



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,

“Have an outline of sound words, which words thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Keep, by the Holy Ghost which dwells in us, the good deposit entrusted.”

2 Tim. 1:13, 14

With this commandment of the apostle Paul and with a heart full of thanksgiving and gratitude to our Lord Jesus Christ, I would like to introduce you to your new magazine.

“Toward the Mark” is a result of a deep exercise of heart and of much prayer to provide food and help for young people. Although we recognize that we only have five barley loaves and two fishes, we know that in the Master’s hands it will be blessed and multiplied to feed the multitude.

I would welcome your questions to be addressed in upcoming issues in our question and answer section. I also would like to acknowledge the labor of love of those who have helped in the editing of this magazine. May the Lord reward their hard work and labor of love .

Please continue to pray that through this magazine young people will be built up, edified and challenged in their Christian walk here below.

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 Mr. J.N.Darby translation.*

MILK

The truth shall make you free

SALVATION

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation:
which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and
was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him?
Hebrews 2:3*

Salvation is one of the great themes of the Bible, the Word of God. **SOS** (save our souls) is the distress signal used when there is danger of people losing their lives. Adam's race, lost and perishing, is in need of salvation. Joseph was the first person to speak of saving lives. When he saved his brethren from starvation, he said, "God did send me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth and to save you alive by a great deliverance," Genesis 45:7.

We have many examples in the Old Testament of how God saved His people from their enemies and other dangers.

However, this great salvation we have before us means more than rescuing people from physical danger.

The very first chapter of the New Testament speaks of the Lord Jesus, "He shall save His people from their sins," Matthew 1:21. This at once lifts the whole matter up to a much higher platform. Here we have God's mighty intervention on behalf of man, for we read that "the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost," Luke 19:10. The announcement of that mighty deliverance is called "the gospel of our salvation," Eph. 1:13. This salvation is so great because of its cost, the life of the Lord Jesus. It reveals the love of God to mankind. It is so great because of its scope, which reaches to all and covers the past, the present and the future. It is so great because it saves not only from the penalty and power of sin, but also from the presence of sin.

Why does man need salvation?

Man is a sinner! The Word of God makes it very clear that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23. Man disobeyed God and as a result death came in. The Word of God is very clear. "The wages of sin is death," Romans 6:23. Therefore, as those that are lost and perishing, we need salvation.

Now we must understand that man is not a sinner because he does sinful things, but he does sinful things because he is a sinner; that is what man is by nature.

In the court of God, we stand convicted of our sins. Sin is a taskmaster and, as a dark cloud, shuts us out from the presence of God, (Genesis 3:23).

Man is spiritually lost because sin separates us from God.

No one can argue that he is good. Who is good? Can we say that a man that commits one sin a day is a good man? If a man breaks one law of his country each day for ten years, can we call a man that commits 3,650 crimes in ten years of his life a good citizen?

We must recognize ourselves as lost and in danger of perishing. God's salvation is a deliverance from every peril that could possibly threaten us - whether in the past, the present or the future. Salvation is a term carrying the thought of deliverance from peril, and since sin lies at the root of every peril threatening us, God in His grace provides salvation for us.

What did God do to save us?

God, who created man, knows that man is unable and incapable of saving himself. So God, in His love and grace toward mankind, provided the Savior, the Son of His love, one who is equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Savior was promised (Gen. 3:15; Isaiah 43:11; 49:6,25; 59:16; 61:1; 63:5,9). In

the New Testament this Savior was introduced: ...“thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins,” Matthew 1:21.

This Savior is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.

How is He able and capable to deal with the matter of sin (that separates us from God) and rescue us from eternal death? The only way was for Him to become a man just like us, “...yet without sin,” Heb. 4:15. (In Him is no sin, 1 John 3:5, He did no sin, 1 Pet. 2:22, He knew no sin, 2 Cor. 5:21.) Although He became man, He never gave up His Deity. He is qualified to save us because He was God and sinless man in one person. Because the wages of sin is death, He had to take my place and die for my sin.

The Lord Jesus Himself said, “Greater love has no man than this that a man lay down His life for His friends,” John 15:13. Because He loves us, He was willing to take our place in death to pay the penalty of our sin. The Lord Jesus was then buried, raised from among the dead on the third day, and now He lives in Heaven providing everything for your rescue. He is waiting for your cry of SOS.

The question now is how can I obtain this salvation?

We must first acknowledge that we cannot save ourselves, then we need to accept our sinful condition, and finally believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work.

In the Bible we have a man who sent his SOS. He cried, “What must I do to be saved?” The answer was, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,” Acts 16:30,31. The salvation we are speaking about is eternal. Once you are saved you are saved forever! You never lose your salvation because it is not dependent on you. Just as you cannot save yourself, neither can you keep yourself. The Lord died to save us and now He lives to keep us - He said, *“I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand,”* John 10:28, 29.

Present salvation or salvation from the power of sin:

Salvation may be spoken of as a past and complete thing, so that believers can speak of themselves as those “which are saved,” 1 Cor. 1:18. So when we speak of ourselves as saved, the emphasis seems mainly that once we were trapped in every kind of evil and defilement, but now we are rescued from it all (Titus 3:3-5). Although we can speak of God as the One who “hath saved us,” 2 Tim. 1:9, we still live in a world that is full of seductions, with treacherous flesh within and with Satan, the enemy of our souls, without. Therefore, we need to be saved daily. When God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt and they set off on their journey to the Promised Land, there was no doubt that they were saved; they came safely out of the land of Egypt and passed through the Red Sea. But the journey ahead of them was very dangerous; therefore, they were in need of daily salvation. So God ordered Moses to build the Tabernacle, a tent of meeting, where God was present in the midst of His people.

In the Tabernacle, the high priest's job was to represent the people before the presence of God. For us, the Lord Jesus is our great High Priest.

After His death, burial and resurrection, He returned to Heaven and there He lives forever. From there, “*He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them,*” Hebrews 7:25. The present salvation, that we need and receive as believers, is based upon the death of Christ, but it actually reaches us by His priestly activities on our behalf. As He lives for us on high, we are being “*saved by His life,*” Romans 5:10. In order to enjoy this practical, everyday salvation, we are granted the instruction furnished by the Word of God. The Word of God is able to make us “*wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,*” 2 Tim. 3:15, 16. These verses speak of scripture being profitable not only for teaching, but also “*for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*”

There are many warnings and instructions for us; if we heed them, we shall be saved from all snares and dangers. We are saved daily from the power of sin because the Lord Jesus, as our High Priest, is interceding

for us. Putting the Word of God into practice in our lives through faith and obedience, by the help of the Holy Spirit, we experience God's present salvation.

Salvation from the presence of sin:

This is our bright future. The great salvation is, as we have said, both full and complete. It has the idea of saving us from this evil place and bringing us safely home. The Lord Jesus spoke about saving the lost sheep and bringing him home. The Lord promises us, "I go to prepare a place for you and I will come again to take you to the Father's house," John 14:1-3.

It is our hope, for we look for the Savior "...who shall change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body," Phil. 3:20-21. Now we are waiting for Him to appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation (Heb. 9:28).

The last act of the salvation of the Lord Jesus on our behalf involves the raising of the dead in Christ and changing the bodies of those who are still alive. The Bible teaches that "...we shall not all die, but we shall all be changed," 1 Cor. 15:51. The final part of salvation depends altogether upon the crowning act of mercy that will reach us; the last delivering act of the Lord Jesus on

our behalf. It will involve the raising of dead saints and the catching away of living saints before the full storm of God's wrath breaks on earth. Then the whole heavenly company will be gathered together and given bodies of glory like His own glorious body, and will enter the Father's house.

God's salvation is comprehensive! It deals with our sin and separation from God. It is an eternal salvation - once we are saved we cannot be lost. God also provides us with the power to overcome the power of sin. Finally, Christ is coming again soon to save us from the presence of sin, change us unto His likeness and take us to Heaven. What a great salvation!

E.S.N.

Meat

Sanctify them by the truth

THE PLACE

The question was asked in a national survey: “Why do you attend the church you do?” The answers were very interesting. It seems many people go to churches because it suits them, it is convenient, their family has always gone there or because it is where their friends are.

In Exodus 20, we read that God desired to have a place, even in the wilderness, for Him to dwell and be remembered. In Exodus 29, we see that God determines this place is in the midst of the camp. This is where the tent of meeting was found, and there God met with His people on the basis of the burnt offering. But in Deuteronomy 12, with the wilderness journey virtually over, the people find themselves on the fringe of the land. In the land there is not to be a camp.

The question arose, “Where in the land will this place be?” Where could they serve the Lord in the Promised Land?

Where is the place He would cause His name to dwell? In this important chapter of Deuteronomy the Lord gives instruction as to where they could come together. He makes it clear that in the Promised Land there is one place for worship. There are many features of this place of worship that correspond to what is revealed in the New Testament. It is mentioned 14 times in Exodus 12-16 that this place is chosen by the Lord, and six of those 14 times are found in chapter 12. This is most essential. It was not up to the people to choose the place. They could not go into the land, look around, and choose the most suitable place to come together. It was the Lord who had to choose this place; it was not up to man. How important this principle is for us today.

Many dear and well-intentioned Christians fail to follow this principle; they come together using human institutions and organizing who will preach, and so, end up eating in their own gate,(verse 17). Not all “eating in our own gate” is wrong; certain things may be taken up privately. However, when it comes to the place of gathering, and

where the Lord chooses to place His name (to dwell among His own people) it cannot be according to our own ideas. This is very important in a practical way. Many people ask this question: "Where should I go on Sunday?" How easy it is to give a street address and a town name. But the Lord never does that. The answer is to search the New Testament and read it from beginning to end; look for everything the Lord says about how He wants His people to gather in His name, and where He chooses to be in the midst; then find that place.

The next question is, are there Christians who take heed to those principles? The important thing is to find that place the Lord clearly describes in His word (verse 5). God did not say that this place would be Jerusalem; He said: "you have to seek it." You have to search for it. It took Israel 400 years for them to find the place, since they were not looking very diligently.

It is good to note that the name the Lord causes to dwell among His people in the New Testament is the name of the Lord Jesus. We gather to His name (Matthew 18:20). Also, we have the name of the Father. "For by one spirit we have access to the Father," Ephesians 2:18. It is

important to see that obedience is most vital. We find in Deuteronomy 11 the proper motive behind obedience. Verse 1 states, "therefore love the Lord your God and keep His commandments;" verse 13, "...to love the Lord your God and serve Him with all your heart;" verse 22, "to love the Lord your God and walk in all His ways." These are the real reasons behind seeking. We should have a love for this place where the Lord is in the midst of His own. Therefore, if we really love the Lord, the first thing we seek after is the place where He chooses to place His name.

In Psalm 132:5, one gets the idea of seeking; David wants to find a place for the Lord, the mighty one of Jacob. Please note that David did not look for this place when he became king. When he was an old man, he said, "Behold we heard of it in Ephrathah," verse 6. He was in EPHRATHAH not when he was a king, but when he was a young man with the sheep. There are many things that young people think about: What job will I have? Where will I go to school? What will I do in the future? Some might even be active in preaching the gospel. But one would like you to have the love David had when he

was a young man. This amazing young man was contemplating God's dwelling place.

Young people should be thinking the same today. Where is the Lord dwelling in the midst of His people? In Psalm 132, David is referring to the ark. The ark had been hidden in the house of Abinadab for 20 years. Apparently no one cared and all had forgotten about the ark. But there was a young man in the field with the sheep and he cared. He knew that it was not the right place for the Lord to be, because the ark was the representation of His presence among His people. He was a young man who never guessed he would be king. He cared about the ark and wanted to find the proper dwelling place for the Lord. He was seeking for it.

The next question is, where did he find it?

When he became King and conquered Jerusalem, he did not know this was the place God had chosen. 1 Chronicles 21 makes it clear that this was a very humiliating time; a time of confusion.

Today is a similar time - a time of ecclesiastical confusion. In David's time there was a plague from the

Lord; today there is a plague in Christendom - a plague of our sinful condition. In verse 28, David saw that the Lord answered him from the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and he sacrificed there. In 1 Chronicles 22:1, and in 2 Chronicles 3: 1, one finds the answer to Deuteronomy 12. It took 400 years to find that answer (1 Kings 6). One hopes it does not take you so long to find the place David referred to as the house of the Lord God. It was only a threshing floor, yet he knew this was the answer.

"This is the house of the Lord and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel." One sees the basis for this place in Exodus 29, with the burnt offering; the basis now is the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross in a state of humiliation. This is a most important lesson for us. To go outside the camp is very humiliating, because it means a condemnation of much of what we see in Christendom.

In Matthew 18:20, we read, “For where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them.” We find:

- 1- the divine place (where)
- 2- the divine number (2 or 3)
- 3- the divine center (His Name) where his rights and authority are maintained.

In Luke 22, we follow the man carrying the pitcher of water (the Holy Spirit of God applying the Word of God). He gives direction to the place of gathering in the upper room where the Lord finds a resting place among His own. In John 1, the Lord asks the two disciples, “What seek ye?” They pass the test; they were not seeking a thing, they asked, “Where abidest thou?”

In the Song of Songs chapter 1:7, there is a similar question, “Where do you feed your flock?” She mentions “the flock of your companion,” who are the friends of her beloved. There are many Christians who love the Lord but have their own flocks. However, she did not want to be with any flock; she had only one interest - where you

feed your flock. One does not want to wander around from one place to another.

Do I want to be where He is? There is no street or house number. “Come and see,” if you do not know, you should. Do not follow the footsteps of the flock, follow the man with the water pitcher. Let us get hold of that. Let us look for that place.

Let us get a sight of the One that makes this place so precious. It is not just any place. There is only one place where the Lord is pleased to make His name DWELL.

E.S.N.

Honey

How sweet are thy words unto my taste!

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Did you know?

The Bible has 66 books. There are 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. It has 1,189 chapters: 929 in the Old Testament and 260 in the New Testament. It has about 31,193 verses: 23,325 in the Old Testament and 7,058 in the New Testament. In the original it has 430,938 words containing over 3,000,000 letters.

The smallest book in the Old Testament is Obadiah with one chapter. In the New Testament, the smallest books are Philemon, 2 John, 3 John and Jude, also with one chapter.

The smallest chapter in the Old Testament (not counting the book of Psalms) is Esther chapter 10 with 3 verses. The smallest chapter in the New Testament is Revelation 15, having 8 verses. The smallest chapter in the Bible is Psalm 117, the longest chapter is Psalm 119 and the middle chapter in the Bible is Psalm 118. The

middle verse in the Bible is Psalm 118:8, which says, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in man."

The longest verse in the Bible is Esther 8:9. The shortest verses are Exodus 20 verses 13, 14, 15, John 11:35 and I Thess. 5:16,17, which last says, "Pray unceasingly".

The Bible has been translated into more languages than any other book in history at almost 1,670. The works of Lenin come in a far second at 200 and even the well-known Shakespeare has been translated into only 97 languages. Since the invention of printing more than 6 billion copies of God's Holy Word have been printed.

*Question: When you read Psalm 119 you will discover that there is a reference to God's word, statutes, decrees, laws and commandments in each of its 176 verses except for two verses. Can you find them?

***Send your answer to: Toward The Mark .
You might win a prize!**

E.S.N

THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

As Christians, we are called of God to enjoy the divine and spiritual blessings that He has given to us in Christ. We are to walk worthy of the calling wherewith He has called us, and, as Paul exhorted Timothy, to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. 2:3. Conflict cannot be avoided if we are faithful to God, but He has provided the armor needed for this spiritual warfare. He gives us “the armor of light” to protect us from the “works of darkness,” Romans 13:12. As we pass through a world of darkness, the armor of righteousness protects us from the unrighteousness that abounds on every side, 2 Cor. 6:7. In the epistle of Ephesians, where the Christian is viewed as “blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ,” the conflict is shown as not with flesh and blood, but “against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places,” Eph. 1: 3; 6:12.

It may seem strange that a naturally brave man like Simon Peter should desert his master in the hour of His need and that all other disciples should forsake Jesus and flee when He was apprehended by the band from the chief priests. It is evident they realized their foes were not simply flesh and blood, but that they were confronted by the powers of darkness for which they were no match. It appeared to be a servant maid that brought about the downfall of Simon Peter, but behind the action of the maid was the power of Satan.

In our own strength we are like Peter, unable to stand against the powers of darkness, but God provides for us the armor that enables us to stand for Him in the evil day. We must learn to be strong, not in ourselves, but in the Lord and in the power of His might. The Lord met and vanquished the enemy in all his power, and if we are strong in Him, realizing He has triumphed and the might of His strength is available for us, we shall not fear a foe he has defeated.

Jericho was probably the most strongly fortified of all the cities of Canaan, yet it fell to Israel before they had even struck a blow. Joshua met the angel of the Lord with a drawn sword in his hand, and, as long as Israel was

strong in Him and in the power of His might, they were victorious. Ai was far weaker than Jericho, and Israel, without consulting Jehovah, thought it could be easily taken. They soon found their own strength was insufficient for overcoming even such a small city.

We have to learn that “without me ye can do nothing,” John 15:5, and with Paul, “I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me,” Phil. 4:13. We are to put on the whole armor of God; not to resist the power of Satan (for his power was broken by Jesus at the cross), but to stand against the wiles of the devil. Our foe is subtle and has long experience. He brought about the fall of man by seducing Eve with his wiles. Israel, through unwatchfulness and not consulting with the Lord, was seduced into making a league with the Gibeonites.

Our watchful adversary is ever endeavoring to hinder our entering into the practical enjoyment of the inheritance God has given to us in Christ. He constantly seeks to distress us with his wiles and fiery darts. As long as we are in this world we need the whole armor of God, for the evil day will last until the Lord comes to put away all evil. We cannot withstand the attacks of the enemy with any other armor than what God provides; any attempt to do so

is to invite failure. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul remarked, “for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds,” 2 Cor. 10:3, 4.

First of all, we are to stand in the panoply of God, withstanding the assault of the enemy. Then, having done all, taking a step forward to possess what God has given us, we are to stand firmly in possession; for if we are not watchful, the moment of triumph can be the moment of defeat.

There are seven parts of “the whole armor of God,” and we cannot do without any one part. If we endeavor to stand with any portion missing, the watchful foe will speedily find it out, take advantage of our weakness and readily defeat us.

In subsequent issues we purpose (DV) to take in detail each part of the armor.

H.S

EXPECTATION

Lord Jesus! Source of every grace,
Glorious in light divine,
Soon shall we see Thee face to face,
And in that glory shine;

Be ever with Thee; hear Thy voice;
Unhindered then shall taste
The love which doth our hearts rejoice-
Though absent in this waste.

In peaceful wonder we adore
The thoughts of Love Divine,
Which in that world for ever more
Our lot with Thine entwine!

J.N.D.