗先让仆人往前走，自己留下来片刻，好听神的话。

I want us to pause there. Saul has been travelling, searching, worrying, and making plans to return home. Now he is asked to stop and listen.

我想请大家在这里停一停。扫罗一路上奔走、寻找、担忧，还计划着怎样回家。现在，他却被邀请停下来，安静聆听。

Before he is presented to Israel, before anyone cheers for him, he needs to hear what God is saying.

在他被介绍给全以色列之前，在有人为他欢呼之前，他首先需要听见神要对他说什么。

In 1 Samuel 10:1, Samuel takes a flask of oil and pours it on Saul's head. He kisses him and declares that the Lord has anointed him ruler over His inheritance.

撒母耳记上 10:1 记载，撒母耳拿起一瓶膏油，倒在扫罗头上，亲吻他，并宣告耶和华已经膏立他作祂产业的君。

There is no crowd gathered around this anointing. It happens quietly, after the servant has gone ahead. A moment with enormous consequences takes place on the road home.

这场膏立没有群众围观。仆人走远以后，一切就这样安静地发生了。一个影响深远的时刻，竟然发生在回家的路上。

Human beings like the great occasion. We like the announcement, the applause, the recognition. But here, the public role begins with a private encounter. Saul must first receive the word that tells him whose people these are and where his authority comes from.

我们人很喜欢盛大的场面，喜欢宣布、掌声和认可。然而在这里，一个公开的职分，却始于一次私下的相遇。扫罗首先必须听见神的话，明白这些百姓究竟属于谁，以及自己的权柄从哪里来。

The people belong to God. The calling comes from God. Saul is being entrusted with a responsibility; he is not being given ownership of Israel.

百姓是属于神的，呼召是出于神的。神把一份责任交托扫罗，却不是把以色列变成他的私有产业。

Notice the title Samuel gives Saul in 10:1. Some translations use "ruler," while others say "prince" or "leader." The Hebrew term identifies someone appointed to lead. It can describe a ruler whose authority is received rather than independently possessed. Saul is clearly being appointed to kingship, but the emphasis matters: God appoints him over God's own people. His authority remains accountable to the One who gives it.

请留意撒母耳在 10:1 给扫罗的称呼。有些译本翻作“统治者”，有些翻作“王子”或“领袖”。这个希伯来词所指的是一位受委任带领百姓的人，也可以用来形容一个权柄是领受而来、并非自己拥有的统治者。扫罗显然是被立为王，但这里的重点很重要：神委任他管理的，是神自己的百姓。他必须向赐给他权柄的那一位负责。

That is where Saul will struggle later. But at the beginning, the gift and the responsibility are placed before him together.

这也正是扫罗后来会挣扎的地方。不过在故事一开始，神已经把恩赐和责任一同摆在他面前。

And look again at the setting. The servant has gone ahead. Samuel and Saul are alone on the outskirts of town, perhaps standing by the roadside. This is where Israel's first king is anointed. There is no grand procession, no crowd to impress.

再看看当时的环境。仆人已经先走了，撒母耳和扫罗单独站在城外，也许就在路旁。以色列的第一位君王，正是在这样的地方受膏。没有盛大的队伍，也没有供人观看的场面。

The great work of God often begins quietly, even unnoticed. Think of Moses at the burning bush, Jacob wrestling through the night, Joseph in prison, Hannah weeping in the temple, or Jesus born in humble surroundings. So often, God begins His work in quiet, unexpected places rather than with pomp and extravagance.

神伟大的工作，常常在安静中开始，甚至不为人所注意。想想摩西在燃烧的荆棘前、雅各在夜间与人摔跤、约瑟在监牢里、哈拿在圣殿中哭泣，还有耶稣出生在卑微的环境中。神的工作，往往不是从排场和盛典开始，而是从那些安静、出人意料的地方展开。

In Matthew 6:6, Jesus tells us, "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." I know this passage is about prayer rather than anointing, but it reminds us that our life with God does not depend on being seen by other people. There are things He forms in us when no one else is watching.

在马太福音 6:6，耶稣教导我们：“你祷告的时候，要进你的内屋，关上门，祷告你在暗中的父；你父在暗中察看，必然报答你。”我知道这段经文谈的是祷告，不是膏立；但它提醒我们，我们与神的关系，并不取决于别人有没有看见我们。有些生命的塑造，正是在没有人注意的时候，神悄悄完成的。

God's work among us is not measured only by what happens on the platform. It also takes place in homes, in quiet prayers, and in conversations where someone becomes willing to obey.

神在我们中间的工作，不能单凭讲台上发生了什么来衡量。祂也在我们的家中、在安静的祷告里、在那些使人愿意顺服的交谈中工作。

What begins quietly in Saul's life is later made known before all Israel at Mizpah in 1 Samuel 10:17-27. Through the casting of lots, the tribe of Benjamin is selected, then Saul's family, and finally Saul himself. Samuel already knows whom God has chosen. Now the people witness that choice through the practice of casting lots. God could simply have announced, "Saul is my man," and left it there. Instead, the public process makes His choice known to the community. They have asked for a king, but God remains sovereign over His people.

扫罗生命中在暗处开始的事，后来在撒母耳记上 10:17-27，于米斯巴向全以色列公开显明。透过掣签，先选出便雅悯支派，再选出扫罗所属的家族，最后选出扫罗本人。撒母耳早已知道神拣选了谁，现在百姓也借着掣签的方式，亲眼见证神的选择。神大可以直接宣布：“扫罗就是我所选的人！”事情就结束了。但祂却使用一个公开的过程，让全体百姓知道祂的拣选。百姓虽然要求立王，神仍然是他们真正的主。

And what a reversal. At the very place where Israel once gathered against Benjamin, the tribe they nearly wiped out now gives them their first king. The public gathering brings us back to the story of the least, even as it confirms what God first revealed in private.

这是多么奇妙的翻转！就在当年以色列人聚集起来攻打便雅悯的地方，这个几乎被灭绝的支派，如今却为以色列带来第一位君王。公开的聚会，让我们再次想起那些卑微者的故事，也印证了神早已在私下向扫罗启示的事。

So, for us as a congregation, as we discern our next steps and direction, let us remember that God's direction is not always accompanied by noise and spectacle. Let us train our ears to listen through prayer, His Word, and quiet conversations with one another. And when the time comes, may our hearts be prepared to obey.

所以，今天当我们作为一个教会，一同寻求下一步该怎样走、未来方向在哪里的时候，愿我们记得，神的引导不一定伴随着热闹的场面。愿我们学习借着祷告、祂的话语，以及彼此安静的交谈，操练聆听。等到需要迈出那一步的时候，愿我们的心已经预备好顺服。

#### **4. God's invitation comes with God's help 神的呼召，也伴随着神的帮助**

Samuel does more than give Saul an assignment. He tells him that God's Spirit will come upon him and change him. As Saul leaves, God gives him another heart. He is not sent into this responsibility without God's help.

撒母耳不只是把一项任务交给扫罗。他告诉扫罗，神的灵将临到他，使他改变。扫罗离开时，神赐给他一颗新的心。神没有把这份责任交给他之后，就让他独自承担。

That is grace. Saul did not campaign for this position. He did not arrange the meeting. He did not create the opportunity. God brought him to Samuel and equipped him for what lay ahead.

这就是恩典。扫罗没有为这个职位拉票，也没有安排这次相遇，更没有为自己制造机会。是神把他带到撒母耳面前，又装备他去面对前面的道路。

Yet when the time comes to present him publicly at Mizpah, Saul is hiding among the supplies. We are not told why. Perhaps, as he begins to grasp the weight of this responsibility, he feels overwhelmed. We can understand that hesitation, can't we? Hearing God's Word is one thing; stepping forward in trust is another. The word we receive in quiet moments is meant to shape the life we live afterwards. Here is a man who has received a calling, yet is still reluctant to step into it.

可是，当扫罗要在米斯巴公开站到百姓面前时，他竟然藏在器具中间。经文没有告诉我们为什么。也许当他开始明白这份责任有多沉重时，心里实在承受不了。我们能够理解这种犹豫，不是吗？听见神的话是一回事，凭信心走出来又是另一回事。我们在安静中领受的话语，是要影响我们之后怎样生活的。眼前的扫罗虽然蒙召，却仍然不敢真正踏进这个呼召。

But God's calling comes with God's help. Saul has been told that God will empower him with His Spirit. So, Saul, come out from your hiding place. You do not have to face this responsibility on your own.

然而，神的呼召总伴随着神的帮助。扫罗已经听见，神要用祂的灵加给他力量。所以，扫罗啊，从你躲藏的地方出来吧！你不需要独自面对这份责任。

There is a word here for us as well. As you discern God's next steps for this congregation, remember that you are not here by accident. God has placed you here at this moment in the church's story. So do not be afraid of the future. God often works through people and events that seem insignificant at the time, yet have a place in His larger purpose. Our task is to be patient in prayer and to listen for His direction as we speak with one another. Remember where this whole story began: with Hannah, a helpless woman praying quietly, willing to offer what was most precious to the God she trusted. We have that same invitation to trust Him.

这对我们也有提醒。当你们一同寻求神要怎样带领这个教会走下一步时，请记住：你们在这里并不是偶然的。神把你们放在教会故事的这个时刻。所以，不要惧怕未来。神常常借着当时看起来微不足道的人和事来工作，而这些人或事，在祂更大的旨意中都有位置。我们的责任，是耐心祷告，在彼此交谈中留心聆听祂的引导。还记得这整个故事是怎样开始的吗？是从哈拿开始——一个无助的妇人，静静地祷告，甘愿把自己最宝贵的献给她所信靠的神。今天，神同样邀请我们这样信靠祂。

Saul's later story will remind us that a gracious beginning does not remove our need for continuing trust and obedience. Being chosen does not make us incapable of losing our way. Receiving God's help today does not mean we can live independently of Him tomorrow.

扫罗之后的故事会提醒我们：一个蒙恩的开始，并不表示我们以后就不需要继续信靠和顺服。被神拣选，并不代表我们再也不会迷失方向。今天领受了神的帮助，也不表示明天就可以不再倚靠祂。

So, as we consider Saul, the question is not simply, "What has God given me?" It is also, "How am I receiving it? How am I living with it?"

因此，当我们思想扫罗的时候，问题不只是：“神给了我什么？”也要问：“我怎样领受祂所赐的？我又怎样带着这份恩赐生活？”

God reaches into the wounded history of Benjamin. He meets Saul in an ordinary, frustrating search. He speaks to him in a quiet moment and entrusts him with a place in His people's story.

神进入便雅悯那段满是伤痕的历史；祂在扫罗平凡而令人沮丧的寻找中与他相遇；祂在安静的时刻对他说话，又把一份责任交托给他，使他参与神百姓的故事。

Perhaps you feel like the least today. Perhaps you have been searching and cannot find what you are looking for. Perhaps you are carrying responsibilities that seem too ordinary to matter, or too heavy to bear.

今天，也许你觉得自己很卑微；也许你一直在寻找，却找不到你要找的东西；也许你正背负着一些责任，平凡得让你怀疑有没有意义，或者沉重得让你几乎承担不起。

**Do not be afraid to bring that life before God. You do not need to pretend that you understand the whole story. Attend to the responsibility in front of you. Receive help from the people He brings alongside you. Make room to hear His word.**

不要害怕把这样的生命带到神面前。你不需要假装自己已经看懂整个故事。先忠心做好眼前的事，接受神放在你身边之人的帮助，也腾出空间，聆听祂的话。

**The God who frames the stories of our lives has not forgotten you.**

那位编织我们人生故事的神，并没有忘记你。

**And as He gives us grace, may we receive it with thanksgiving and live it with humility. May we learn to trust Him in the ordinary work, in the uncertain journey, and in the quiet moments when He calls us to listen.**

当祂赐下恩典，愿我们存着感恩的心领受，并以谦卑回应。愿我们在平凡的工作中、在充满未知的旅程中，以及在祂呼唤我们安静聆听的时刻，都学习信靠祂。

**Saul's story begins with a gift. Next week, we will consider the character of the man who received that gift, and how he began to protect his position as king rather than trust the God who gave it.**

扫罗的故事，从一份恩赐开始。下星期，我们会进一步看看这个领受恩赐的人究竟有怎样的品格，以及他后来怎样开始保护自己的王位，却没有继续信靠那位赐他王位的神。

**We already have a hint in verse 27: "But some worthless fellows said, 'How can this man save us?' And they despised him and brought him no present." How will Saul respond when others question the gift he has received? That is a question we will return to next week.**

其实，第 27 节已经给了我们一点线索：“但有些匪徒说：‘这人怎能救我们呢？’就藐视他，没有送礼物给他。”当别人质疑他所领受的这份恩赐时，扫罗会怎样回应呢？下星期我们再来思想这个问题。

**For today, let us remember where his story begins: with the least, with the lost, and with a word from God on the road home. May we be willing to hear that word and take the next faithful step. Amen.**

但今天，让我们记得他的故事从哪里开始：从卑微的人、从寻找中迷失的人，以及回家路上神所说的一句话开始。愿我们愿意聆听祂的话，并凭信心走出下一步。阿们。