



# ***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,

**“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:23–29).**

There is no rest in the world for the Christian. There will always be something to disturb, perplex, or distress him; for we are living in a world that is under control of the devil and his angels.

But the Lord Jesus says, “I will give you rest.” He does so by enabling us to rely on His word, recognize His hand, submit to His will, and trust in His perfect work. He assures us that our sins are forgiven; that our persons are safe in His keeping; that His presence shall always be with us; and that HE will make all things to work together for the best. We can rest on His faithfulness; He has been tried and found faithful. We can rest on His love, for it knows not the shadow of a turn. We can rest on His power; it is ever engaged on our behalf. We can rest on His promises; it is ordered in all things and sure. We can rest on His blood; it speaks peace, pardon, and acceptance with God. We can rest at His feet; there we are safe and can never be injured. We cannot rest on our graces, on our comforts, on our friends, or on our possessions, but may we rest on Jesus. We should rest on Him with unshaken confidence and ardent love; for His promises are plain, His power is infinite, and His love passeth knowledge.

Praying that the Lord would use the articles in this issue to build you up on your most holy faith, that you might draw closer to Him during the summer month so you can grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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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***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"*

### PSALM 23!

#### **"The Lord Is My Shepherd"**

He knows His sheep.

He counts them and He calls them by name.

He goes before.

They follow as He leads, through flood or flame.

The Twenty-third Psalm unfolds before us the blessings of one who takes his journey, through this world, with the Lord Jesus as his Shepherd.

The Psalm is closely connected with the preceding Psalm, as well as the one that follows. All three Psalms are of outstanding beauty and value, seeing that in each one Christ is the great theme. Psalm 22 presents the Lord Jesus as the Holy Victim offering Himself without spot to God, on the cross, in order to meet the holiness of God and secure His sheep. Psalm 23 presents the Lord Jesus as the Shepherd leading His sheep through a wilderness world. Psalm 24 presents the Lord Jesus as the King—the LORD of hosts—bringing His people into the kingdom glory.

The Psalm opens with the great statement, "The LORD is my Shepherd." Every believer can say, "The Lord is my Savior"; but have we all definitely submitted to His leading, so that we can each say, "The LORD is my Shepherd"? He has told us that He is "the Shepherd"; but have we each told Him, Thou art "my Shepherd"? Have we not only accepted Him as our Savior who has died for us to save us from our sins, but also submitted to Him as our Shepherd to lead us home through all our difficulties?

Let us think for a moment of a flock of sheep without a shepherd. They are needy, foolish, weak, and timid creatures. If left to themselves to take their way through a wilderness scene, what would happen? Being hungry creatures, they would soon starve; being foolish, they would wander and lose their way; being weak, they would grow weary and

fall by the way; and being timid, they would flee before the wolf and be scattered.

In contrast, let us ask, what will happen if the sheep take their journey under the guidance of the shepherd? Now, if the sheep are hungry, the shepherd is there to guide them into green pastures; are they foolish, he is there to keep their wandering feet; are they weak, the shepherd is present to gently lead his sheep and carry the lambs; are they timid, he is in front to lead them through the rough valleys, and defend them from every foe.

Plainly, in a flock without the shepherd everything depends upon the sheep, and this must lead to disaster. It is equally plain, that if the shepherd goes before, and the sheep follow, it will mean a safe journey for the sheep with manifold blessing by the way.

This, indeed, is the picture that truly represents the journey of the Christian flock through this world; for does not the Lord, Himself, say that He is “the Shepherd of the sheep,” that “He calls His own sheep by name,” that “He goes before them, and the sheep follow; for they know His voice” (John 10:2–4).

The Twenty-third Psalm sets before us this blessedness of the Shepherd going before, and the sheep following. We, alas! in our self-confidence, may at times get in front of the Shepherd; or, growing careless, we may lag far behind. But granted the two conditions—that the Shepherd leads the way, and we follow—we can count upon the support of the Shepherd in every difficulty that we have to meet.

The Psalmist touches upon seven different circumstances that we may be called to face:

1. Our daily needs.
2. Our spiritual needs.
3. Our failure and dullness of soul.
4. The shadow of death.
5. The presence of enemies.
6. The daily round.
7. The prospect of eternity.

All these things may, in varied ways and at different times, cross our paths, and, if left to face them in our own strength, will surely

overwhelm us with dread and disaster. Nevertheless, with the Lord as our Shepherd, to lead the way, we can with confidence face the journey that leads to glory, in spite of the difficulties that may lie in the path.

As every blessing in the Psalm flows from the first great statement, “The LORD is my Shepherd,” we may very well preface each verse with these words, “The LORD is my Shepherd.”

First (v. 1), there are the daily needs of the body. How are they to be met? The Psalmist does not say, “I hold a good office, I shall not want”; or, “I have kind friends who will care for me, I shall not want”; or “I have ample means, I shall not want”; or “I have youth, and health, and abilities, I shall not want.”

In all these ways, and many others, the LORD may meet our wants, but of none of these means does the Psalmist speak. He looks beyond all second causes, and providential ways, and he sees the LORD; and with the LORD going before, and he himself following, he can say, “The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want.”

Secondly (v. 2), in the wilderness path there are not only temporal wants, but spiritual needs. For the Christian the world around is an empty wilderness. There is nothing in all its passing vanities to feed the soul. Its pastures are dry and barren, its waters, only waters of strife. If “the LORD is my Shepherd,” He will lead me into His green pastures and beside the still waters.

How quickly the pleasures of this world pall, even upon its votaries. The spiritual food provided by the Shepherd is ever fresh, for He leads into the “green pastures.” Moreover, the Shepherd not only feeds, but satisfies, for He makes His sheep to “lie down in green pastures.” No hungry sheep would lie down in the midst of plenty. It would first feed, and when full lie down. Furthermore, the Shepherd leads beside the still waters. The waters of the stream that make most noise and show, are ever where the rocks are most abundant and the waters shallow. The still waters are quiet but deep. The Shepherd can calm our souls and quench our spiritual thirst with the deep things of God far removed from the noisy and shallow strifes that occupy men, and too often distract the Christian.

Thirdly (v. 3), as we pass through this wilderness world, we may fail in following the Shepherd; and, apart from actual failure, we may grow

weariness in the way and dullness in our affections. Even so, if “the LORD is my Shepherd,” “He restores,” or “revives,” my soul. Let us, however, remember it is “He,” Himself, that “restores.” It almost seems, at times, as if we think that when we have grown weary of our wanderings, we can restore ourselves by our efforts and in our own time. It is not so. We can wander; He alone can restore. Naomi, restored from her wandering in the land of Moab, can say, “I went out,” but, she adds, “the LORD has brought me home again.” She says, as it were, “I did the going out, but the LORD did the bringing back.” Blessed be His Name, He can, and He does, restore. Were it not so, the people of God on earth would be little more than a great company of backsliders.

Moreover, He does not only restore, but having restored, He leads us into “the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” Alas! how often we may even in sincerity and zeal turn aside into paths of self-will, that are inconsistent with His Name, only to prove how little, in practice, we allow the LORD to lead us as our Shepherd. The path of righteousness, in which He leads, is a “narrow way” in which there is no room for the self-confidence of the flesh, and can only be trodden as we have the LORD as our Shepherd before us. Even so an Apostle found, when with real sincerity and zeal, and yet with great self-confidence, he said, “Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.”

Fourthly (v. 4), we have to face “the valley of the shadow of death.” Even if we are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, and have not personally to pass through death, yet, again and again, we have to face that dark valley as, one by one, our loved ones are taken from us. Then, in a wider sense, what is our passage through this world but a journey through the valley of the shadow of death? For, over all there sounds the toll of the passing bell.

Nevertheless, if the LORD is our Shepherd, we can say with the Psalmist, “I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me.” The Lord can say, “If a man keeps my saying, he shall never see death” (John 8:51). The Lord does not say, he will not pass through it, but he shall not see it. Those who stand round the deathbed of a dying saint may indeed see death, but the one that is actually stepping down into the dark valley sees JESUS. Even so, if we have to pass that way it is only passing “through.” And the journey through is very short; for is it not written,

“Absent from the body...present with the Lord”? And in that passage through the valley, not only is the Lord with us, but He is present with His rod and His staff—the rod to drive off every foe, the staff to support us in all our weakness.

Fifthly (v. 5), in this wilderness world we are surrounded by enemies that would rob us of the enjoyment of our blessings and hinder our spiritual progress. But the LORD is our Shepherd who prepares a feast for us in the very presence of our enemies. And not only so, He prepares His people for the feast, for He anoints the head with oil, and not only fills the cup, but makes it run over. He does a great deal more for us than ever we did for Him in the days of His flesh; for, though one of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him, and in wonderful grace the Lord sat down to meat in the Pharisee’s house, yet, He has to say, “My head with oil thou didst not anoint.”

Sixthly (v. 6), there is the daily path that we have to tread “all the days” of our lives. Each day of our life brings its ceaseless round of duties, difficulties, and circumstances, small and great. But if we follow the Shepherd, we shall find that “goodness and mercy” will follow us. Were we nearer the Lord, following hard after the Shepherd, should we not with clearer vision trace His hand in the little things of the daily life, and discover therein His goodness and mercy?

Seventhly, and lastly, looking beyond the days of our life into the great eternity that stretches beyond we see that if the LORD is our Shepherd, it is, not only to lead us through the wilderness, but, at last to bring us home to “dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” For the Christian it is the Father’s house; there to dwell beyond all bodily wants, with every spiritual longing met, where no failure can intrude, no hearts grow cold, no shadow of death can come, no enemy approach, but where, indeed, the cup will run over. “The days of my life” will end “in the house of the LORD forever.” In that great home gathering not one of His sheep will be missing. “Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost” (John 17:12). Long years ago, the saintly Rutherford wrote, “What think ye of His love? What of these feet that went up and down the world to seek His Father’s lost sheep, pierced with nails? The eyes that were oft lift up to heaven to God in prayer, wearied with tears? His head pierced with thorns? The face that is fairer than the sun, all maimed, and the hair pulled out of His cheeks? He



took shame and gave you glory. He took the curse, and gave you the blessing, He took death, and gave you life...As the Chief Shepherd, He shall make an account of all His lambs, and tell His Father, these be all My sheep. I went through woods and waters, and briers, and thorns, to gather them in, and My feet were pricked and My hands and My side pierced, ere I could get a grip of them; but now here they are.”

Remembering all that He has done for us in the past, when, as the Good Shepherd, He gave His life for the sheep; knowing all that He will yet do for us when He comes as the Chief Shepherd, we may look up into His face during our present wilderness journey and say,

“THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD.”

Hamilton Smith

## MEAT

*"Sanctify them by the truth"*

## HEBREWS 10

Our beloved Mr. J. N. Darby pointed out the three outstanding subjects of the chapter as:

- “The Will of God” (Hebrews 10:1–10),
- “The Word of Christ” (Hebrews 10:11–14), and
- “The Witness of the Holy Spirit” (Hebrews 10:15–18).

They all combine to prepare us for approach. There are three words in the first verse of the chapter that require consideration and will help to shew the great theme of this discourse.

They are: “Shadow,” “Image,” and “Perfection. “A shadow can only be caused by a substance. An image is a presentation. The word rendered “perfection” here really means “completion.” The whole “law” system was but a shadow, not the substance. Christ and the heavenly system of which He is the center form the substance. These heavenly spiritual things could not be presented in an earthly material order. Hence, completion could not be attained by an earthly material shadow. The weakness of the whole of the first order is demonstrated in the opening verse. If we keep these three things in mind, we will be prepared to transfer our thoughts from the shadow to the substance as seen in verse 7; from the material to the spiritual as seen in verse 9; and from imperfection to perfection as seen in verse 14.

Mention is made of the institution of animal sacrifice and the shedding of blood to deal with the question of sin. This, we are told, is a shadow. What then is the substance? It is the perfect work of Christ, counselled in eternity. This is clearly stated in verse 7: “In the volume of the book.” We must keep in mind that He did not die merely to fulfil the types. His death had been counselled in eternity, of this the various types were the shadow in time. If we think then that His death, counselled in eternity, was primary and as a result, in time, the offerings are brought in secondary, we can clearly understand why the whole law system was but a shadow! Then the imperfection of the first order is witnessed in this fact. Being repeated

every year proved that those who approached (J.N. Darby Translation) had never by these sacrifices been made perfect. If once they had been perfected, no more need of an offering would have arisen. Hence the shadow carried its own witness of imperfection, in that the offerings were constantly repeated. Yea, instead of witnessing that sins were put away, they repeatedly called to mind that sins were not put away. They constantly called sins to mind as stated in verse 3. The reason for this is clearly stated in verse 4: "For the blood of bulls and goats (is) incapable of taking away sins." Note the statement: "take away sins." This involves the work of Propitiation by Christ Himself! To effect this, it was necessary that the One who was the substance of all the shadows should come into the world in manhood.

It appears now that all the offerings under the Law gave no pleasure to God (v. 6). The reason was, they could not make man fit to come into the presence of God. But when He comes into the world in the body prepared for Him (Luke 1:35), we read, "Lo, I come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do O God thy will" (v. 7). His coming into the world was the fruit of Eternal Counsel. Writing in Scripture carries the thought of what is unalterable (see Luke 3:4; Rev. 21:27). Nothing in that book can be altered. The word "roll" here too is interesting. It is *kephalis* (see footnote in J.N. Darby) and means "a heading up" or "summing up." It would suggest that the subject matter of eternal Counsel is summed up in this, "Lo I come to do thy will, O God." Every detail of the will of God was counselled in eternity and Christ comes into the world to carry it to fruition. "He takes away the first that He may establish the second" (v. 9). The shadow is removed that the substance may abide. In chapter 9 we had mention made of a first and a second place, but in this verse, it is more the first and second order. No doubt the first order allowed man into the first place, but the second order has fitted man for the second place (i.e., inside the veil).

How wonderful to read next, "by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." He took that body to accomplish the will of God, and here we are told God had willed our sanctification. So, in coming into the world to do the will of God, we read here that He has done this by sanctifying a priestly company who are thereby fitted to enter the presence of God. So perfect has that one work been, that it has never needed to be

repeated. Having done the work, He “sat down in perpetuity” and as a result we are “perfected in perpetuity” (vv. 12–14). This perfection was never effected while the shadows were running their course, for sins were not put away. He has by one sacrifice settled the question forever. It has meant the sanctifying of a company, complete or fully furnished with all that they need, to fit them for the presence of God. It is to this perfect work, done once and for all, that the Holy Ghost bears witness. What a contrast in the two systems. The first brings sins to remembrance but the second says they are remembered no more. Brought to remembrance in the first because they had not been put away. Remembered no more in the second because they have been put away (v. 17). As year succeeded year under the old order, the total of sins would be increasing, for the past year’s sins had not been put away. Remembered afresh every year as the total increased, till at last the sum total was remembered for the last time, on the head of Christ at the Cross but this time, they were put away. Now, as a result, they will be remembered no more. It is to this fact that the Holy Spirit bears witness, following the perfect work of Christ on the Cross. It was the “will of God” that they should be put away. “The work of Christ” has put them away. “The witness of the Holy Spirit” to us would have in view, our acceptance of it by faith. Faith on our side is the first step to approach into the presence of God (v. 22).

We now come to the exhortation to “draw near” (v. 22). Why should we stay away? all that would keep us from God has been removed by the death of Christ, in order that with holy boldness, we can approach the presence of God. On the one hand His blood has fitted us to go in, and on the other, it has met the claims of God. We are fit to go there, and God in His righteous and holy character can have us there. Christ has dedicated that way for us by going in, having become priest by His own blood. The way is said to be “through the veil, that is, His flesh,” referring to His Manhood. It is by becoming man He has opened the way for us into the presence of God. Both revelation and approach are complete in Him. God was revealed in Him and as a consequence, we go to God in the light of that revelation, in Him. He is the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. God coming out in revelation in Him is seen typically in the rending of the veil of the Temple when He died. Our going in to God is seen more in the veil of the Tabernacle (Hebrews 9:3). That is the building before us in this epistle, not the Temple. We have no record of the veil of the

Tabernacle being rent! It is Christ in manhood, whether coming from God as Apostle or going to God as High Priest. We must of course free our minds from the material and get the spiritual import as seen in Christ Himself. Entering the Holiest means that we are consciously in the presence of God in the faith of our souls—in the presence of the God who has been perfectly revealed in His Son. When we get there, we find ourselves in company with the Great Priest over the House of God. In answer to Aaron and his sons on the day of consecration, we have Christ and the Assembly in the blessing of the “Heavenly Calling” and in function as the new spiritual company, inside the veil. High or Chief Priest, would be relative to the company but Great Priest, would be absolute, because of Who He is. The first would tell us of His infinite grace in associating us with Himself but the second would preserve His Personal dignity for He is the “Son, perfected for evermore.”

Here then are the inducements we have to encourage us to draw near to God. The blood of Jesus has met the claims of God and put away our sins. He has opened up as a consequence a new and living way by going in to God. By becoming man, He has perfectly revealed God as the Apostle and, still in Manhood, He has gone into God as High Priest. Through that revelation we can know God, and now in Him as the fruit of His work we can go to God. Then when we approach in the faith of our souls, we are conscious of being in His company as the Great Priest over the House of God. We join Him there as the Minister of the Sanctuary and He sustains us and leads in the worship of God.

Now we have the exhortation, “Let us approach with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, sprinkled as to our hearts from a wicked conscience, and washed as to our body with pure water.” In referring once again to Aaron and his sons, we learn that they were washed in water and then sprinkled with blood (Exodus 29:4, 29). The water for cleansing and the blood for expiation. The washing with water would give us a “true heart” as dealing with our state. The sprinkling with blood would give us “full assurance of faith” as dealing with our guilt. The word here translated “pure” is *katharos*, and really means clean. A concordance will show that the word for purge in Hebrews 9:14; 10:2, is the same as that used here for “pure.” In each case it means “clean.” The twofold result is that we have a clean heart and a

clean conscience. The first would give us a new state as the result of the washing by water, that is, morally cleansed by the word. The second gives us a clean conscience as believing in the precious blood of Christ. The way has been opened up on the divine side by Christ making God known and going in to God. We are fitted on our side to lay hold of the privilege as having a clean heart and a clean conscience. Everything for God and for us has been done by Christ, who has thus accomplished the will of God in securing a company to approach the sanctuary to take up His praise and worship.

May we know what it is to join Christ as the Great Priest over the House of God and as the Minister of the Sanctuary, that under His direction, as associated with Him in the presence of God, He might lead out our hearts in praise and worship for the pleasure of His God and Father.

G. Davison

### **SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!**

1. Who was the first man mentioned in the Bible to have a dream?
2. What prophet was exiled in Egypt with the people that he told not to go there?
3. Who was the ruler of the synagogue in Corinth?

## EXERCISE

*"Exercise thyself unto piety"*

### **"FEAR HATH TORMENT"**

“And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? And David laid up these words in his heart and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. And he changed his behavior before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house? David therefore departed thence and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father’s house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men” (1 Samuel 21:10–22:2).

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Corinthians 10:11).

It is obvious that fear dominates the time in which we live. In the last few months, we can see how fear is paralyzing mankind, but worse yet how it is impacting true believers who, until just a few months ago, boasted in how they trusted in God.

One of the powerful attributes of the Scripture is that it is living and applicable to every period of our lives. The historical books are extremely helpful because they bring before us historical facts that happened to real people; for it is clear that Scripture is not theoretical or limited in its impact to a certain time in history.

David is well known to be one of the bravest men that ever lived. The story in 1 Samuel 17 shows clearly his valiant spirit, although to the

eyes of men he was no match to Goliath. The secret of his courage was not a careless spirit, but he had the right estimate of Goliath (an uncircumcised Philistine) and he also had the right perspective of the power of the living God. And to the amazement of all around, this young man who had faith in the living God, overcame the fear that characterized the whole army of Israel and brought victory and gave courage to those around him. But it is interesting that a few chapters later we see the same David behaving in the opposite way.

And I always wondered, Why? Could it be that the spirit of fear had taken hold of his heart? Let us before the Lord examine that and let us also examine our own hearts.

### **The Fear of Saul**

First, his fear of Saul caused him to forget what God had promised him: that he would have the throne, which meant that God would preserve him until He fulfilled His promise, for God is not a man that He should lie. That fear made him leave his inheritance and seek protection from the Philistines. When fear likewise governs our hearts, we also will lose sight of our inheritance and all His promises never to leave us or forsake us will diminish in our eyes. The Scripture says that the Lord is our inheritance. Let us always remember that the Lord is our Shield.

### **The Fear of Achish**

Then, the fear of Achish, the king of the Philistines. It is hard to believe that the brave David who acted in all dignity and who trusted God in front of Goliath would behave as he did in front of Achish. If David in his time of fear acted that way, we are also in danger that we will act as mad men when we lose sight of the Lord and seek to find protection in the world, its methods, its advice, and its point of view. How sad that sight was for David's men as they watched their leader behave in such a way because he was concerned and feared for his safety, forgetting the dignity that should characterize those who fear the Lord, seek His hand of protection, and trust Him in all of their circumstances.

But thank God that the story did not end there. David realized that his place of safety was in the cave of Adullam, which means "testimony for them." Although the palace of Achish was perhaps more comfortable than the cave of Adullam, in that cave he learned afresh the strength and protection of the Lord, for he wrote in Psalm 56:11 and in Psalm 34 about his learning experiences there. But just as fear



is contagious, so is courage: In the cave of Adullam, there were those who were attracted to David despite their state—in stress, in debt, and discontented. Yet they found with David they would be in safe keeping even in the discomfort of the cave. That is a testimony to all who want to overcome fear. For out of the cave of Adullam went the three mighty men, putting their lives in danger to satisfy the longing desire of their lord David and to bring him a cup of water to refresh his heart. Fear is gone (1 Chronicles 11:15–19).

### **The Fear of death**

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:14–15).

In the New Testament, the Spirit of God tells us that one of the most fearful weapons in Satan’s arsenal is the fear of death, for it keeps men in bondage. After all, the Scripture tells us that death is the “king of terror,” and today Satan roars as a lion to put fear in our hearts. But today we have more than David ever had. We have the complete work of Christ, Who destroyed him who has the power of death, the devil (Hebrews 2:14–15), and delivered us from the fear of death. For death, which the apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:26 is the last enemy, has its sting taken away, and it death become a means to transport us to Paradise if the Lord has not come yet for His own.

If David did not have that knowledge, neither was he indwelled by the Holy Spirit, how should we who have all these resources react to the fear at the present time? Saul, a type of man in the flesh, or the flesh in us, brings fear and makes us lose sight of our Christian inheritance, which includes the promise of the protection of the Lord. Fear from the Philistines around us with their news media and so-called subject matter experts will cause us to behave in an undignified way and bring shame upon the name of the Christ for whom we are called.

But those who are the family of God, loved by the Father and by the Son and indwelled by the Holy Spirit, would live in the circle of divine love and say: “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love” (1 John 4:18).

Indeed, fear is an immensely powerful emotion, and John in his epistle tells us that it torments, but perfect love casts out fear. Let us learn from these clear lessons in the Word of God, let us take courage, let us walk in the dignity of the sons of God, and let us not fear their fear, but set up Christ as Lord in our hearts and walk in the light of that knowledge.

The world is watching how Christians who claim, “Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me,” are walking in the midst of today’s confusion and fear caused by Covid 19.

Do we have something the unbelievers in Christ do not have? We do have the Lord and with Him we have the only safety and security any one can obtain.

We should offer that to a world that is full of fear and anxiety and that are heading to eternity in the lake of fire; they need our Lord Jesus and His great Salvation. For this is the only God-given remedy that will remove fear from hearts of the children of men today. But they will not accept that from us until they see a practical expression of it in us and the reality that we live what we believe and what we preach.

The world today and its experts are concerned only about man’s body. They tell us what to do and how to be protected, though they change their mind and advice and recommendations and mandates every day.

Even many of these experts admit that they do not know what the best mean of protection. The expressions used today by experts—and almost everyone—are “I do not know” and “we do not know.” How many times, dear believers, have you heard that?

In contrast, how wonderful to hear one in a most dire condition, in a Roman jail, no clean air, no sanitary conditions, and with the sentence of death hanging over his head saying, “For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day” (2 Timothy 1:12).

The dignity, the confidence, the trust in the Lord, and the faith in Him that belongs to the heart of those that love Him cannot be in words only, for theoretical Christianity has no value to anyone. Let us join the recovered David, who learned his lessons in the school of God and

recorded them to us by the Spirit of God in Psalm 34 and 56, and let us say with him:

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee...In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.” (Psalm 56:3, 11).

“I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears” (Psalm 34:4).

“O think not of this world of woe.  
Though subject still to grief;  
But seek your portion there to know,  
For this will give relief.  
Aye trust, forever trust in God,  
For every promise given;  
And dwell with Him through Jesus’s blood,  
Within the veil of heaven.”

E.S. Nashed

## REST

*“Shall I not seek rest for thee that it may be well with thee?”*

### *“AS SORROWFUL, YET ALWAYS REJOICING”*

These words, written by the apostle Paul in Second Corinthians 6:10, must be an enigma to the men of this world, for in natural things when sorrow enters the human heart its joy departs. Though the Christian knows the joys and sorrows that are natural to men, he also has a divine joy of which the men of this world know nothing, and he also has sorrows that cannot be known to those who have not the divine nature that God has given to His children. The apostle was speaking for himself and his fellow servants when he uttered these words, but in measure they also belong to all the saints of God, and perfectly express what belonged to the Son of God in Manhood.

#### **The Son of God**

Long before the Lord Jesus came into the world it had been written of Him by the prophet, “He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). As we retrace the steps of the Lord Jesus on earth, we see how these words were fulfilled. Although God’s Son, He was a perfect Man, knowing experimentally all the sorrows that belonged to men—the sorrows of bereavement, poverty, hunger, misunderstanding, and all that a perfect, sinless Man could feel in natural things. Besides, He had sorrows that lay outside of that which was natural because of Who He was, and on account of the work He had come to do.

What sorrow must have filled the heart of the Son of God in seeing the conditions of man in sin, and of being the Object of the reproaches of those who were hardened in sin against the God Who had surrounded them with His mercies. When the Lord Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, there was much more than human sorrow in His tears. The heart of the blessed Lord felt the ravages of sin, evinced in the death of Lazarus, as no other could ever feel them. His tears expressed a character and depth of sorrow that were His own, for He was both God and Man. The rejection of His words and works from God His Father, and His own rejection by His people Israel, brought deepest sorrow to Him, causing Him to weep over Jerusalem.

In Luke 10:21, as in Matthew 11:21, 26, the Lord pronounced woes upon the cities in which His mighty works had been done. These favored cities had closed their doors upon the One Who had brought down to them the grace of heaven, and with deepest sorrow in His heart the Lord is compelled to speak of the judgment that awaited them because of their unbelief. Yet in the moment of deepest sorrow it is recorded by the Spirit of God, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Here we learn the secret of the Son's joy. If there was sorrow because of what His people Israel had done in rejecting Him and His works, He could rejoice in the Father and in the Father's will. If Israel closed its door against Him, the Son saw another door opened by the Father into which others would enter, and in this there would be greater glory for the Father and greater joy for His heart. The wise and prudent of Israel, the leaders of the people, knew nothing of the secret counsels of the Father for the blessing of men, but those who were despised by the great of earth, the humble disciples of the Lord, had from the Son the wondrous knowledge of the Father and of His counsels of eternal love.

With the deep, deep sorrows of Gethsemane and the cross before Him, the Lord said to His disciples, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11). This is indeed wonderful. So soon there was to be the fulfilment of the words of Jeremiah's Lamentations (1:12), "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow," yet the Lord speaks to His disciples of His joy. His sorrows were because of His devotedness to His Father, and on account of His great love for His own; but His joy was found in the Father and in the finishing of the work He had given Him to do.

### **The Apostle Paul**

No servant of the Lord entered into the sorrows of his Master more than Paul. We must never forget that the Lord had sorrows that were peculiarly His own, but there were sorrows into which His own can enter, and which they can share, though the depth and intensity of them can never be known by us. As a special vessel in the service of the Lord, the apostle Paul had peculiar sufferings, even as he writes in

Colossians 1:24, “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body’s sake, which is the church.”

What Paul suffered is found in measure in 2 Corinthians 11, though much of what he passed through for Christ and His church was endured after this was written. At the close of the long list of sufferings mentioned, Paul adds, “Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches” (2 Corinthians 11:28). If there was sorrow in the apostle’s heart because of the rejection of his testimony to Christ by many, and especially by his fellow-countrymen who unweariedly assailed him, how much deeper was his sorrow on account of that which passed in the churches for which he cared.

How great was Paul’s sorrow at the state of the Corinthian assembly, with the entry of unjudged moral evil, with its divisions, with the dishonor to the Lord’s Name when they gathered together, and with the evil teaching that denied the truth of the resurrection. He wrote in his Second Epistle, “I wrote this same unto you...out of much affliction and anguish of heart...with many tears” (2 Corinthians 2:3,4), and had no rest in his spirit till Titus returned with the news that his first epistle had been received in repentance. The danger in which the saints of Galatia were found must also have brought much suffering to the apostle, when it wrung from his heart the solemn words, “From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus” (Galatians 6:17).

Yet this same servant of the Lord, who knew so much of sorrow, wrote so much of joy in his epistle to the saints at Philippi. When he prayed for these saints, he made his request “with joy” (Philippians 1:4); and even regarding his dying for Christ, he could write, “Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all” (Philippians 2:17). Paul found His joy in the Lord, even as he exhorted the saints, “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord” (Philippians 3:1); but he also found joy in the saints when they were going on well in the things of the Lord (Philippians 2:2; 4: 1).

### **The Saints of God**

The saints of God have very much in which to find their joy. We have seen how the apostle Paul exhorts the saints to rejoice in the Lord, and

as we contemplate Him in His Person, in His love and grace, in His glory, there is so much in which to rejoice. The apostle Peter also refers to joy when he writes of the “salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice” (1 Peter 1:5–6). Whatever the circumstances and conditions of life through which we are called to pass, the end is sure: We shall be saved out of this world to share the glory of Christ, and be His companions for ever in the Father’s house.

Peter then adds, “Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:6–7). For the saints there may be the need of manifold trials, trials of persecution for Christ’s sake, trials for righteousness’ sake, and the trials that are common to men. In earlier days, as in some parts of the world now, the saints of God know what it is to suffer for Christ’s sake, but all is carefully watched over by Him Who loves His own with an infinite love.

In Hebrews 12 we learn that the sorrows we experience in trial come from a loving Father. He may allow the testing to come through evil men, or from the enemy as in the case of Job; but whatever the agent, we can take all from the loving hand of our Father. It is His desire to make us like Himself, to produce the features of Christ in us, and to this end He chastens. There may be the need of chastisement, but even then God uses it for purifying, so that we may be partakers of His holiness, and that there might be produced the peaceable fruits of righteousness in those He loves. The dross is separated from the precious gold in the furnace, and in the trials of faith the things of the flesh that hinder the work of faith are taken away.

Whatever the sorrows through which the saints pass, God has before Him His glory and their greatest good, and also the place that we are to share with Christ in the day of His glory. Peter can therefore speak of the trial of faith being in view of “praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” When Christ appears in glory, the saints will be with Him, and what God has wrought in us will be displayed in that day.

Christ Himself should ever be before us while we pass through the sorrows that trial brings; so Peter continues, “Whom having not seen,

ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (v. 8). This is indeed wonderful, something beyond the knowledge of man after the flesh. Though having deepest trials on earth, the saint, like his Master, can be in the enjoyment of that which belongs to heaven. This is the joy of which the Lord spoke to His disciples in John 15:11, His own joy shared with His own.

The apostle John joins with Paul and Peter in speaking of the joy that God has given us. In his First Epistle, we read of the eternal life that has been manifested in the Son of God, and of the fellowship into which God in His great love has brought us, that which we share with all the saints, all in God’s family, communion with each other in that which the Son has made known, and fellowship with the Father and the Son. The object of all this is that “your joy may be full” (1 John 1:1–4).

Soon all our sorrows will be over, and we shall enter into a scene where all is unbroken joy; and for this we wait. How blessed it is to know that the sorrow is not sent to deprive us of divine joy, but rather to wean us from that which would hinder our enjoyment of it, and to deepen our appreciation of the things that the Son of God has come to reveal to us.

R.

### **ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURE SEARCH!**

1. Abimelech (Genesis 20:3)
2. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 43:5–7)
3. Crispus (Acts 18:8)



## GREAT ADAMIC PANDEMIC

As I write these words, the novel coronavirus/COVID-19 is spreading like wildfire across the globe. By the time you read these words I hope the worst is over, and this virus turns out to be less deadly than expected. This is a terrible situation, but there have been many similar outbreaks in history.

In the 1300's the "Black Plague" killed 75-200 million people. Estimates are that between 30% and 60% of Europe's population died from it. In 1918-1920 the "Spanish Flu" devastated an already war-weary world. Some 500 million people were infected, and 17-50 million died. In 2009-2010 the H1N1 "Swine Flu" infected between 700 million and 1.4 billion people. Between 150,000-600,000 of the infected people died.

However, each of these plagues pales in comparison to the greatest scourge to ever impact the human race, the "Great Adamic Pandemic," spoken of in the Bible.

### **THE EXTENT OF THE INFECTION**

Sin, the "Great Adamic Pandemic," affects everyone. Scripture says, "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23). Adam and Eve sinned. They disobeyed God and their fellowship with God was broken (Genesis 3). Every son of Adam and daughter of Eve who has ever lived has inherited that fallen sinful nature. We are sinners by inheritance and by choice. Our individual sins vary, but the "sin issue" goes far beyond the seriousness of specific sins. Every one of us is born with a sin nature, a pre-disposition to sin. Does any parent have to teach their child to disobey? No, disobedience comes naturally.

### **THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE INFECTION**

Sin has consequences. Theologians speak of the "Seven Deadly Sins"—the "PEGLAWS"—Pride, Envy, Gluttony, Lust, Avarice, Wrath, Sloth. Yet, in reality, every sin is deadly. Romans 6:23 states, "*For the wages of sin is death.*" The "Great Adamic Pandemic" is 100% fatal, no exceptions! Death is a reality, but few people take the time to consider it biblically. We are aware of *physical death*, the separation of a person's soul from the body. Even those who survive this new coronavirus/COVID-19 will experience physical death at some point. The Bible says there is another far more serious death, *spiritual death*, the separation of a person's soul from God for all eternity.

In 1546 the reformer Martin Luther died. Luther had written these words inside the cover of his Bible:

*“Born once, die twice.  
Born twice, die once.”*

Let’s “unpack” Luther’s statement. It means:

1. Anyone who has only been born once (born physically) but *not* born spiritually (“born again,” see John 3:3) will experience both physical and spiritual death.
2. Those who have been born twice (born physically *and* born spiritually) will only experience physical death. They will *never* experience spiritual death.

### **THE CURE FOR THE INFECTION**

During the “Black Plague” of the 1300’s, people were desperate for a cure. They did not understand germ theory, or how the plague was transmitted from rats to fleas to humans. Therefore, their attempts to treat the disease were useless. By contrast, the “Great Adamic Pandemic” has a cure. Romans 6:23 says the wages (payment) for sin is death. The verse goes on to say, *“but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

You and I do not deserve the cure for the “Great Adamic Pandemic.” We cannot earn it. We cannot buy it. God cannot be bribed or bought off. Because God loves us, He provides salvation freely, as a gift. He sent His Son, Jesus, to pay our sin debt on the cross. John 3:16 says, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

A cure for the coronavirus/COVID-19 will be found. How foolish if someone dying from that virus is offered the cure but refuses to take it?

Regarding the “Great Adamic Pandemic,” someone has said:

*“Life is short, Death is sure;  
Sin the cause, Christ the cure.”*

Don’t refuse sin’s cure.

Don’t reject God’s gift of eternal life, which only Jesus Christ can provide.

Admit your sin to God. Accept His gift. Trust Christ alone for Salvation. It’s the only way to survive the “Great Adamic Pandemic.”

D.E.B