

Scriptures June 21, 2026

Modern Testimony

“Life Goes On” by Howard Thurman

During these turbulent times we must remind ourselves repeatedly that life goes on.

This we are apt to forget.

The wisdom of life transcends our wisdoms;

the purpose of life outlasts our purposes;

the process of life cushions our processes.

The mass attack of disillusion and despair,

distilled out of the collapse of hope,

has so invaded our thoughts that what we know to be true and valid seems unreal and ephemeral.

There seems to be little energy left for aught but futility.

This is the great deception.

By it whole peoples have gone down to oblivion

without the will to affirm the great and permanent strength of the clean and the commonplace.

Let us not be deceived.

It is just as important as ever to attend to the little graces

by which the dignity of our lives is maintained and sustained.

Birds still sing;

the stars continue to cast their gentle gleam over the desolation of the battlefields,

and the heart is still inspired by the kind word and the gracious deed.

There is no need to fear evil.

There is every need to understand what it does,

how it operates in the world,

what it draws upon to sustain itself.

We must not shrink from the knowledge of the evilness of evil.

*Over and over we must know that the real target of evil is not
destruction of the body,
the reduction to rubble of cities;
the real target of evil
is to corrupt the spirit of man and to give his soul the contagion of inner
disintegration.
When this happens,
there is nothing left,
the very citadel of man is captured and laid waste.
Therefore the evil in the world around us must not be allowed to move
from without to within.
This would be to be overcome by evil.
To drink in the beauty that is within reach,
to clothe one's life with simple deeds of kindness,
to keep alive a sensitiveness to the movement of the spirit of God
in the quietness of the human heart and in the workings of the human
mind—
this is as always the ultimate answer to the great deception.*

~silence is kept~

Ancient Testimony Genesis 21:8-21 NRSV

The rescue of Hagar and Ishmael

Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away

⁸ The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. ⁹ But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac.^[a] ¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, 'Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac.' ¹¹ The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. ¹² But God said to Abraham, 'Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named after you. ¹³ As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because

he is your offspring.’ ¹⁴ So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

¹⁵ When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, ‘Do not let me look on the death of the child.’ And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. ¹⁷ And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, ‘What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. ¹⁸ Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.’ ¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. ²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Ancient Testimony Matthew 10:24-39 NRSV
The cost of discipleship

²⁴ ‘A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵ it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

Whom to Fear

²⁶ ‘So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷ What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸ Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.^[a] ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. ³⁰ And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹ So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³² 'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³ but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

Not Peace, but a Sword

³⁴ 'Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,

and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

³⁶ and one's foes will be members of one's own household.

³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸ and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.