



# ***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***

**April 2025  
Vol. 24 No. 2**

April 2025

Dear Reader,

**“And he spoke also a parable to them to the purport that they should always pray and not faint” (Luke 18:1).**

How blessed is the subject of prayer! What a privilege to be free anytime, anywhere to speak to our God and to ask Him to do something or thank Him for something. What a blessed opportunity to draw upon His heart, His wisdom, His power, His mercy, and His grace. Our Lord Jesus said of this privilege, “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

Dear brother J. N. Darby remarked, “Prayer is founded on the immense privilege of having common interests with God both as to us and as to all that are His, yea, even as to Christ’s glory. Wondrous thought! Unspeakable grace!”

**Prayer expresses our dependence upon our God. We are not sufficient in ourselves; only God is self-sufficient. By prayer we express our need and count upon His strength.**

**Our prayer needs to be in connection with the Holy Spirit’s intercession, maybe with fasting. Remember, also, that our moral state can hinder our prayers.**

May we be challenged to make prayer a more coveted part of our daily fellowship with God and to let nothing into our lives that would hinder our requests or God’s answers to them.

**“Prayer without ceasing” (1Thessalonians 5:17).**

Thank you for the encouraging e-mails that we often receive.

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

**Make sure that you visit our website to find many helpful articles.**

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,

*Emil S. Nashed*

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# TOWARD THE MARK

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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"*

## SALT

### WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY ABOUT SALT

**Salt is of great importance to man. It makes savory what without it would be insipid. It checks the growth of nature in the vegetable kingdom; it preserves from corruption and decays what belongs to the animal kingdom.**

Job speaks of its savory properties (Job 6:6). Moses and the prophets bear witness to its power in destroying the growth of nature (Deuteronomy 29:23; Jeremiah 17:6; Ezekiel. 47:11); and Abimelech's action in sowing the city of Shechem with salt (Judges 9:45) shows us that Israel was well acquainted with its influence on vegetation. But not less marked is its action on that which belongs to the animal kingdom, preserving that which is subjected to its influence from the corruption to which otherwise it would assuredly turn.

**Now as salt acts in the realm of nature, so does grace in spiritual matters. It savors; it checks the outflow of nature from man. It is preservative, too, in its action from corruption.**

Under the law, the meat offering was to be salted, typical of the Lord Jesus in His life on earth, in Whom grace acted constantly (Leviticus 2:13). With all their offerings they were to offer salt. Hence, a "covenant of salt" was a term Israel well understood (Numbers 18:19; 2 Chronicles 13:5), meaning that such a covenant should never be broken; no element of corruption should enter into it, for it would last forever. That was the character of the provision God made for the support of Aaron and his house. The Lord's engagement to David and his sons was of that same character.

**In the New Testament the figurative meaning of salt, as illustrative of grace in its savoring and preservative action, is met with more than once. The disciples were the "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13).**



**But, as the Lord reminded them, salt is useless if once it has lost its savor.** So, they would be of no use as salt, unless grace was really in them. What, then, man in nature does not have, what the earth viewed morally does not possess, that the disciples were, and should be careful to continue to be. **They were not merely salt for the earth, but the salt of the earth.** And having salt in themselves, the working of nature would be checked, and they would have peace one with another (Mark 9:50). Moreover, that preservative and savoring character of grace would be felt if their speech was always with grace, seasoned with salt (Colossians 4:6). They would know how to answer every man, and no corrupt communication would proceed out of their mouths, but only that which was good to the use of edifying, that it might minister grace to the hearers (Ephesians 4:29). Moreover, the preservative character of grace would characterize all God's people, "for every sacrifice shall be salted with salt."

**But there is another statement of the Lord, preserved only in one Gospel, that of Mark; and that statement, to which we now draw attention, is most solemn in its character, and universal in its application. "Everyone shall be salted with fire"; for as salt preserves things in the animal kingdom, so the fire of judgment will act on men.** It will not consume them so as to terminate their existence, but burning up all that is perishable of men and their works (1 Corinthians 3:13–15) will leave that which never can decay. To have one's works tried by fire is a solemn consideration for God's saints. To be salted with fire is a dreadful prospect for the wicked. And in connection with these latter, it should be remarked, the Lord brings in, "Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For everyone shall be salted with fire" (Mark 9:48, 49). Even in things of nature in the animal frame there is a residuum which the fire does not consume. But after burning up all that is consumable, the fire dies out. **Now it will not be so in the other world; all that can perish will assuredly perish, but the wicked shall never cease to exist, and the fire will never be extinguished.**

## MEAT

*"Sanctify them by the truth"*

## **PAUL: GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE MAN**

Philippians 3:20

**In this dispensation grace, the time from the day of Pentecost until the Lord Jesus Christ comes for His own which that is the rapture.**

**The Apostle Paul is a representative man of this dispensation, in his person, ministry, and manner of life. His salvation and apostleship illustrate for us the ways of God in this dispensation. We are living in the dispensation of God's grace. His life is a pattern to us for our lives in this day of God's grace.**

### **His Person**

**In his person we see the display both of the grace and the righteousness of the dispensation.** Saul of Tarsus was taken up by the Spirit of God in order to represent in him the grace and the righteousness that are now brought to us. He magnifies the grace of the dispensation when he calls himself the chief of sinners, showing that God's grace could reach and flow even to the greatest of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15).

When Paul would make known the character of the righteousness of the dispensation, he speaks of himself as blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the law, but then he sets that righteousness aside as loss and dung (Philippians 3:8). The true righteousness that has been revealed to us through him is the righteousness of God in Christ.

**Paul not only displays God's grace and the gift of God's righteousness, but he also illustrates God's present way of displaying His grace in the believer's life.** Paul had to learn that he had mistaken the way of blessing and of glory. He had to learn, as every believer has to learn, that when he was weak, then he was strong, for God's grace is made perfect in weakness. By his "thorn in the flesh" he represents the believers in this dispensation in their weakness, showing that such weakness is their suitable condition for the present display of God's grace and power (2 Corinthians 12:9). In the eyes of the world the "thorn in the flesh" is viewed as a blot. The comeliness that a world could see and appreciate was tarnished by this blot. In the Spirit, Paul had wondrous revelations, and the secret of God was blessedly with him, but before men there was a stain

upon him. All this is in character with the dispensation. The saints are exalted in Christ, but before men they are to be humbled. The world does not know them. The dispensation allows for no confidence in the flesh. God has set the flesh aside as profitless. The man in Christ is not to look at things as man in the flesh does, that is, according to their external appearance. There is to be no measuring or comparing of things by any such rule. By external appearance there was the thorn in Paul that tempted the scorn of men. The thorn in Paul's flesh came from the same love as his rapture into paradise. If he had stood in the full intelligence of the Spirit, he would not have prayed for its removal; he had to learn to glory in his infirmities. **No one is perfect, but the Master Himself. Favored and honored as Paul and others have been, there is none perfect but the Lord. This comforts our souls. God rests well-pleased in Him forever, but in Him only. He never had a desire to recall, never a prayer that was not according to the Father's well.**

### **His Ministry**

Paul's preaching was to all the world, and it represents the comprehensiveness of the grace of God in this dispensation. The good news of God's grace was to go to the ends of the earth. To illustrate this message of grace for all men, Paul speaks of his ministry as stretching itself on the right hand and on the left, from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum. He had received "apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations," and he felt himself debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. He spoke to the Jews, the devout, the common people and the philosophers (Acts 17). His purpose was to compass the whole earth. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. He was calling on men everywhere to repent. When Paul could no longer go about with the gospel, being the prisoner of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles, he "received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:30-31).

In Jewish times, the ordinances of God were all at Jerusalem. Jerusalem was where men ought to worship. The priest abode in the temple, for the dispensation was one that refused to converse with other men, but in righteousness kept the flock of God folded in the land of Judea. Now the dispensation is one of grace, going forth in the activities of love, to gather home the lost sheep that have gone astray upon the mountains. Preaching is, therefore, the great ordinance of God now. Preaching is the new

appointment of God, something that is beyond the mere services of a secluded temple. Paul's preaching of this new dispensation to all men presents the pattern for all of us.

**In Paul's ministry we see what the world would consider to be "the foolishness of God" and "the weakness of God." Paul gave testimony to the Christ crucified. Christ on the cross was weak and foolish in the judgment of the wise of this world. So Paul and his ministry came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom in the eyes of men. His preaching was not with enticing words, but he was among the saints in weakness, in fear and in much trembling (1 Corinthians 2:3).**

### **His Manner of Life**

Paul lived on earth as a citizen of heaven, "for our conversation is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). So effectually had he learned Christ and so blessedly was he, through grace, enabled to exhibit the character of the dispensation that the Spirit says he was "unto God a sweet savor of Christ." So fully was he a pattern of that manner of life to which we are called that he could say, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample."

**Paul's life was a "manifestation of the truth." The truth of God revealed to Paul to give to the church was seen not only in his teaching, but it was displayed by his manner of life. His life of faith reflected the truth which he received and dispensed to others. The conduct of faith is always according to the principle of God's present dealings. As John says, "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." As Peter says, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (1 Peter 3:9). That is, blessing being bestowed on us, and also required of us.**

In Paul's manner of life, we trace the spirit of Christ and the great principles of God's present dealings with the church. The Son of God emptied Himself of the glory that He had before the world was, and while on earth He ever refused to call for legions of angels. So Paul in the spirit of Christ, though free from all, made himself the servant of all, becoming all things to all men for their good (1 Corinthians 9:22). In this way his life reflects the unmeasured and untiring love of God, which has visited us in the gospel of the grace of God!

J. G. Bellett

## EXERCISE

*"Exercise thyself unto piety"*

### **"COME"; "TAKE"; "LEARN"**

Matthew 11:25–30

**There are certain passages in the Word of God that are especially dear to the hearts of all that love our Lord Jesus, inasmuch as they very definitely set forth the loveliness of Christ. Among such portions we may well include the six closing verses of Matthew 11, for in these verses we see the perfection of Christ shining out in one of the darkest moments of His earthly pathway.**

The passage opens with the words, "At that time." We may well pause to enquire, what was "that time"? The preceding chapters bring before us the Lord's ministry in the midst of Israel. He had presented Himself in all the glory of His Person as Emmanuel—God with us—cleansing the leper with a touch, healing the centurion's servant with a word, and commanding the demons to depart. He had revealed the grace of His heart in forgiving sins, in sitting down to eat with sinners, in raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, and in making the dumb to speak. He had revealed the tender love of His heart by suffering in His spirit the sorrows that He took away by His power and had expressed His compassions for those who were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. He had shown the lowly grace of His heart by entering the humble home of a fisherman, by preaching the gospel to the poor, and by becoming so poor that He had nowhere to lay His head.

**What response did the nation give to the One who expressed His grace by becoming poor in order to show forth His love and power on behalf of sinful men in relieving them of every sorrow and pressure, even of death itself?**

Alas! some besought Him to depart; others said, "This man blasphemeth." Again, there were those who laughed Him to scorn; others said He was a gluttonous man and a winebibber. The leaders said "He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils." They insulted Him, defamed Him, and thus speaking and acting against Him, they fulfilled His own touching words: "They have rewarded Me evil for

good, and hatred for my love” (Psalm 109:5). **It thus becomes clear that “that time” was the time of His utter rejection by the nation of Israel.**

This then was the answer the nation gave to all His love and grace. But what answer did the Lord give to all the insults and scorn that men heaped upon Him? Did He assert His sovereign rights and fall back upon His royal power by which He could have silenced every opposer and crushed every foe? He had, indeed, warned the nation of the judgment that would overtake them, but He utters no word of resentment, He uses no threats, He is not moved to any act of revenge. In like spirit, a little later, in the last closing scenes, in the presence of false witnesses, “Jesus held His peace.” Before Pilate, when accused by the chief priests, “He answered him to never a word”; and yet again, before the mocking Herod, “He answered him nothing.”

If then He was silent, if He took no revenge upon His enemies, was it that He had no resource? Far from it, but His resource was not to vilify His enemies and turn upon His foes, but to turn to the Father in prayer. As He can say, “For my love they are my adversaries; but I give myself unto prayer” (Psalm 109:4). So Peter can write of the Lord in his Epistle, “Who when He was reviled, reviled not again: when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” The answer then to all the insults men heaped upon Him is seen in the threefold perfection that it called forth from the Lord.

**First, “that time” brought to light His perfect and unshaken confidence in the Father’s love.** He finds His resource in turning in prayer to the Father—the One who loves Him, and who has all power as the Lord of heaven and earth. No circumstances, however terrible, are allowed for one moment to call in question the Father’s love, or the power of the Lord of heaven and earth. Nor does the Lord turn to the Father, calling for revenge upon His enemies, but with thanks that, in spite of all the hatred and opposition of men and devils, divine love and divine power are carrying out the Father’s purposes. These counsels of love pass by those who by their wisdom know not God, proclaim the gospel to the poor who have no resources, and make known the Father to the babes who make no pretension.

**Moreover, a second great perfection comes to light. With perfect confidence in the Father's love and power, the Lord perfectly submits to the Father's will.** Thus He can say, "Even so Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight." If carrying out the Father's will entails the hatred and scorn of men, He will submit. A little later, Peter, in his fleshly zeal, may draw a sword to resist those who oppose His Master; but the Lord Himself can say, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11).

**Furthermore, the sorrowful circumstances bring into prominence a third perfection of the Lord, for He can say, "I am meek and lowly in heart."** In perfect meekness He gave way rather than asserted His rights, and in perfect lowliness He refused to exalt Himself. As He passed through this world, he ignored self to serve others in love.

Thus, the darkest moment of His pathway becomes the occasion of bringing into display the moral excellencies of Christ, as seen in His perfect confidence in the Father's love, His perfect submission to the Father's will, and the meekness and lowliness of heart that could think of everything, and everyone, but self.

**Thus, in a threefold way the loveliness of Christ shines forth. If, however, we are to profit by Christ as our perfect pattern it will not be enough to admire His excellencies, we must also give heed to His three exhortations: first, "Come unto Me"; second, "Take my yoke"; and, third, "Learn of Me."**

**"Come unto Me."** Israel's rejection of Christ cannot stay the grace of God: indeed, it becomes the occasion for that grace to flow out to all, Jew and Gentile alike. Therefore, the Lord can say, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." However great the burden of sins, we are welcome to come, even as the woman who was a sinner found in the house of Simon, and as a poor thief found when nailed on a cross. As another has written, it is as if the Lord said, "If you are a poor woman, not fit to face any of your fellow creatures, come to Me; I will have you, trust Me: if you are hanging on a cross for your crimes, you shall go up today with Me to paradise. My blood is enough to put your crimes away: my heart is open to receive you." Weary with our vain efforts to meet our condition, and burdened with our sins, how good to hear His words of love, "Come unto Me," and, in His presence,

discover that He knows the worst about us, and yet He loves us. Then to learn that loving us He has died for us, and that the holy God is so satisfied with what Christ has done that He has raised Him from the dead and seated Him in the glory, and that the one that believes in Him is justified from all things, and is as clear of the judgment that his sins deserve as Christ, Himself, in the glory. Thus it is He brings peace to the conscience, and we realize the truth of His words, “I will give you rest.”

**“Take My Yoke.”** The yoke implies service taken up in submission to the will of another. With our natural tendency to self-importance, we may seek to be among the Lord’s people as those that rule and exercise lordship, but He could say, “I am among you as He that serveth.” Moreover, it is not service according to our own wills, or doing what we think best, but service according to His thoughts and in obedience to His will. It is not simply “a yoke” that we are asked to take, but “His yoke.” Coming to Him as needy sinners He will give us rest; taking His yoke as believers we shall find rest. Martha, who served the Lord according to her thoughts, was distracted and “cumbered about much serving.”

**“Learn of Me.”** If then, our service is to be according to His will and pleasure, we shall need to remember the Lord’s third great exhortation, “Learn of Me.” This involves not only that we learn the service He would have us to take up, but that we learn His blessed character, so that we not only do the right thing, but we do it in the right spirit. Therefore, the Lord’s desire is first, that we should take up His service in submitting to His yoke; second, that we should exhibit His character as the One Who is “meek and lowly in heart.”

**We can learn of one another; we can learn by the prayerful study of the word; but to learn of Him implies that we are in His presence and keep His company.** As the Lord could say a little later, “If any man serve Me, let him follow Me” (John 12:26). It is not, indeed, that He will give us any fresh revelation beyond that which is made known to us in the word; but in His presence we learn the blessed reality of all that the word reveals. Paul can write to Timothy, “Consider what I say: and the Lord will give thee understanding” (2 Timothy 2:7). **An Apostle may be used to reveal the truth, but the Lord alone can give understanding of the truth revealed.**



It is good indeed to have the doctrine set forth with all the authority of God's written word; but good, also, when the written word turns us to the living Word to see the truth set forth in all its perfection in HIM.

In His Person there is brought before us, in a way that must deeply affect us, all the moral excellencies and spiritual graces that marked every step of His path of devoted service. We look up to Him in the glory as our object and our hope, but we look back to His perfect pathway to learn in Him the spirit that should mark His people as they pass through this world. In Him we see our perfect example, for He was "meek and lowly in heart." It is still possible, like Mary of old, to sit at His feet and hear His word, and learning of Him we shall catch something of His spirit and express something of His lovely character. It has been truly said, "There is so much Christian service in the world which lacks true strength and beauty, because it stands too little connected with the source of all service, with Christ Himself, and is too little founded on the word of God. There are so many believers who like Martha, are busied about many things, but alas! have neither the desire, nor quietness enough, to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His precious word. To spend an hour alone with the Lord would be to them far more difficult than to labor the whole day about all sorts of things. And whence comes this? It demands a far more spiritual mind to tarry in His presence than to be occupied with service. In the latter even nature can find some satisfaction, while in His presence it must be entirely set aside.

**Furthermore, if we learn of Him, we shall not only take up His service in His spirit, but, in the presence of all the sorrows and trials of life, the desertions and disappointments, the insults and malice we may have to meet, we shall act as He acted. We shall not allow any of these things to call in question the Father's love, but, like Christ, we shall make them the occasion of turning to the Father in prayer, of confiding in the Father's love, and submitting to the Father's will. In the spirit of meekness, we shall be quiet in the presence of every insult. With the lowly mind we shall refuse to exalt self and seek, rather, to ignore self while seeking to serve others in love. Thus acting like the Master we shall find rest to our souls.**

Hamilton Smith

## HOLINESS, ASSURANCE AND FEAR

Holiness in life is the consequence of salvation. He “hath saved us and called us with an holy calling” (2 Timothy 1:9). Being born of God and having received Christ as life, the principle of holiness is in every believer, although its conscious development and practical exercise is when the question of justification is settled. The affections of the heart are fixed on Christ as having so loved us and given Himself for us. He is received into the heart, and we are thus sanctified and grow up to Him, the Head, in all things, His walk being the only true measure of ours.

**And here it is that diligence of soul comes in, not in connection with redemption and justification, but rather with the working out of our own salvation in fear and trembling. It is perfectly evident that we cannot work out our redemption; Christ has finished the work and God has accepted it as complete. There is no more offering for sin. Where then is the working out of salvation? The Christian is viewed in two ways in Scripture; first, as in Christ, and therefore as Christ before God; he has boldness for the day of judgment, because as Christ is, so are we in this world.**

Second, almost all Christians pass through a longer or shorter period of exercise and testing. They are men on the earth, even if ever so truly men in Christ. There is no doubt that if they are really in Christ, Christ will keep them, and they shall never perish; still they are tested and proved in their life down here, and they have much to hear, much to correct, and much to learn of themselves. At the same time, they also learn of God’s tender and faithful love and what it is to be dead with Christ to sin and to the world; they learn more of the fullness of Christ and how to grow up unto Him in all things.

In our course here below, the proof of reality is just the seriousness which works out the final salvation with fear and trembling, for the snares and dangers are real on the way, though there is the promise of being kept through them. But it is a solemn thing to be the scene of conflict between God’s working in us and the power of darkness, though victory through Christ is certain. Hence it is a moral process in the human soul; it is a testing, proving, sifting, teaching, helping: We

learn ourselves and God, and it bears most precious fruit. We learn not only to glory in salvation and in the hope of glory, but in tribulations and, finally, in God Himself, whom we thus come to know.

**The Christian, every true believer, then, is redeemed and in Christ, where there is no “if.” But he is also, in fact, on the road to glory and must reach the goal to have it. He has the promise of being kept, but he is morally exercised along the road in dependence, in grace, in watchfulness and diligence, the true proof that it is a reality with him. It is a place that belongs to one who is redeemed, where he learns the ways of God and works out his salvation in fear and trembling, for he is ever in danger as to his daily path to glory, though he is dependent and counts on the faithfulness of Him who keeps him. Christ’s grace is sufficient for him, and His strength is made perfect in weakness.**

Bible Treasury, adapted

### **SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!**

1. Who constructed the first altar?
2. What did Elisha do to make an ax head float to the surface of the water?
3. Who bribed the guards at the Lord Jesus’ tomb?

## REST

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

## **DISCOURAGEMENT OR PEACE?**

**The Spirit of God has furnished us with a very striking and edifying contrast between Job and Jeremiah in their trying circumstances and the Lord Jesus in His.**

"Job opened his mouth and cursed his day" (Job 3:1). He sighed for rest but sought it amid the shades of death and in the darkness of the tomb. gloomy rest! In the prophet Jeremiah we see the same thing (Jeremiah 20:14–18). **Both these beloved and honored saints of God, when overwhelmed by outward pressure, lost for a moment that well-balanced condition of soul which genuine faith ever imparts.**

**Now, the blessed Master stands before us in glorious contrast in Matthew 11. That chapter records a number of circumstances which were entirely against Him.**

Herod's prison seemed to have shaken the confidence of John the Baptist. The men of that generation had refused the double testimony of righteousness and grace, in the ministry of John and of Christ Himself. Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum had remained impenitent in view of His "mighty works."

**What, then? Did the Master take up the language of His servants Job and Jeremiah? By no means. His will was perfectly blended with that of His Father, and hence, "At that time [when all seemed against Him] Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father...for so it seemed good in Thy sight." Here it was that Jesus found rest. And He invites "all who labor and are heavy laden" to "find rest." He does not point us to the grave as our resting-place, but He graciously stoops down and invites us to share His yoke with Him—to drink into His "meek and lowly" spirit—to bear about a mortified will—to meet the darkest dispensations and the most trying circumstances with a "thank**

**God” and an “even so.” This is divine “rest.” It is rest in life and not in death—rest in Christ and not in the grave.**

**Do you ever find yourself disposed to wish for the grave, as a relief from pressure? If so, look at the above scriptures. Think of them, pray over them, and seek to find your rest where Jesus found His, in having no will of your own.**

**We often think a change of circumstances would make us happy. We imagine, if this trial were removed and that deficiency made up, we should be all right. Let us remember, when tempted to think thus, that what we want is not a change of circumstances, but victory over self. May the good Lord ever give us this victory, and then we shall enjoy peace.**

Things New and Old

### **ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE SEARCH**

1. Noah (Genesis 8:20)
2. He threw a stick into the water (2 Kings 6:4–7)
3. The chief priests (Matthew 28:11–15)

## **BALTIMORE BRIDGE**

On March 26, 2024, at 12:44 a.m. on the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, a few bridge maintenance workers were taking a break. Some were eating, and some were talking about their plans for the weekend and how they could not wait to go home to be with their families. It was a routine night shift.

The Dali container ship carrying 4,700 containers, left the Port of Baltimore at 12:44 a.m. bound for Columbia, Sri Lanka. At 1:24 a.m. the ship suffered a “complete blackout” and began to drift out of the shipping channel.

At 1:27 a.m., a Mayday call was made from the Dali container ship, notifying the Maryland Department of Transportation that the crew had lost propulsion and control of the vessel and that a collision with the bridge was possible.

At 1:28:45 a.m., the ship struck the southwest pier of the Francis Scott Key Bridge, and within seconds the bridge broke apart in several places, leaving sections protruding from the water and the roadway’s approaches cut off. The main span fell onto the ship’s bow, and a section of it came to rest there.

Emergency teams began receiving 911 calls at 1:30 a.m. The Baltimore Police Department was alerted to the collapse at 1:35 a.m. Large rescue and recovery efforts were begun. The Coast Guard deployed boats and a helicopter as part of rescue efforts.

Six people, all part of the maintenance crew, were reported missing. Their bodies were all recovered from underwater by May 7.

This was a major disaster that happened within a matter of minutes. A bridge collapsed and more importantly, lives were lost. The men working on the bridge had no warning that their lives would be lost that day. Six people ushered into eternity...

**Dear friend,**

**You must meet God. It might happen suddenly to you with no warnings. Are you ready? “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). When you stand before God, will you be stained with your sin, or will you have been washed clean through faith in Jesus Christ?**

God has provided a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to rescue every sinner who receives Him as their savior. The Lord Jesus Christ became the Savior of sinners by coming down from Heaven and dying on the cross for our sins. God raised Him from the dead, and He is now a living Savior at God’s right hand in Heaven. Trust in Him. No matter what you’ve done, He can save you now!

**The issue is very clear: your response to the Lord Jesus Christ now will determine your destiny for eternity.**

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

**Would you accept Him now, tomorrow might be too late! “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).**