



TOWARD THE MARK

***“I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE
OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.”
PHILIPPIANS 3:14***

*A MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS
OF ALL AGES*

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Dear Reader,

“The apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught” (Mark 6:30).

In this busy life of ours, it is very hard to find someone we can trust, to whom we can tell all our sorrows and joys, who will listen, and on whose sympathy we can fully rely. **But there is a friend who is always near us, ready to listen and to sympathize with us. There is no trial and no joy He will not share; and that friend is the same one to whom the disciples unburdened their hearts.** Yes, they went and told Jesus “all things.”

You can do the same, dear Christian. He loves to hear your voice. Tell Him everything: your school cares, your work cares, your innocent joys, your shortcomings; and make known to Him all your needs. Do not keep anything from Him that concerns you. **He is your only true and faithful friend,** so speak to Him with reverence, yet with liberty and confidence. **He knows everything about you and the entire struggle you are going through, and you need to know that He is willing and able to help you, guide you, and fill your heart with His own peace.**

He loves all His people to be winners of souls, so give Him the joy of hearing you tell Him that you have been trying to lead some of your classmates or co-workers to Him. For, just as the apostles, you are His ambassador and **He is your Lord as well as your faithful friend.**

May the Lord use this issue to strengthen, encourage and help you to be established to the end that Christ may be displayed in your life.

Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement.

Please keep praying for the Lord’s blessing on Toward the Mark

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,

Emil S. Nashed

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I have the pleasure to inform you that a mailing list has been set up for Toward the Mark. If you would like to receive an electronic version simply send an e-mail to toward.the.mark@gmail.com or visit www.towardthemark.org to be added to the mailing list. If you also want a copy of older issues, please mention it in your e-mail.

Quotations from Scripture are generally taken either from the King James translation or the J. N. Darby translation.

MILK

"The truth shall make you free"

ADDRESSES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA

REVELATION 2 AND 3

PERGAMOS

(Revelation 2:12–17)

Pergamos is about sixty miles north and east of Smyrna. It was the next staging point on the circuit of the seven churches. Its name means “powerful marriage.” Prophetically, Pergamos looks forward to the time of Emperor Constantine, who became Emperor at Rome in 306 A.D. Under his rule, the church became united to the state. Christianity was actively and officially promoted. The assembly, which should have been faithful to Christ, was married to the world whose very system was opposed to God.

She ignored the warning: “Love not the world, nor the things in the world. If any one love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 Jn. 2:15). To escape the persecutions of the world, suffered at Smyrna, the church went into the world. But the marriage was an unholy alliance. A ship, well designed, constructed, maintained and controlled, is safe in the midst of a stormy sea, but when the sea gets into the ship, it sinks. It would seem that from this period on the church, as a whole, lost her heavenly character.

Verse 12

And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

“**Angel**” means “messenger.” The letter was addressed to what we might call the responsible element in the local church; that is, those who both acted responsibly in the assembly and were also prepared to accept responsibility in assembly affairs.

The sharp sword with two edges

Christ presents Himself in a way appropriate to the condition of the assembly at this period, as “He which hath the sharp sword with two edges” (cf Heb. 4:12). He has the capacity to discern and judge, righteously (2 Ti. 4:8). Self-judgment is the best judgment, but if the assembly does not judge itself, He shall not hesitate to do so.

Verse 13

I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

The church at Pergamos was situated in a most ungodly place. She faced peculiar difficulties and trials. The Lord was conscious of that. “I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is.” Pergamos was the first city to adopt ruler worship. This was instigated by a local pagan king Attalus 1 Soter. He had a temple, dedicated to himself, erected on a prominent hill which dominated the local landscape. When the Roman Caesar Domitian was visiting the area, he accepted the principle of ruler deification, but insisted that he, as emperor, and not his local representative, was the one to whom worship should be rendered. The local populace, even many of the Christians, evidently were quite content to tolerate that. Satan, the implacable enemy and adversary of God, was, of course, the real if unseen power. He is the god of this world (2 Co. 4:4) and the prince of this world (Jn. 12:31).

Sadly, the church as a whole had chosen to develop strong links with the world. They were dwelling where Satan's power was being exercised. This weakened the witness of the church in the world and to the world. One cannot bear witness against a system with which one is moving hand in glove. Satan ruled the very world-system which was infiltrating the church. The result was that this professing church (like much of so-called

Christendom generally today) was settling down to live in a world dominated by Satan, thus displacing the true God and making Satan, in effect, her king.

Thou holdest fast My name

Despite the failure of many at Pergamos, there was still that element which the Lord could commend. He said, “Thou holdest fast My Name, and hast not denied My faith.” A name in Scripture always identifies and characterises a person. In the midst of such a corrupting environment, they continued to maintain the great cardinal truths of Christianity, especially concerning the Person and work of Christ. Even though the Lord could no longer speak of the assembly as a whole as “My faithful witness,” there were, thankfully, still some faithful individuals. This is exemplified in the instance of Antipas the faithful martyr.

Whether or not the name Antipas was his actual, literal, personal name, its meaning (“against the father”) was certainly characteristic of him. Antipas was martyred as a result of his attempts to combat the error then current. Men were arising, taking to themselves the position, status and title of “father.” Antipas was not against THE Father, God the Father, but against any man who set himself up as a so-called official, ecclesiastical “father.” The Lord commends him as “My faithful witness, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.” Antipas was a bright example of one who remained steadfast, unyielding, even though his faithfulness led to a martyr’s death. He was a bright witness to Christ in Satan’s world, a shining example of what the whole church should be in this world. The Lord’s words, “he was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth” was a clear reproach against those who were content to go along with the tide of popular opinion.

Verse 14

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to

cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

What could not be achieved by persecution from without, as Satan attempted at Smyrna, was now gained at Pergamos by corruption from within. Hence the reference to Balaam (v. 14), who, although encouraged by Balac (Nu. 22:6), found he could not curse the people of God, and proceeded to corrupt them. Balaam’s counsel to Israel, “Be friendly with Moab” (Nu. 25:1-3), exactly characterises the moral position at Pergamos. In the history of the church, what starts as the “way of Cain” (self-will) and continues its course as the “error of Balaam” (self-seeking) must inevitably be judged as was Korah (self-assertion) (Jude 11).

A church which has settled down to dwell in the world adopts its ways. Individual Christians might have protested against such things, but most professing Christians no longer resisted these false teachers. The Lord had to say, “Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam.” Evil teachers were tolerated, and evil practices followed. As ever, bad doctrine leads to bad practice.

Verse 15

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

The Pergamos stage of the church’s history was marked by those that held the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. It is difficult to determine just who these Nicolaitanes were, or precisely what they taught. They had apparently developed a form of teaching to justify conduct which by scriptural standards would be totally unacceptable and universally condemned. The tendency had first shown itself in immoral practices brought into the assembly at Ephesus. These indecent deeds were at that stage hated and refused by that church. However, in Pergamos, this evil became more serious, inasmuch as what had been deeds in the Ephesian church had now become an established doctrine at

Pergamos. Fundamentally, the Nicolaitanes were people who abused the grace of God. They would probably have said, "Let us continue in sin that grace may abound," an attitude condemned by the apostle Paul (Ro. 6:1-2).

The Lord warns that the sword of His mouth, His word, will refute what they say, their doctrine.

which thing I hate

The Lord Jesus is The Righteous Judge, and hates unrighteousness (Ps 45:6-7, Hebrews 1:8-9).

Verse 16

Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Unless there is repentance, and self-judgment, it will be necessary for Christ to use the sword of judgment against those responsible. The Lord did not say I will fight against "thee," but against "them." If the church no longer had the moral power to deal with false teachers and evil doers, the Lord, Himself, would act to cleanse out the evil and maintain the honour due to His Name. This judgment would be executed with the sword of His mouth, His word.

The first attack of Satan was to cast doubt on that which proceeded out of the mouth of God – "hath God said?" (Gen. 3:1). He whose Name is called The Word of God shall ultimately, at His Appearing, smite the nations with a sharp sword going out of His mouth (Rev. 19:15). His word will suffice. Prior to that, the false teachers at Pergamos will be both exposed and condemned by the Word of God proceeding out of the mouth of the Son of God.

Verse 17

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the

stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

There is then an appeal for the individual to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The very words of Scripture are, indeed, God-breathed, in the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Co. 2:13, 2 Ti. 3:15-16).

To him that overcometh

There is a three-fold promise for the **overcomer**, he who has an opened ear and is prepared to accept the word, and obey it.

hidden manna, a white stone, and a new name

At Pergamos, much of the food for sale had been previously dedicated to pagan deities, or to the Roman Emperor. Christians who abstained on conscience grounds (Acts 15:20, 1 Co. 10:25-29) from eating such meat were promised hidden manna. This refers to the manna that was placed in the ark of the covenant for a memorial of God's goodness to Israel while they journeyed through the wilderness. The manna itself was typical of the holy, perfect manhood of the Lord Jesus, manifested in His life in this world. The overcomer, the faithful believer who is morally separate from the world, is let into the secret of God's own appreciation of the holy, separate Manhood and life on earth of His only begotten Son. The overcomer has the personal sense in his own soul of God's own appreciation of the perfect Manhood of the Lord Jesus. The Father alone has a full appreciation, but the overcomer gains a fresh appreciation of what is hidden to the eye of all but God and he to whom it is revealed (See Exodus 16:33 and Hebrews 9:4).

In addition to this mark of an inward appreciation, the Lord says, "I will give him a white stone," an outward sign of His approval. This most likely refers to the custom of placing a white stone into an urn in order to show approval of a candidate in an election. The stone itself bore the name of the candidate. A black stone would indicate disapproval.

There was another local connection. Normally, the local dark granite was used for public buildings. For special buildings, especially those erected in honour of some notable person, and for monumental statues, pillars, and tablets, expensive, white, Italian marble was imported. Local honours granted for services to the community involved commemorative plaques or tablets in this same white stone. At the same time as this honour was conferred, a new name was given, and engraved in the white stone.

It signifies the Lord giving the overcomer His manifest approval. The overcomer might well be rejected by many because he stands against the unholy alliance of the church and the world; nevertheless, he should be encouraged by the thought of the Lord's approval as set forth in the white stone.

There are two valid understandings of what the new name represents.

1. The overcomer is given a special appreciation of the Lord's beauty and glory that is a personal revelation to him because of his personal faithfulness to the Lord, even or perhaps especially in difficult days.

2. A special appreciation of the overcomer expressed by the Lord. The moral character which Christ personally sees and appreciates in the individual to whom He gives a white stone will be expressed in that new name.

There is merit in both considerations.

The fullness of eternal, spiritual, heavenly blessing lies ahead for every believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. But, what do I know now of the hidden manna, the white stone, and the new name?

Ernie Brown

MEAT

"Sanctify them by the truth"

THREE APPEARINGS OF CHRIST

At the end of the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, there are brought before us three appearances of Christ. In verse 24 it is a present appearing – “Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands... but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” In verse 26 it is a past appearing – “now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,” and in verse 28 it is a future appearing – “unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

This great epistle was written to Jewish Christians to deliver them from a system of ordinances and ritual appealing to sight and sense but, nevertheless, in which God dwelt in thick darkness; and to bring them, though still on earth, into the privileges and enjoyment of a new heavenly relationship brought in by Christ, in whom God has been fully made known.

Thus the old system, whilst full of wonderful typology, has been superseded by a new order, a heavenly order brought in through Christ. “He taketh away the first that He may establish the second.” A characteristic word of the epistle is “better” – we have a better hope; better covenant; better promises; better sacrifices etc., and all is centered in Christ who has seated himself at the right hand of God. **Four times in the epistle this is stated – in chapter 1 it is the greatness of the PERSON who has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having made purification for sin; in chapter 8 it is the greatness of such a high PRIEST who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; in chapter 10 it is in the greatness of the PROPITIATION which He has made by the sacrifice of Himself that He has sat down in perpetuity on the right hand of God; and in chapter 12 it is the greatness of the PATHWAY of faith delineated by Jesus who endured the cross,**

despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

First then, a present appearing. It is this great and glorious PERSON who now appears in the presence of God for us. He appears before God on our behalf as stated in chapter 7 verse 25 – “He ever liveth to make intercession for them”; and in the great prayer of John chapter 17 He says, verse 19, “for their sakes I sanctify Myself.” He has set Himself apart in the Glory, ever living to make intercession for us. He is our great High Priest (the only high priest designated “great”) able to succor, able to save to the uttermost.

Not only does He now appear in the presence of God on our behalf, but also as our representative as stated in chapter 6 verse 20 He has entered as the “forerunner,” one who goes in advance, and we are exhorted as “after runners,” followers, to look unto Him and to consider Him Who has delineated the whole PATHWAY of faith which leads to the glory.

A present appearing – He now appears in the presence of God for us. This is connected with His present service of love and we may say He lives for us.

Secondly – a past appearing. He has appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. All the blessing and glory that is made known by His present appearing in the presence of God for us, rests absolutely and eternally on what was accomplished in this past appearing. It was “in the end of the world” or “the consummation of the ages.” At the appearing in this world, in the fullness of time, of the Son of God incarnate, the dealings of God with men reached their climax, and the whole question of good and evil was resolved, settled once and forever. He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. What a touching expression this is, the sacrifice of Himself. He is the PROPITIATION for the sins of the whole world (1 Jn. 2:2). Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world (Jn. 1:29).

If His present appearing in heaven is for us, and is connected with His service, we may think that His past appearing was especially for God and is connected with His sacrifice, and we may say with adoring hearts He died for us.

Finally – a future appearing. Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many – not the thought of propitiation – the value of the sacrifice to God – but the thought of substitution – the many being those who by faith in Him obtain the blessings of salvation. So whether it be the church on earth or the nation of Israel, or the earnest looking out of the creation, all awaits His second coming (apart from the question of sin which was settled absolutely, perfectly and eternally at His first coming when He gave Himself a sacrifice for sin), to bring in salvation.

Christians now in the good of salvation from the penalty of sin, the judgment having been borne by Christ, and enjoying present salvation along the pilgrim pathway from the power of indwelling sin, will experience at His second coming the salvation from the actual presence of sin when their bodies of humiliation will be changed, and they will have bodies of glory like unto His own. Then Israel will be saved from all her enemies and the Lord will reign in righteousness as King over all the earth. The church glorified, Israel gathered and the nations governed.

The hymn writer has so beautifully put it –

“He’ll give these bodies vile a fashion like His own:
He’ll bid the whole creation smile, and hush its grown.”

The word for “appear” in verse 28 in the original Greek is not one of the great words used elsewhere for His appearing, His coming, his manifestation in Glory, but a word which means He will be seen. So this future appearing is connected with salvation and we may say He is coming for us.

The One who died to save us, lives to keep us, and soon is coming for us. Hallelujah.

Norman Griffiths

Exercise

"Exercise thyself unto piety"

JOHN MARK

When the apostle Peter was delivered from Herod's jail by an angel, he "came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying." It is in this incidental way we hear of Mark for the first time. And it is noteworthy that he, rather than his mother, is prominent in the mind of the inspired writer, Mary being identified as "the mother of John, whose surname was Mark."

A delightful home, his was: a pious mother to guide it, keeping it open for the Lord's interests – a home where prayer was wont to be made. How unusual must these advantages have been for one nurtured in such an atmosphere and how extensive must his knowledge of the Spirit's activities in those early days have been!

The apostle Peter calls him "Marcus, my son," an expression which may describe him as a convert of that apostle. He had listened to the great Pentecostal address, doubtless; knew the man who was healed at the temple's gate called Beautiful; had talked with Stephen and Philip; and no doubt he had become acquainted with Saul of Tarsus about the time his uncle Barnabas commended him to the assembly at Jerusalem.

But a few years having passed, we are now to see him in new circumstances. He has left the shelter of his home and has cast in his lot **with Barnabas and Saul**

Meeting them upon their arrival from Antioch with the bounty of the saints in that region (Acts 11:30), and hearing their account of the work among the Gentiles, may have produced a desire to accompany them. However, all that we certainly know is that "they took with them John whose surname was Mark" (Acts 22:25).

Setting out from Antioch for the first missionary journey, the two apostles first go to Cyprus; they preach in Salamis in the synagogue of the Jews: "and they had John to their minister." At Paphos, on the south-western coast of the island, they meet the sorcerer Elymas and

the deputy Sergius Paulus – the former being smitten with temporary blindness for opposing the gospel, and the latter converted upon believing. From thence the evangelists sail to Perga, on the mainland, and as they are about to get fully into the work for which they had set out, John Mark returns to Jerusalem.

Seven years have now passed away, and Paul and Barnabas are preparing to leave Antioch on a second missionary tour, when John Mark reappears. What he had been doing in the interval, how long he remained in Jerusalem, what he did or what passed through his mind in those seven years are questions we would like to be able to answer, but cannot. What we do learn is that Barnabas determined to take him with them, while Paul objected because he had departed from them from Pamphylia, and **went not with them to the work.**

Writers have speculated as to whether Mark's defection at that time was caused by resentment at the increasing prominence of Paul, or through fear of perils ahead, or home-sickness; but Paul leaves no room for doubt in the matter. He had one fatal defect – he had not kept to his work; he had turned back. It might be supposed that during the seven years of his truancy he had discovered and judged the state which accounted for his lack of application, but he appears not to have done so. There is still a lack of steadfastness and devotedness about him. **The root of this defect seems to have been in the idea that the prestige of worthy connections qualifies for service. The fact that he allowed his uncle to seek his reinstatement indicated this trait in Mark. But this is the very thing which needed discipline from God.**

No doubt it was good to have lived in Jerusalem and to be an eye-witness of its gospel-triumphs; it was good to associate at home with those prominent among Christ's followers; and it was not small honor to be able to address the devoted Barnabas as his uncle. We need not underrate such advantages; they could have been turned to good account if the grace that was exhibited before Mark's eyes in the circle wherein he moved had stirred his spirit and exercised his conscience before God; it would have led to spiritual growth. **But the mere fact of having possessed such advantages could not add one cubit to his measure, nor furnish one iota of fitness for service.** At any rate Paul declared that he would not consent to share

campaigns, such as he and Barnabas had conducted, with one who is not dependable. The consequent breach between Paul and Barnabas need not be described. We note, however, that Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus – without Paul.

Here then is the result of the slackness of a brother who thought “more highly than he ought to think” and not soberly according as God had dealt to him the measure of faith (Ro. 12:3). And though it would be unjust to magnify the failure of one who eventually became devoted and efficient, much would be lost by ignoring the fact that his early ways led to a rupture between apostles of the Holy Ghost’s choosing, depriving Barnabas of association with the man to whom the ministry to the Gentiles was committed, and robbing Paul of the solace found in the company of this ‘son of consolation.’”

Some years have passed since the breach between Paul and Barnabas occurred because of John Mark’s early ways. But God has wrought in his soul. If we turn to 1 Peter 5:12-24 we find him in Babylon with the apostle Peter and with Silas. **Silas is the brother Paul chose when Barnabas sailed for Cyprus with Mark; moreover he is the brother who, as Mr. Darby says, “preferred the work to Jerusalem,” while Mark preferred Jerusalem to the work.** But the fact that Mark is now in the company of Silas betokens a humble and spiritual mind; it has stopped all friction on his account; it turns him back to the work.

But time flies. The apostle Paul is now an old man, in actual years perhaps 67, but called “Paul the aged” as the result of his labors and sufferings. He is now a prisoner in Rome, and as he is writing to the saints at Colosse, we are greatly cheered to note these words in his letter: “Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, **and Marcus, sister’s son to Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him);** and ... Justus... these only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me” (Col. 4:10-11).

Again he writes: “There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus; **Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-laborers”** (Philemon 24). **And two years later, as he is awaiting his sentence from Caesar, he writes to Timothy to come to him at Rome – not alone, for he adds: “Take Mark, and bring him with**

thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry” (2 Ti. 4:11). Although Luke is with him, this veteran defender of the gospel desires to have two others with him ere he finishes his course, and these two are **Timothy and Mark.**

What a change! Mark is now acknowledged as a “fellow-worker,” a “comfort,” a “fellow-laborer,” and “profitable for the ministry.” What has made the change? This: **Mark has learned his lesson.**

Doubtless to most of the saints Mark had always seemed a very estimable brother, but in Paul’s spiritual mind a distinct work in Mark’s soul was necessary to support him in the place of activity which he had started to occupy; he can now discern it has taken place, and that he is a very different sort of John Mark – he is thoroughly dependable. Where the work of the Lord is, he is. If there is work to be done in Pamphylia, no power on earth could prevail to turn him back to Jerusalem. What means this continual reference to his comings and goings from and to Rome? Ah, Rome then and Rome now were very different in the Christian point of view. Rome now is the city where “religion goes in silver slippers” – as Bunyan would say. But Rome then was the city that “had not known an apostle except in chains!” Yet to find John Mark we must go to Rome, or if he has gone on the apostle’s errand it will not be long till he is back.

But that is not all. This precious servant of the Lord, before his home-going, leaves us a priceless heritage. He writes a book – a wonderful book – a unique book. What is its theme? Does he relate the scenes he had witnessed in those unforgettable early days of the infant church? No. Does he give us an account of his service at Babylon together with the apostle Peter and Silas? No. Does he describe – as he was well able to do – the latter days of our beloved “Paul the aged?” - or would he inform us that he stood by this faithful witness at Rome at the last? No. John Mark writes of ONE – the One who is worthy of all homage and praise; he writes the Gospel of Mark.

Not as Matthew does he especially portray Him as the anointed King, lifted up and cast down (Ps. 102:10) when presented to and rejected by Israel. Not as Luke does He distinctively set Him forth as **The Son of Man** obedient to God and the vessel of all grace to man. Nor

does he, like John, describe who He is in the glory of His Person – the eternal Son of God become flesh and tabernacling among us. No doubt all of these glories, though veiled, shine in Him whom Mark describes, for “he could not be hid;” but with the fitness which God gives to the vessel He employs for a given work – even though that vessel be inspired – John Mark writes **of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as The Servant in whose entire course no failure was found.**

He writes of Him “straightway” doing this, or “immediately” doing that, and always at His Father’s business. Mark reveals Him at prayer “a great while before day” with a full working day following – eager to go “into the next towns” with the gospel, while multitudes press upon Him where He is. It is he, too, who informs us that while the privacy of His early prayers is interrupted by His disciples, and the “desert place apart” which He had sought for His disciples is invaded by the people, He is never ruffled by such things, but accepts them as a call for further labors. It is Mark again who forcibly reminds us of His desire to have those benefited by His service to “say nothing to any many” about it, yet relates the praise of those who – though charged to say nothing – say, “**He hath done all things well.**”

R.J. Reid

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

1. What Egyptian was the mother of two of the tribes of Israel?
2. Who is the only king in the Bible referred to as “the Mede”?
3. What Roman governor had a Jewish wife named Drusilla?

Rest

"Shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?"

“I WENT INTO THE SANCTUARY OF GOD”

PSALM 73:7

When Asaph went into the Sanctuary of God his whole outlook was changed, he was the subject of a moral revolution. Before he went in he was restless, his whole soul was in rebellion against the state of things, and consequently against God who is behind all. He was discontented and at a loss to understand the will of God.

He was no infidel, he was a man whose God was the Lord, and he had a deep sense in his born again soul of what was right, but he was much perplexed. **He was a type of many in these days; they cannot understand why the good things of life should be poured into the lap of the wicked and why trouble should dog the steps of the honest and good.** Unrighteousness rides triumphantly in a gilded coach, or perhaps a luxurious car, while goodness goes afoot on the dusty highway. Why?

One hour in the Sanctuary of God changed everything for Asaph. Is there anything in the New Testament which answers to the Sanctuary in which Asaph found the key to all his difficult problems? Yes, there is! We have a Sanctuary in the New Testament and the Minister of it. Hebrews 10 tells us we have boldness to enter into the Holiest – that is, into the very presence of God – and it tells us of Jesus who is there, our great High Priest, who delights to lead us in, and maintain us in the place of light and blessing.

It is wonderful how things change as we sit in the presence of God. It is more wonderful how we ourselves are changed.

If any of us have not experienced this we should lose no time in testing it. 2 Corinthians 3 speaks of beholding the glory of the Lord and being changed into the same image. It is this which takes place when we sit in the presence of the Lord; the world's tinsel glitters just as brightly, but it loses its attraction for us. The wicked still prosper but we envy them not, the little storms that have shaken us are calmed, our souls are rested and filled with peace. In the presence of God he saw how transient were all earthly things, and he saw, also, the end of them – the end of a thing is the great test of it. **The Christian, who rejoices in the hope of glory of God, and who knows he is an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ Jesus, will not covet the worldly goods of a man who is without Christ, without God, and without hope in the world. But it is in the presence of God that things become real, and Asaph saw things in a different light, his faith had been shaken and his foot had well nigh slipped, yet God had held him up in His right hand, and he learned too, that God would guide him with His counsel, in and through the maze of life, and afterwards receive him into glory.** What more could he desire than that? **To be the object of God's special care not by bit and bridle, but to be intelligently led and instructed in the knowledge of God, a heart free from distress and distrust.** Then to hear him break forth "whom have I in heaven but Thee..." God becomes his everlasting portion. Shall we be behind Asaph in our knowledge of God? – Greater light shines for us than shone for him; "Let us draw near with a true heart... full assurance of faith." It is in His presence "the Sanctuary" we see everything clearly, moreover, we know that light shines in the face of Jesus, the sinners Friend and Savior – He cares for us and will bring every trail to a right issue.

Was not Hannah changed (1 Sa. 1) when having knelt in the Sanctuary and poured out her grief before God, she arose and went her way, and her countenance was no more sad? Was not Thomas changed when in the presence of his Lord,

having seen the wounds in His hands and side, his doubts were gone, and he confessed "My Lord and God?" **Was not Mary changed when she bent in adoration at the feet of Jesus, and arose to carry about in her person the fragrance of the spikenard that she had poured upon Him, unmoved by the criticism of her brethren? Was not Paul changed, when having sought three times the presence of the Lord about the thorn in the flesh, the Lord answered him with the words "My grace is sufficient for thee...most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities!"**

Yes, we shall all be changed as we behold the glory of the Lord, the burdening and buffetings of life may remain, and circumstances unchanged, but we shall be changed, and become rich in faith, the workmanship of our great God. No longer shall we murmur at the inequalities of life, but refreshed in the Sanctuary, we shall joy in our God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

J.T. Mawson

ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURES SEARCH!

1. Asenath (Genesis 47:20)
2. Darius (Daniel 5:31)
3. Felix (Acts 24:24)

WHO MADE IT?

The Apollo 8 space mission in December, 1968, marked the first time that man had flown to the moon. While orbiting the moon, the crew made the famous “Christmas Eve broadcast,” a live television and radio event heard by an estimated one billion people. **While on the air, the astronauts read part of the account of creation from Genesis chapter one. Each of the three astronauts took turns, starting with Major William Anders reading, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” After Captain James Lovell took his turn, Colonel Frank Borman ended with “And God saw that it was good.”**

These three were the first men ever to see some of the wonders of the universe, and before a worldwide audience they gave credit to the One who made it all. He was the One who put the planets into their precise orbital motions, without which the calculations guiding the flight from the earth to the moon and back would have been impossible. During the trip back to earth, Bill Anders was asked who was flying the spacecraft. He said, “I think that Issac Newton is doing most of the driving right now.” Newton was the first to describe the laws of motion and gravity affecting objects in space.

The story is often told of how Newton had a skilled craftsman build him a scale model of our solar system which was then displayed on a large table in Newton’s home. Not only did the excellent workmanship simulate the various sizes of the planets and their relative proximities, but it was also a working model in which everything precisely rotated and orbited when a crank was turned.

One day while Newton was in his study, a friend came by who was a great scientist, but who was also an atheist. Examining the model with enthusiastic admiration, he exclaimed: “My! What an exquisite thing this is! Who made it?” Without looking up from his book, Sir Issac answered, “Nobody.” Stopping his inspection, the visitor turned and said: “Evidently you misunderstood my question. I asked who made this.” Newton, no doubt enjoying the chance to teach his friend a lesson, replied in a serious tone, “Nobody. What you see here just happened to assume the form it now has.” “You must think I’m a fool!” retorted the visitor. “Of course somebody made it, and he’s a genius. I want to know who he is.” Laying his book aside, Newton arose and laid a hand on his friend’s shoulder, saying, “This thing is but a puny imitation of a much grander system whose laws you know. I am not able to convince you that this mere toy is without a designer and maker. Yet you, as an atheist, profess to believe that the great original from which the design is taken has come into being without either designer or maker!” The atheist was not longer an atheist when he left that day.

The Lord Jesus has not only created the sun, moon, and stars – He has created you with a never-dying spirit and soul. The day is coming when our lives on earth will be over and “every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12). **Are you ready to meet your Creator? Come to Him now as a lost sinner, believing that the Lord Jesus Christ loves you and died on the cross to pay for the wages of your sin and to save you from eternal torment in hell.**

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John: 3:16)

Would you receive Him as your Lord and Savior today?