



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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July, 2007

Dear Reader,

“And all that sat in the council...saw his face as it had been the face of an angel” (Acts 6:15).

Some years ago an older Christian asked a group of young people this question: **“If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?”** He asked **how many people would testify that I was guilty of witnessing to them concerning my Savior? How many unbelievers would say that my godly conduct and Christ like spirit put them to shame? Would unsaved individuals charge that the influence of my life constitutes a menace to their cause?**

Stephen was on trial because of his devotion to Jesus Christ, and the evidence was indisputable. In fact, the reason for his arrest was that his adversaries had become infuriated when “they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.” They had been silenced by his arguments and confounded by the Christ-like attitude he evidenced. They hated him so much they resorted to bribery and perjury to destroy him. However, as they looked upon him, their faces angry and their eyes flashing, they saw Stephen’s countenance glowing as if reflecting the very presence of God. The radiance was too much for his antagonists, and they soon hustled him out to the stoning ground. However, one of them, Saul of Tarsus, never forgot that scene. The remembrance of it burned in his soul until he accepted Jesus as his Master and, like Stephen, became a Spirit-filled Christian witness.

Dear Christian friend, “If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?”

May the Lord use this issue of *Toward the Mark* to help you grow and be established as you read it. Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement. Please keep us in your prayers.

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 want to get an electronic version of the magazine, 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.

A BIRD'S MESSAGE

“Ask now...the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?” (Job 12:7, 9).

Many years ago a missionary in the Congo was translating parts of the Bible. He had difficulty with some words about God's message to Noah about building the ark. He sent a pigeon with the question to another missionary for help in the translation, and the other missionary sent the reply back with the pigeon.

The pigeon flew on its way, but first it rested in a native African village called Borogoma. A little girl in the village coaxed the pigeon to come near her, and after she caught it she took off the band on its leg. She took the band to a wise man in the village who could read it. **“The bird brought a message from God, telling us to build a house of wood because of the coming of heavy rain and water,”** said the wise man solemnly. **“It is the word of God, a God greater than we have yet worshipped.”** The village people were very astonished, but they all decided to build a house for this strange God who had sent a message by a bird, so they thought. The village people believed that birds were spirits that carried all kinds of news from place to place.

The people of Borogoma set to work to build a wooden house, as the bird's message had told them to do. They had never built a house of wood before because the termites would soon eat it. But this was a message from God and so they must obey, and they kept fires nearby to keep the termites away.

One day a missionary came to Borogoma and how surprised he was, for he found a building already built and the people waiting for some one to tell them about that God! When he heard the story about the bird he realized how strangely and wonderfully God works, and he found the people of Borogoma were eager to hear and accept the Gospel story. Our story ends here, but we may suppose that many of the village people came to know the Lord Jesus as Savior. **“God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform!”**

“God...does great things and unsearchable; marvelous things without number” (Job 5:8-9).

MILK

“The truth shall make you free”

AN EPISTLE OF CHRIST

2 CORINTHIANS 3

I would like to speak to you about letters and what we may understand by the use of the word in Scripture. We may, perhaps, group our thoughts around four or five headings.

- A letter is sent by someone.
- A letter is sent to someone.
- A letter is a message about something.
- A letter is written on some kind of material.
- How can the clarity and intelligibility of the message be preserved?

The idea of a letter is brought before us here in two ways. We are to think of Christ as written on the hearts of believers; in the case in point, on the hearts of the Corinthian Christians. Secondly, the letter so written was intended to convey a message to be read by others. There are some other aspects of this matter to be seen in these verses but we shall limit our thoughts to the four or five topics suggested.

1. I have a letter here which was sent to me by a friend. There is a curious thing about our letters in Europe; you have to read the letter right through to find out who wrote it. It begins, Dear John, but I only discover who sent me the letter when I read the signature at the close. In many African countries, as in Bible letters, the writer tells you at the beginning who he is: “Paul, apostle of Jesus Christ...” and so on. God, by His Spirit, has written a letter in the hearts of His people, (v.3) and it is He who sent the letter. We should note that the noun letter, or epistle, is in the singular. **It is not suggested that we are, individually, letters, but that we are, as thought of together, a message from God. No one of us on his own is capable of conveying this message; as together we form the epistle.**

We might be thought of, individually, as being characters in the message, each contributing his part to the message as a whole. **It is a matter of interest that we derive our English word “character” from the Greek word “charakter,” which means to cut or engrave. It came to mean die, and ultimately a letter used in writing, and so the letter written, engraved or printed. A printed character is the image of the die or stamp which printed it. So, though you may not have seen the stamp, the printed character gives you a fairly clear idea what it is like.** So the letter conveyed by the saints at Corinth was sent to the citizens of Corinth. When we think of this as applied to us today, wherever we are located, it brings us a deep sense of responsibility. **The message which has been written on us is God’s message; He is its Author. Nobody has ever seen God, but you and I as characters in His letter bear His imprint, and together we constitute His message to our fellowmen. They are not able to see Him but they see us, and He has written His message on our hearts for the purpose of it being seen in our lives by others. It must be clear to us all that whatever we value in our hearts is bound to have a profound effect on our lives.** It is very awesome to consider this and it would surely deflate us if we were inclined to be somewhat big-headed, but it has pleased our God to make a communication through us to our fellow-men.

2. A letter is sent to someone. In the case of the brethren at Corinth, the message was for the folks of the city and its neighborhood. **We sometimes speak about “getting the message.” The people around Thessalonica got the message which God sent to them through the newly converted brethren there.** From that band of men and women the word of the Lord was sounded out throughout Macedonia, Achaia and into places further afield. **In Acts 11 we read that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. The people there got the message. Those believers so accurately represented Christ as His message to them that the saints came to be known as Christians, followers of Christ.** The people of Antioch had never seen the Lord Jesus but His testimony had been carried far and wide, and all knew of the Man who had been crucified at Jerusalem, and what was His character. It was clear that the disciples at Antioch were like their Lord so they dubbed them Christians.

Very possibly it was intended to be a mild kind of pun, or term of contempt, but it fitted the saints at Antioch and they bore it gladly. **Like their Lord, they were in the world but they were free from the corruptions which abounded in the society around them. In their gatherings they were under the control of the Spirit; the men were under His authority and announced the gospel of God and were guided by the truth. The sisters were controlled by the truth and were not subject to the conventions or practices of the heathen world in such a manner as to demonstrate that God was among them of a truth. People got the message, not simply that they were different or odd but that they were followers of the Man of Calvary and that their lives were controlled and molded by Him.** Barnabas and Saul assembled with the brethren there for a whole year, and, along with other servants, taught them the truth. It is evident that they were nor merely hearers of the truth, but that they responded to it positively and that the character of Christ was developed in them in a marked way.

If we might think for a moment of an individual, it can be seen also in the case of Stephen. His contribution to the message of God to Jerusalem can be seen clearly in his life; so plainly that no one could mistake it. They saw his face as the face of an angel and when, in their fierce anger, they laid violent hands on him, his response was so governed by the Spirit of Christ that it has been noted and commented on for centuries. “Lay not this sin to their charge,” was the supplication of the dying by victorious martyr. But his was part of the local “epistle.” They remarked of the others that though they were ignorant and uneducated men they were with Jesus (Act 4:13). As a company they bore the unmistakable brand of their Lord and Master.

3. The epistle is about Christ. It is God’s message to men, no less, nothing different. Writing to the Romans about the gospel, Paul stated that the gospel of God is “concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (Ro. 1:3-4). The whole of Scripture concerns Him. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” That is, it concerns Him throughout. When God spoke to the fathers in ages past, though He spoke in various ways, indirect speech on some occasions, by parables, in types or symbols, it was the message of Christ that He sent.

When finally the Son came, He was God's message to men. God spoke IN SON. Since He returned to the Father and the Spirit to indwell believers, it is still Christ who fills the foreground. The Lord said of the Spirit, "He shall testify of ME." So, as constituted to be God's epistle to the men of our locality, this is our message. We should be able to say, like Paul, "We preach Christ, and He crucified."

4. It is amazing grace that God should choose to write His message, concerning His Son, on material such as we. Paul is thinking of the miracle of this as He writes to the Corinthians: "We have this treasure IN EARTHEN VESSELS, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Co. 4:7). He had said in the previous verse: "God...hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the glory of God in face of Jesus Christ." We generally think of this as being a wonderful blessing for us; but the text actually reads, "for THE SHINING FORTH of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." **Certainly we come into the marvelous blessing of this for ourselves, but it is intended that WE should let it shine out for the benefit of those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.** The vessels of clay, like Gideon's pitchers, are expendable, in order that the light might shine out. Many believe that it was Gideon's pitchers that the apostle was thinking of when he penned these words. **During the war Christians in the forces were sometimes called "crackpots." But this was how the light in those pitchers of Gideon's little army was able to shine out. The pots were cracked and broken.**

5. Finally, how may the message of the letter be kept clear and legible and intelligible? The story is told of a young boy who had been given a luminous watch for his birthday. Some weeks after his father remarked that he did not seem to be using it. He said, "O, I do look at it, but it seems to have lost its glow now." His father said, "Where do you keep the watch?" He replied, "I keep it in the drawer of my dressing table in case it should be damaged in some way." His father explained to him that this was why its luminosity had disappeared. The luminous letters and pointers must be recharged by exposure to the light; otherwise they will cease to emit light.

This could illustrate what we need to know about ourselves as God's letter. Though we have been given the light of this message once for all time, we need to be taking it in daily, hourly; recharging the luminosity of the divine message which is our privilege to carry, that it may be fresh, clear and readable. Then, too, it should be intelligible. Let us avoid the use of jargon or stereotyped phrases, which may mean something to us but may convey no meaning to those who hear us. This relates, of course, to anything we may say by way of testimony. But what will speak more loudly to those who know us will be the character of our lives. **Those brethren at Antioch were known by how they lived. In character, they were like Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ desires that we by his Spirit should represent Him in some way in our locality. Emmerson, the agnostic, said to a neighbor who was a professing Christian and was for ever pestering him, What you ARE speaks to me so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.**

J.Barnes

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

1. Where did Cain kill Abel?
2. What prophet told a priest that his new name was to be Magormissabib?
3. How many Marys are in the New Testament?

Meat

“Sanctify them by the truth”

REPENTANCE

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou upon thy face? Israel hath sinned...So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes...And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? The Lord shall trouble thee this day” (Jos. 7:10-11, 16, 25).

There is at the present time an awareness of breakdown, ruin, and failure — in particular the failure of each individual and their corresponding participation in the ruin and breakdown — and the need for repentance. It is necessary, however, to own that repentance is not only sorrow for sin, or an owning of sin, but putting it away and abandoning it. Exodus 12 describes **the individual rejecting leaven:** “ye shall eat unleavened bread” (v.15); **families rejecting leaven:** “put away leaven out of your houses” (v.15); and **a company of God’s people rejecting leaven:** “in all your dwellings shall ye eat unleavened bread” (v.20). **We should all be familiar with leaven as a type of evil, but are we prepared to do without it — to reject it in every sphere and to “cut off whoever eateth leavened bread” (v.15)?**

Brethren, **although the Lord has allowed the problems, resulting in breakdown and ruin, He did not introduce them;** and until known difficulties are dealt with there cannot be true repentance. **There may be much godly sorrow, but action is required if a true turning away is to be effected.** There can be earnest humiliation, confession, and repentance as individuals and in homes, but is there a willingness to stand for the truth and to walk in the truth in the local assemblies?

Herein is the kernel of most difficulties: an unwillingness to offend friends, an unwillingness to offend relatives, an unwillingness to offend our brethren, but quite ready to offend the Lord. The holiness of God's house is to be maintained — by each believer — and if they do not then the candle will be removed (Rev. 2:5), and, to use an illustration from Solomon's words, "this house which is high, shall be an astonishment to everyone that passes by it; so that he shall say, Why has Jehovah done thus to this land and to this house? And they shall say, Because they forsook Jehovah the God of their fathers... Therefore he has brought upon them all this evil" (2 Ch. 7:21-22).

A good illustration of repentance is found in Luke 15: the son recognized his failure and condition, and confessed it in his heart; then he abandoned the swine, filth and far country, and came to his father and confessed — he came to submit to the authority of his father and be subject to rule in his father's house. He was already clean when he got to his father's presence — because his father called for the best robe, the ring and the sandals to put on him — then came the rejoicing.

J.A.Pickering

Exercise

“Exercise thyself unto piety”

WHY CHRISTIANS MUST BE READERS

“The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments” (2 Tim. 4:13).

Paul was in prison, soon to lose his life at the instigation of the Roman Emperor Nero. But in prison he asks Timothy to bring with him books and parchments. It is a most interesting scene. Here is a great man, full of the Spirit of God, with a life of fruitfulness almost unparalleled in the history of mankind. Soon he will leave this world and go to be with Christ. But in his prison cell he longs for something which Timothy can bring: books and parchments.

We cannot know for sure what these books and parchments were. They might, of course, have been the Scriptures of the Old Testament. We bear in mind that the New Testament Scriptures were only beginning to exist at this time as a collection of books. They certainly were not yet put together in the form of a completed New Testament. So in all likelihood these books and parchments included the Old Testament Scriptures. But Paul was a prolific reader and an indefatigable student. It is probable that amongst these books and parchments were other books, perhaps commentaries on Scripture or even secular books written by Greek writers of the pagan world. You will know that on two or three occasions Paul reveals his familiarity with pagan Greek literature. He evidently did not despise Greek literature. At this point we might ask a question of our text. If it was the Bible of the Old Testament that Paul was asking to be brought, my question would be, “Why did he need it?” He had a good memory. He had studied the Scriptures from his childhood, and seems to have been able to quote much or even all of the Old Testament from memory. Some people have achieved something similar.

Why then would he need the Scriptures, if he had them stored away in his own mind?

On the other hand, if it was not the Bible of the Old Testament he was asking for, but other books, one might ask, “Why would he want them?” He was, after all, so close to death and to glory. Soon he would see his Savior’s face and receive his immortal honors from Christ. You would hardly think that such a man would be interested to read anything but divine, spiritual, and inspired literature. **But whatever it was he wanted, and whatever it was he needed, he asked for these books to come. So we are faced with the question: Why?**

Let me suggest three reasons. First, I would suggest that if a man is once a reader, he is always a reader. And a prison cell to a reader becomes a home from home when there are books. A small shelf of familiar books is like a small cluster of familiar friends. How the apostle in prison at Rome would have rejoiced to see these old “companions” beside him!

And then, as a second reason, it does not matter how advanced a Christian is in knowledge, grace, wisdom, and experience; in this life he has not yet come to perfection. The apostle was forever pressing on to that perfection which was his desired goal. Even as the shadow of eternity fell upon him, he was anxious that his dying days should be also learning days and days of progression. Evidently there were still things he had to learn, and he was humble enough to indicate his readiness to learn from books.

Let me offer to you a third reason. I would suggest that the apostle includes these words for Timothy’s sake, as though to say to Timothy, “You must be a reader, Timothy. You are taking up the work that I am laying down.” Technically, Timothy did not have plenary, divine inspiration as the apostles did. Whenever the apostles opened their mouth officially to preach, what they said was infallible, conveying the very Word of God. But Timothy did not have that gift. His work was the consolidation of the churches of Christ, and it was essential that amongst other responsibilities that Timothy would take upon himself was reading the best books.

So I do not think it is straining the passage to say to you that the doctrine from these words is surely this: **A Christian man or woman must be a reader, all his or her life. We are to be readers to our dying day. No book is remotely comparable to the Bible. So it is most important that in talking about books we say something first about the way to read the Bible to greatest profit. When we read the Word of God, I believe we should try to memorize it and try to learn it often by heart. We cannot know the Bible too well.**

We know nothing compared to some of our spiritual forefathers in the faith. **You would have heard of the Waldensians. They were the evangelicals of the Middle Ages.** They lived in northern Italy in remote and inaccessible valleys and hillsides. They maintained the Word of God in its integrity and purity for centuries. **Their ministers had to learn the New Testament by heart before they entered the ministry, and often they knew the Psalms also. We know our Bible so little compared with them.** The Waldensians are an inspiration to us to learn our Bible. **It is not enough just to read it. We are to imbibe it until, like John Bunyan, our very blood is ‘bibline’ and the mind of Christ fills our whole conception of everything. Evaluate everything by this book. That is the way in which we are to use the Bible. Then you must read the Bible to consolidate your theology. What is missing in many Bible readers today in the world is that they have not understood the theology of the Bible, and that is an incalculable loss. What is the theology of the Bible? It is the distillation of all its teachings. Put the Bible in the crucible, heat it up, distil it to its essence, and what you have is what the world has learned to call “Fundamentalism” or “Dispensationalism.”** The theology of the Bible is a system of grace. We must see that and have that consolidated more and more in our minds. Perhaps there is one thing we could export to Christians all around the world. After the Lord’s Day evening meetings for preaching or the prayer meetings on a weeknight we could gather together in one or other of the homes of the assembly for a while to talk about the Word of God. One may ask questions, and let others volunteer answers; and then others will be drawn in to speak from their own experience about things relating to the text of Scripture that is being discussed.

God did not make us to be mindless. We begin with the mind, the renewed mind of the decided Christian. True faith begins with the mind, and that is what is so wonderful about those who have instructed us in the truths of the recovered truths. They began with the mind. They address the mind. They give factual, propositional instruction to the intellect of a believing man. **But our teachers also addressed the heart. The mind is the first thing, but not the only thing. What we believe must affect our emotions, and that is what they believed in: the reality of faith in the heart.**

Some of these books are the very best books the world has ever seen. Scarcely any language in the world has had such books as the English language. Today if you go to countries which are influenced by the gospel, the first thing these other countries have to do is to read our language. In Korea today and other countries Christians are learning our language because they want access to the books! What an extraordinary thing! Young people gathering to read the Puritans. But you see my point is this: **You and I don't need to learn the English language. We have it; we were born with it. It is our mother tongue. Shame on you and me if, having the language and having the books and having the means of getting them, we do not fill ourselves with the divine knowledge. Through reading the Word of God and the best books, the fragrance of heaven should be felt by others to be in our hearts and homes.**

Contributed

ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURES SEARCH!

1. In the fields (Genesis 4:8)
2. Jeremiah (20:3)
3. Six - Mary the mother of the Lord Jesus, Mary of Bethany, Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James and Joses, Mary the mother of John Mark, and Mary of Rome.

REST

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

SATISFACTION AND REST

RUTH

Having reached the moment when Ruth is found at the feet of Boaz the story is naturally more concerned with what Boaz does. **He works to satisfy the desires that his love and grace have raised, but he will also work for the satisfaction of his own heart. All this brings before us the far deeper mystery of Christ and His desires for His Church. Nothing will satisfy His heart but having His saints with Him and like Him. His love must have the company of His loved ones.** We are going to heaven because love wants us there. **It did not satisfy the heart of the father to remove the rags from the prodigal son and meet his needs: he must have him in his own company suited to his presence, with the best robe, the shoes on his feet, and the ring on his hand. Nor does it satisfy the heart of Christ to deliver us from judgment and clear us from our sins, but He must have us with Him and like Him.**

- It was with this end He gathered souls around Him as He passed through this world, for when He called the twelve it was, first of all that they should be "with Him" (Mk. 3:14).
- It was for this He prayed when He said, "Father I will that they also whom Thou hast give Me be with Me where I am."
- It was for this He died, that "whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him" (1 Th. 5:10).
- It is with this end that He serves His people today, washing our feet that we might have part with Him.
- It is this end that He has in view when He puts one of His saints to sleep, to depart and be "with Christ."
- And when at last the Lord comes into the clouds to call us home, it is to receive us unto Himself that where He is we might be also, "for ever with the Lord."

This then is the blessed truth that we learn at His feet. Not only that we want Him, but that He wants us. **Small wonder that we should want Him, but an everlasting wonder that He should want us.**

Many learn at His feet that He can dispense with all our service but He cannot do without ourselves. "I am my Beloved's and His desire is toward me," is the great and glorious truth that we learn at His feet. And so Ruth tells us of this same truth, for at the feet of Boaz she learned not only that she longed for Boaz but that Boaz longed for her. And having learned this she can "sit still" and wait for Boaz to finish the thing (v.18).

Deeply significant is the way that Boaz takes to secure rest and satisfaction for his own heart and the heart of Ruth. There is what he does with Ruth, followed by the work He does for Ruth. In chapter 2 he wins her affection; in chapter 3 he gives her holy boldness to gratify the affection he has won.

First, having refused all others and followed Boaz, she is assured of blessing, "Blessed be thou" (v.10). Second, he removes every trace of fear from her heart, saying, "Fear not" (v. 11). Then she is assured that every hindrance to the fulfillment of all his purpose will be overcome (vv.12-13). In the meantime he richly supplies all her need. He gives her six measures of barley. When she sought her own blessing she obtained one measure of barley (2:17); when she sought Boaz himself she gets "six measures of barley." But still it is only "six" not seven, the complete number. No amount of barley can give complete satisfaction.

Thus it is that the Lord acts with His own today. Is there not a special blessing for those who have learned the great secret that the Lord wants us for Himself? **Does not this remove all fear, give us holy boldness, and assure our hearts that no hindrance can stand in the way of the fulfillment of His purpose for us? In the meantime He meets our every need and thus enables us, like Ruth to "sit still" in the knowledge that He will not be in rest until He has finished that which He has begun. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).**

Hamilton Smith

CAMELS READY TO TAKE THE HEAT

“O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches” (Psalm 104:24).

One of the most fascinating ways to study the character of God is to study His creation. From galaxies to molecules, “God’s invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made” (New International Version, Rom. 1:20). The camel is a sure crowd-pleaser at the zoo, with its loping gait and comical expressions, but a closer look at this unique animal reveals a surprising design that points directly to an omniscient Creator.

Camels belong to the family Camelidae, along with their New World relatives llamas and alpacas, and they are divided into species: *Camelus bactrianus*, or Bactrian camel, and *Camelus dromedaries*, or Dromedary camel. The Dromedary, also called the Arabian camel, has long been referred to by Bedouins as “God’s gift.”

From their nose to their feet, camels are perfectly suited to their desert environments; the harsh, hot winds and sand of the deserts of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

To protect them from sandstorms, camels were given nostrils that they can open and close; they also have bushy eyebrows, fur-lined ears, and double rows of curly eyelashes for the same protective purpose. The tough, leathery skin on their knees pads the joints as they kneel and their special foot pads spread as they walk, to keep them from sinking into the sand.

Even more remarkable is the camels’ ability to withstand the intense, arid heat of the desert. Unlike any other mammal, camels can raise and lower their own body temperature, thereby conserving precious water.

Camels also have a unique metabolism that allows them to store enormous amounts of water in their bloodstream, while oval-shaped red blood cells, exclusive to the camel, tolerate both dehydration (lack of water) and osmosis (storing water).

Camels drink more than twenty gallons of water in a ten-minute period – a feat that would kill almost any other mammal – then store the water in their blood for up to two weeks.

Two obvious differences between the Dromedary and the Bactrian camels are the number of humps and the length of their hair. A one-hump camel is a Dromedary, and a two-hump camel is a Bactrian. The Dromedary has relatively short hair, enabling it to live in the extreme heat of the Arabian Desert. The Bactrian camel has long, shaggy hair better suited for the cooler temperatures of Asia.

A camel's hump, or humps, once popularly thought to contain water, in fact contain fat, which is used as fuel when food is scarce. Metabolizing this stored fat is also how camels utilize the water stored in their bloodstream. So, the misconception that the hump contains water is not so far from the truth after all! Camels can live without food for up to a month, by which time their hump, or humps, have become floppy and fallen to one side. However, the hump is restored when camels feed and build up their fat storage.

But how did the camel come to be suited for such a harsh, hot sandy environment? A common misconception among evolutionists is that the creationists believe God created each animal exactly as we see it today. But if this were true, many of the camel's design features would have been at best superfluous in the "very good" world of the Garden of Eden.

In Genesis 1:24, God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds." **The original camel "kind" would have contained in its genetic code the information to produce "modern" camels, as well as their relatives, such as the llama. God, in His omniscience, may have placed in His original tale of survival in one of the harshest climates is a beautiful testimony to the foreknowledge and amazing creativity of an infinite God who cares deeply about His creation.**

**Answers in Genesis magazine
www.AnswersInGenesis.org**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q. What does the latter part of John 6:27, “The Son of man...has the Father sealed, even God,” mean? Does it have any connection to John 1:32-33? Jessica Asaad

A. Dear Jessica:

The Lord Jesus in John 6 is speaking of Himself as the Son of Man — here in this world as a man amongst men, and not in His character as the Son of God. God the Father had sealed Him: when John baptized Him with water in the river Jordan, the Spirit of God descended upon Him, and the Father’s voice from heaven was heard, “Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased” (Lk. 3: 22). The triune God is manifested for the first time here in this world. This provided the opportunity for the expression of the Father’s full delight and satisfaction in the Son as man. He is marked out or sealed as the confirmation of this by the Holy Spirit. You rightly connect this with John 1, where the Lord Jesus is identified by John as the One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. We who are saved are the beneficiaries of that promise, and it is also the promise of the Father (Lk. 24:29). Ephesians 1:13 tells us we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. That link brings us into a very happy position. God the Father having expressed His satisfaction in the Lord Jesus, when here in this world, at His baptism; and then after His ascension by glorifying Him and seating him at His own right hand, now brings those who were dead in trespasses and sins into relation with Himself and now would say, as it were, “You have been sealed and I take delight in you, because by faith you have come into this place of favour where you are livingly linked with a glorified Christ, and are now enabled to be seated together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

J.A.P

ECHO OF SONGS IN THE NIGHT

PART 1

To live in Thee — blest source of deepest joy!
To hear e'en now by faith Thy voice of love —
Thou living spring of bliss without alloy,
Bright inlet to the light of heaven above!

Come fill my soul! Thy light is ever pure,
And brings from heaven what Thou alone canst give,
Yea, brings Thyself, the revelation sure
Of heaven's eternal bliss; in Thee we live.

I hail thee, Lord! of Thee my song shall speak —
Poor and unworthy strains, yet still of Thee;
Yes, fill my soul! 'tis this my heart doth seek —
To dwell in love, and God my dwelling be.

Thou'st made the Father known; Him have we seen
In Thy blest person — infinite delight!
Yes, it suffices: though we here but glean
Some foretaste of His love, 'til all be light.

O, dwell with me; let no distracting thought
Intrude to hide from me that heavenly light.
Be Thou my strength! Let not what Thou hast brought
Be chased by idle nature's poor delight

J. N. Darby

“WHERE THE FIRE HAS BEEN”

“But he was wounded for our transgressions...and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

A group of pioneers were traveling westward by covered wagon. One day they were horrified to see in the distance a long line of smoke and flame stretching for miles across the prairie. The dry grass was on fire, and the inferno was advancing upon them rapidly. The river they had crossed the day before would be of no help as they would not be able to return to it in time. One man, however, knew what to do. He gave the command to set fire to the grass behind them. Then, when the ground had cooled, the whole company moved back upon it. The people watched apprehensively as the blaze roared toward them. A little girl cried out in terror, “Are you sure we won’t be burned up?” The leader replied, “My child, we are absolutely safe, nothing can harm us here, for we are standing on the scorched area where the flames have already done their work.”

The fire of God’s holy wrath against sin came down upon Jesus Christ the day He died on the cross. His own words, “It is finished,” and His resurrection from the tomb furnish us with infallible proof that He paid the price for our sin in full.

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be SAVED” (Romans 10:9).

Dear friend, by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ you do not need to be afraid of death and the judgment that will follow. Positionally you are now safely seated “in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6), because by faith you have taken refuge in the “burned-over place” of Calvary. The fire of God’s wrath cannot touch you there for He will not demand payment for your sins twice. Let this be your comfort; you are standing in safety “where the fire has been.”