撒母耳·卢瑟福出生于1600年苏格兰的尼斯贝特附近，他在1627年成为了安沃斯教会的牧师。

安沃斯是一个乡村教区，会众们分散在山上的农场里工作，卢瑟福在这里孜孜不倦地牧养。他有一颗真正的牧者之心，总是为羊群不停地工作。会众谈到卢瑟福时会说："他总是祈祷，总是教导，总是探访病人，总是写作和学习。"

然而，他在安沃斯的最初几年，却被悲伤所吞没。他的妻子病了一年零一个月，在他们的新家去世。他的两个孩子也在此期间死亡。但是，神却用这段苦难的时间来预备卢瑟福，使他格外能安慰心灵破碎的人。

1636年，卢瑟福出版了一本书捍卫恩典的教义的作品以对抗阿米念主义。这使得他与英国主教制统治的教会当局发生冲突，进而被流放到阿伯丁。

这次流亡对这位可爱的牧师来说，是一次痛苦的考验，因为他觉得与自己的羊群分离是难以忍受的。然而，正是因着他的流亡，我们现在有许多他写给他羊群的书信——他遭遇放逐的邪恶，变成了一个伟大的祝福，为世界各地经历不同伤痛的人带来深切的安慰。

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尊贵的泰勒夫人：

愿祂将恩惠、怜悯、平安赐给您！虽然您不是我地上的亲眷，我也与您并不熟识，但根据您大儿子的见证和请求，我乐意在伦敦写信给您。我在祂里面，略微放胆写信给您，向您说诉我对您小儿子最近在主里睡了的想法，因为我深信，我所敬重的那位活在您心里的主，祂远胜过地上一切其他的关系。

我相信，我们的主已经亲自教导过您，不要因为小儿子的死而感到悲伤（因为我相信您大儿子休先生为您作的见证）。您所有的心结一定是：“他死得太早了，他在生命的清晨就匆匆离去。一切都结束了。”

夫人，我也遭遇和您相似的情况：我只有两个孩子，自从我来到安沃斯，我的两个可怜孩子就都相继死去了。但我相信，神的主权必定也会使您此般的想法保持沉默。因为，至高无上、超乎一切的万物之主，对自己所作的任何事情，都无需加以任何说明——好农夫总是在美好的仲夏采摘祂的玫瑰，或折断祂的百合花；并且我敢说，在晴朗的仲夏日来临前（可能是一月份），祂就会提前把树苗移走，从低处移植到更高的地方；因为在那里，树苗在一年中的任何季节，都可以得到更充沛的阳光和更自由的空气......

是哦！这一切和你我有什么关系呢？所有树苗是祂自己的。这是那位时间和风的创造者（如果可以这样形容祂的话）对受造物仁慈的伤害。此外，如果您能如此考虑，假设自己在您孩子的床边，看到我们的主亲切地来到他的身旁，您就会意识到，自己不能耽误救主自由的爱。

也许，您活着的另一位孩子（我指的不是休先生）可能比您死去的小儿子更令您伤心。您仍需等候，等候他的救主使他悔改。是哦！主已经尽可能地等候您和我，并且似乎在我身上等候的时间更久。但即便如此，您也要将之看作是祂赐给您的一种恩惠，一种白白的恩典，就是那不用花钱就得到的怜悯。

何等尊贵的救主，谁能定出祂的价值？但您没有附上任何代价，就白白得到祂了。祂又叫您为祂受苦，叫您的财物被人抢夺，但这也出于祂白白恩典的作为。您永远不是失败者，因为您有祂！

我如此劝勉您——您若能珍视祂，这世界就没有任何事物能使您感到痛苦了——愿恩惠与您同在。

您的弟兄撒母耳·卢瑟福

1645年于伦敦

https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/jgyFHpQYX9CSMXDWolO9bw

LXVI. To MR. TAYLOR, on her son's death

MISTRESS, -- Grace, mercy, and peace be to you -- Though I have no

relation worldly or acquaintance with you, yet (upon the testimony and

importunity of your elder son now at London, where I am, but chiefly

because I esteem Jesus Christ in you to be in place of all relations) I

make bold, in Christ, to speak my poor thoughts to you concerning your

son lately fallen asleep in the Lord. I know that grace rooteth not out

the affections of a mother, but putteth them on His wheel who maketh

all things new, that they may be refined: therefore, sorrow for a dead

child is allowed to you, though by measure and ounce-weights. The

redeemed of the Lord have not a dominion, or lordship, over their

sorrow and other affections, to lavish out Christ's goods at their

pleasure. 'For ye are not your own, but bought with a price'; and your

sorrow is not your own. Nor has He redeemed you by halves; and

therefore, ye are not to make Christ's cross no cross. He commandeth

you to weep: and that princely One, who took up to heaven with Him a

man's heart to be a compassionate High Priest, became your fellow and

companion on earth by weeping for the dead (John 11.35). And,

therefore, ye are to love that cross, because it was once at Christ's

shoulders before you: so that by His own practice He has over-gilded

and covered your cross with the Mediator's lustre. The cup ye drink was

at the lip of sweet Jesus, and He drank of it. The kind and

compassionate Jesus, at every sigh you give for the loss of your now

glorified child (so I believe, as is meet), with a man's heart crieth,

'Half Mine'.

I was not a witness to his death, being called out of the kingdom;

but, if you will credit those whom I do credit (and I dare not lie), he

died comfortably. It is true, he died before he did so much service to

Christ on earth, as I hope and heartily desire that your son Mr Hugh

(very dear to me in Jesus Christ) will do. But that were a real matter

of sorrow if this were not to counterbalance it, that he has changed

service-houses, but has not changed services or Master. 'And there

shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be

in it; and His servants shall serve Him' (Rev. 22.3). What he could

have done in this lower house, he is now upon that same service in the

higher house; and it is all one: it is the same service and same

Master, only there is a change of conditions. And ye are not to think

it a bad bargain for your beloved son, where he has gold for copper and

brass, eternity for time.

I believe that Christ has taught you (for I give credit to such a

witness of you as your son Mr Hugh) not to sorrow because he died. All

the knot must be, 'He died too soon, he died too young, he died in the

morning of his life.' This is all; but sovereignty must silence your

thoughts. I was in your condition: I had but two children, and both are

dead since I came hither. The supreme and absolute Former of all things

giveth not an account of any of His matters. The good Husbandman may

pluck His roses, and gather in His lilies at mid-summer, and, for aught

I dare say, in the beginning of the first summer month, and He may

transplant young trees out of the lower ground to the higher, where

they may have more of the sun, and a more free air, at any season of

the year. What is that to you or me? The goods are His own. The Creator

of time and winds did a merciful injury, if I dare borrow the word, to

nature, in landing the passenger so early. They love the sea too well,

who complain of a fair wind and a desirable tide, and a speedy coming

ashore, especially a coming ashore in that land where all the

inhabitants have everlasting joy upon their heads. He cannot be too

early in heaven; his twelve hours were not short hours. And withal, if

you consider this, had you been at his bed-side, and should have seen

Christ coming to him, you could not have adjourned Christ's free love,

who would wants him no longer. And dying in another land, where his

mother could not close his eyes, is not much. The whole earth is his

Father's; any corner of his Father's house is good enough to die in.

It may be, the living child (I speak not of Mr Hugh) is more grief to

you than the dead. Ye are to wait on, if at any time God shall give him

repentance. Christ waited as long possibly on you and me, certainly

longer on me: and if He should deny repentance to him, I could say

something to that: but I hope better things of him. And think this a

favor, that He has bestowed upon you fine, free grace, that is, mercy

without hire; ye paid nothing for it: and who can put a price upon any

thing of royal and princely Jesus Christ? And God has given to you to

suffer for Him the spoiling of your goods. Esteem it as an act of free

grace also. Ye are no loser, having Himself; and I persuade myself, if

you could prize Christ, nothing could be bitter to you. Grace, grace be

with you.

Your brother and well-wisher.

LONDON, 1645