

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D.V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, N. C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Rt. 1, Box 65

Keeling, Virginia 24566

PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/84
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

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EDITORIAL

With this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we start another volume, ending one hundred and fifty years of continuous publication.

We want to thank the God of all grace, the giver of every good and perfect gift, who has blessed the editors to send forth to the readers that which is most surely believed among God's people and that which is both comforting and edifying.

In the July issue we started printing the prospectus of the "Signs" and have continued it each month. Some have asked where did this come from and who is its author. It was composed by Elder Gilbert Beebe who established the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1832 and was printed in the first copy. Its purpose is to set forth the doctrine for it to uphold and as a guide line for the material to go forth in its pages.

Some queries have been made concerning articles number two and number nine. Number two "The absolute predestination of all things". To me the word absolute does not add to that which God has decreed, purposed, or that which He foresaw. It only accents that the wills and shalls of God are sure and steadfast and that which He predestinated will surely come to pass. God is unchangeable and is still at the helm, reigning and ruling in heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand. He works and none can hinder and He hinders and none can work.

Article number nine states that "The church of Jesus Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers". This is not referring to the militant churches and their members but the church of Jesus Christ, the body that is fitly framed together and groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. The baptism in mind is the baptism of fire and the holy ghost, the spiritual baptism. The ordinance of water baptism which is required to become a member of our churches here is only an act of an acquitted conscientious toward God, and is not essential for eternal life.

As we enter into the one hundred and fifty second year we pledge our best efforts and pray God's continued

blessings to be with us.

We want to thank all of you who have written or sent in articles for publication. We encourage you to keep this up. Don't forget "The Church Of Our Faith", send us a picture of your church, brief history, location, time of meetings and name of present pastor. We especially want to thank our associate editors for their editorials. Some have been writing for more than forty years. What a blessing it must be to be able to write and to be of so much comfort to the household of faith.

Then there is Elder Williams who keeps up with the subscription list and mails your "Signs" each month. You may not realize it but this is a big task and we think he is doing a fine job. If any of you fail to get your "SIGNS", please let him know. He doesn't want you to miss a single copy.

We have extra copies of the Signs printed each month. These are available to you for one dollar per copy. There may be family members who would like to have a copy to keep containing obituaries of their loved ones.

We are resolving to try and double our subscription list this year. With your help we think this is possible. PLEASE, just one new subscription sent in by each subscriber would meet our goal.

Now may God bless us to run with patience the race He has set before us, ever looking unto Him, the author and finisher of our faith. We pray not for Him to change that which He has purposed, but as the signs of the times come into focus, give us grace and courage to accept it and press on.

A little brother in hope,
Kenneth R. Key

How shall we sing the Lord's song
in a strange land?

Singing many times is the most beautiful and inspiring part of the worship service as voices and hearts are freed to express, with unbounding love, the praise and adoration felt for a sovereign Creator God who gives mercy and grace unto all His children. The songs, when sung from a heart unfettered by the cares and trials of this earthly life, express more love and honor unto God than any other form of praise. Singing with melody in the heart manifests in purer form the sentiment of the writer and the singer adds more meaning as he joins in the worship with his fellowship for the experience being told. It has always been a most beautiful way in which the Saints of God have expressed thanksgiving for their many deliverances and the pure joy for the gifts of mercy and grace bestowed upon them in their journey through this vale of tears. It is a form of worship that can be expressed by one alone or a group of people together with all of the love and fervor the hearts are capable of expressing.

Some of the most precious and pleasant memories of the earliest days of my experience, which I trust was an experience of grace, was driving down the highway with my song book on the wheel and singing the songs of zion at the top of my voice. I was happy beyond measure and I believe that I was enjoying the peace that Jesus spoke of leaving with his people. It seems that I understood clearer the message of the hymn and had a beautiful fellowship for the writer as he told of the Lords dealings with him that impressed him so that he desired to leave it on record for future generations who would pass

this way in their journey. There they would stop and have a drink of cool water from one who had gone on before and remember who the blessing is from in truth. Anyone, in nature, observing me, sometimes weeping so I could hardly see would have been concerned to see a grown man crying but it was from sheer joy and I can truthfully say that these were some of the sweetest seasons that I have ever experienced in my life. This season lasted for three years or more and I can't imagine anyone being blessed with more joy and constancy of mind to read, hear preaching and retain and meditate upon in days ahead of the beauty and comfort than I was at that time. I hardly had time to devote to my work or anything else as my mind was constantly remembering last Sunday's sermon or scriptures that I had read recently that were opened up to me in a way and manner that has since ceased to be.

It seems that now and for a long time I have been in the same condition that is described in the 137th Psalm. The children of Israel were in bondage in the land of Babylon and therefore were not free to do those things that were the desires of their heart. They had once enjoyed freedom to dwell in the land of Canaan and were blessed with grace to worship God in song and prayer as they were led in ways pleasing unto Him and pleasing and precious indeed unto them. Now, in captivity in this strange land they can no longer sing with joy in their heart and praise God from a pure conscience, and they wept as they remembered zion and the joys of their life there. It is because of their sins that they are in captivity, and justly so, but this takes away their ability to sing the

songs of zion with joy and peace. This has been my dwelling place for a long season now and I mourn as I remember the times of refreshing that I have had. I feel to be in captivity under the beggarly elements of the world and it is consuming all my time, demands my allegiance and deprives me of the freedom to sing with melody in my heart unto the Lord. I try to pray and words seem to never leave the room and when I try to speak it seems that I am but speaking with a natural understanding and it seems to be mockery indeed. Surely those referred to in the 137th Psalm could have been in no more desolate a condition than I feel to be in at the present time.

We read the scripture that says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," but we sometimes are made to wonder just how things being with us as they are can possibly be for our good. God's work is a perfect work, he is just as complete in his withdrawing from them for a season to make them to know how frail they are as he is in appearing to them in a season of mercy. These two extremes in his dealings with them cause them to realize their own inability to do anything of themselves but in each condition they cannot know that things will change because they try with all of their ability to help change them or to keep them from changing but at the time appointed of the Father the change comes. They are made time after time to stand still and behold the work of the Lord. This was true of the Children of Israel when they were in bondage under the king of Babylon.

They wept because they feared

they would never again sing those songs of praise and joy in the presence of their Lord. They could feel the barren state that they were in, They were taunted by their captors and demanded to sing them one of the songs of zion. Their captors were commanding that they present a song, which was so precious and sacred to the children of Israel, as an entertainment for the Babylonians. This they could not do and yet they were under the control of the enemy. This was a very distressing experience for the children of Israel, at the time, as it is for all when they are in a strange land and are not free to sing of the beauties of their homeland. They must have the inspiration of the spirit to sing with understanding of the beauties of the kingdom of their heavenly father. Out of zion the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. They long to behold this perfection of beauty but it is back in their homeland and they are in a strange land separated from it.

In speaking of the experiences of Gods children, in one place, the Apostle Paul said, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." And again, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." These and other scriptures causes ones who are in the strange land to have hope that as the Lord brought his children out of captivity so will he deliver those in future generations from bondage and free them so that they can once again enjoy singing the songs of zion and worship God in spirit and in truth. When one has been blessed to walk

about zion, behold her bulwarks, mark her towers and view the glory of her palaces, they will never be comfortable and feel at home when left to the elements of this time world. It will always be a strange land unto them and they cannot sing and make melody in their hearts while in this state of bondage. The world including very dear friends, family and loved ones invites and expects them to join with them and sing along with them, but there is no comfort there for those who have been blessed to know the joyful sound of singing the songs of zion.

The Lord's Children will ever remember zion long for the peace and joy of its courts. They will ever desire the manifest presence of the Holy Ghost in their hearts, as it assures them of their kinship with God the Father and God the Son and the surety that their eternal home will be in heaven. It enables them to rest in the knowledge that the eternal God is their refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. What a wonderful, secure and blessed haven of peace for those who return from their seasons of captivity in strange lands. This hope is what sustains them in the barren and desolate times that the scriptures tell us is experienced by all of the elect and chosen Saints of God in their travels here on earth.

"Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." This is the heritage of all of the singers of the songs of zion and they can but press on here in time and run with patience the race that is set before them, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. This is the highway, this is the way of holiness, it is for those the redeemed of the Lord. "And the ransomed of

the Lord shall return, and come to zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." If these are precious words to you, remember they are the words of the songs of zion and only the singers recognize them.

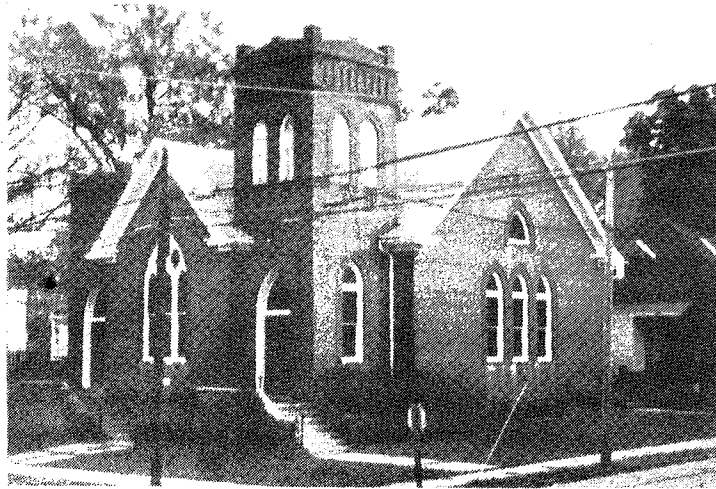
In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in January. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Lindsey Street (Reidsville) Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in 1904. The church is located on Lindsey Street in Reidsville, N. C.

Their meeting time is on second

Sunday of each month at eleven o'clock a. m.

Their present pastor is Elder D. V. Spangler.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life.

John 6:47, 48

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 14:6

CORRESPONDENCE

HUMILITY

It seems very strange to me that my mind should be impressed to write on the subject of humility, when I cannot find one particle of it in myself, and when I firmly believe we cannot tell anything to profit except we have learned it by experience, and that the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Savior comes to us through the exercise of divine grace in our hearts, which is christian experience. Yet being impressed, I feel it a solemn duty. If I have an earthly master, and he tells me to do certain things, I have no right to question, and ask the reason why, but my duty is to obey. And now as I start out in this task I am already encouraged and comforted, because as I hope my Master has at this moment caused me to perceive that he does not require humility at my hands; that HE is my humility, and he graciously and in mercy supplies every want and deficiency in me. If I have quit the service of my former master, whose reign over me was in darkness unto death wherein sin prevailed, calling forth every lust of the flesh, and have entered the service of him who reigneth in righteousness, then would I yield my "members servants to righteousness unto holiness." For the apostle tell us, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." There is no fruit yielded in our service as servants under sin. The end thereof is death. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." Humility is not one of the results of any of the works of

the flesh. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like." Is it any wonder then when I search in my own flesh for humility, that I find it not? Every possible emanation from the flesh is in direct opposition to an humble and contrite heart. The natural heart is filed with pride and self-esteem. It is continually in conflict and in battle for supremacy. It even presumes to say that the arm of God is shortened that he cannot save, unless mighty man humbles himself and accepts the proffered salvation. When I deplore in myself the absence of humility, and grieve and mourn because of the presence of every opposition to it, I discover I am not looking for it in the right direction. I want to do something that will ape humility, and try to deceive myself into thinking it is the real thing. In other words, I am trying all the time to get religion, and I am proud (not humble) to think how well I get along. I search out my brother's faults, and talk to others about him in an ugly way, saying, (if not in words) in my arrogance, if he would do as I do he would be above reproach. Is that humility? When the tree is corrupt, the fruit must of necessity be corrupt also. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean. Of the olden time before the flood we read this Scripture: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." So also throughout all the Scriptures the same truth is set forth; that man is totally depraved.

good thing. Again it is written, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Now when the children of God look to themselves for good deeds, looking away from Christ, and depending upon the deeds done in their body, they find the filthy self-righteousness of the proud spirit of the pharisee. Hide thy drooping head, O humility, thou hast no place there. And yet it is in this very proud pharisaic heart that the sweet spirit of grace takes up its abode, and causes the lofty head to bow low, the proud body to fall prostrate in the dust in humble acknowledgment and gratitude to a covenant-keeping God for his gracious and tender mercy. When we discover the superabounding of grace where sin did abound, what a change has taken place. The poor child HAS HAD his fill of sin; that which he once loved he now abhors.

He sees himself as he never saw himself before; a vile and depraved sinner. From the moment this work of grace begins, we observe the fruit that is yielded. The growth of the old, corrupt tree has ceased, its leaves faded, its beauty gone, its force abated, "a corn of wheat" has fallen into the ground, an incorruptible seed "by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." This seed takes root in the corrupt soil of the heart. The Husbandman careth for it in such a way that soon is manifested the upward growth: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The foul growths and evil weeds so conspicuous before, are cut down and dug up by the roots, by the hand of him whose

Spirit worketh grace in the heart. How interesting to watch the growth of the tender plants, from the time they begin the christian journey, and how anxious we are for them, and how careful of them when they have entered the warfare. The nursing mothers in Israel bathe their scars, and pour oil into the bleeding wounds. And then we rejoice as we see tribulation working patience. The frequent conflicts cause them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Now the work of the Spirit in this earthly soil, what does it produce? The apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law." But one might ask; Can a clean thing come out of an unclean? We answer, no, emphatically no. Well, that one may say, you have been comparing this fruit-yielding work of the Spirit to natural seed sown in the earth. Has the earth been changed, that it should bring forth "bread to the eater," when before it brought forth briars and thorns? No, the earth has not been changed, but it has been subdued, and the briars and thorns have been plowed under, and they die, and the soil is prepared and made ready for the sower. So this corrupt heart of ours. The plow and harrow of divine grace is set to work by the spiritual Husbandman, causing death to the unwholesome and corrupt works of the flesh. They are trodden under foot, they die. "Our old man is crucified with him, (Christ) that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Christ died; by His death the law which condemned us was satisfied, the sword of justice was removed from the way of the "tree of life." Christ arose from

the dead, and all the Father had given him arose with him to newness of life. And this is what the work of the Spirit now makes manifest. The saints of God, as such, are pure and holy, as He is pure and holy. The bodies were prepared for the sowing of the seed. The incorruptible seed has been sown; it has taken root downward, and bears fruit upward. And now we enter the vineyard of our Lord, and eat his pleasant fruits. Again the apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth." Well, what of the production? The first thing we discover in this new conception an birth is, that the Lord has fulfilled his promise that he would "take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh." They manifest a broken heart, which is an humble heart and a contrite spirit. So the very first result of fruit yielding in the new born soul is humility; and what did the man do toward bringing about that result? I will tell you what he did, he fought against it with all the power of all the pride of his natural heart. But glorious news, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Ever afterward when you meet and talk with that child, you will discover the meek and humble spirit. As the garden needs the hoe to keep down the weeds of evil growth, so also there is a need be that the spirit be in continuous exercise. The law of God is written in our heart, and when we violate that law we are chastised, which chastisements in the end "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Each one of us remembers the humility of soul we have felt after a spiritual whipping; how we were ready to crawl in the very dust to the feet of our breth-

ren, imploring forgiveness. O humility, thou canst now raise thy bowed head, for now thy light shineth, and the angels of God rejoice. Wisdom tells us, "Before honor is humility." Also, "By humility are riches and honor and life." And the apostle warns you to "Let no man beguile you in a voluntary humility." And he also admonishes you to "Be subject to one another, clothed with humility." How rich the clothing, wrought gold, as the clothing of the daughter of the King. If you ask me if I ever knew a time when I realized that I was truly humble, I would answer, no, and I would tell you, too, that the times when I thought I was humble, I found it to be pride of the worst sort. The natural man for his own ends will sometimes sham humility; the truly penitent child of God never. The power of God which works humility caused the persecuting Saul of Tarsus to become Paul (the little). The same power also filled the mouth of the psalmist with these words: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Now, O humility, blessed is thy condition; salvation has entered thy portals; thou art clothed with righteousness. The mighty man of war is brought low, behold him now, a child of peace. Jesus, clothed in thy habiliments, has set up his temple in the hearts of the inhabitants of Zion, and great is the joy and rejoicing in Jerusalem.

B. F. Coulter

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

Route 2, Box 920
Bassett, Virginia 24055

Dear Elder Key and all the editors of the "Signs".

I want to thank you for sending me a picture of Elder Gilbert Beebe. I am enjoying so much reading the books of his editorials. I think all Primitive Baptist should have these in their homes to read. He was wonderfully blessed to write the truth as is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Lord has given me a sweet hope that I am His and He is mine. He lead me up a very steep mountain and showed me a stream of pure water coming down that mountain and He blessed me to drink until I did not thirst any more. I was very low with pneumonia, given up by two doctors, and my blessed Lord healed me, a poor vile and wretched sinner. It was all because of His tender love and mercy and not for anything that I had done. I feel to be less than the least but have been given a great love for Him and His dear little ones. It is a blessing to be able to meet with them here on earth as we hope to praise and adore His holy name.

I am seventy-nine years old and have been blessed to meet with His beloved people for over fifty-eight years.

May the blessed Lord continue to lead and bless you editors, is my hearts desire and may the Lord bless you to pray for me.

Your little sister,
Callie Clark

Summerfield, N. C.
May, 1936

Dear Mr. Gold:

What a joy it is to me to read such

good pieces and to hear such good preaching as your father, Elder P. D. Gold, Elder Isaac Jones and Elder O. J. Denny did and Elder Denny does yet. I don't feel worthy of being so wonderfully blessed. And when I read the good experiences of the good brothers and sisters, my mind goes back to the days when I was a young man (I am past 75 now), when I was made to see myself a ruined and lost sinner, did not know what to do, would get the Testament and read it by myself, did not want any one to see me reading. I would get the song book and read, would try to pray, was trying to get good by doing good, but the more I did, the worse I got. My case seemed to be an outside case. How often have I wet my pillow with my tears, trying to ask the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner, and to pardon my many sins, but I got worse and worse all the time until it seemed to me that I could not live much longer. So one day I went out in my father's horse pasture to get a horse to do some work and while out there in that open field not a living soul in sight, all the time trying to ask the good Lord to pardon my many sins and at the same time I did not see how one so Godly as He was could condescend to have mercy on one so sinful as I was. So, while in this condition, my mind in a dazed condition, became impaired, my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth and I was not permitted to have a good thought or to speak a word. While in this fix I heard a still small voice say, "Thy sins are pardoned." My mind was restored, my tongue let loose and I was praising the Lord for His goodness and mercy to all men. I must have been the happiest one. I felt so good, light and free, my burden all gone. I was not only praising the Lord, but

the grass of the fields and leaves of the trees all seemed to be praising Him for His goodness and mercy.

All went well with me for two days and nights, then the tempter came in the way, "You have not met a change. It's all a delusion, it is stuff, all a myth. You have only caught at the substance and caught the shadow." I was in a bad fix to think all of my rejoicing was of no avail. So while in trouble about my condition the same sweet voice said, "My grace is sufficient for you." My doubts and fears were all gone and I was praising the good Lord again for His goodness and mercy. So it has been with me ever since, sometimes rejoicing sometimes in "Doubting Castle."

So after all this had taken place with me I would sometimes think about the Church, but never could feel good enough to ask a home with them. But one morning while I was plowing two horses (that were not very gentle at that time) with a two horse plow and at the same time asking the good Lord about my condition—Had I caught at the substance and only got the shadow?—this came to me as a command, "Why don't you go to the church of the true and living God, at Greensboro, and tell them what the good Lord has done for you and let them decide for you as to whether you have caught at the substance and only got the shadow." And then I was taken away from the things of this world, whether in the Spirit or out of it I can't tell, but there I saw myself in front of them, trying to tell them what the good Lord had done for me. And when I came to myself I was standing between those plowshares and the horses were standing still. Can't tell you how long that might have been, only a few minutes, or longer, but after all this I felt

so little and sinful, so unworthy, how could I go, but the burden of duty was on me. So late one evening when I was feeding the cattle my burden seemed like it would crush me in the ground. I said, "I'll go! I'll go!" Then a sweet small voice said, "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power." I was not only made willing to go, but now I wanted to go, could not wait until preaching day.

I went to the pastor of the church, O. J. Denny, of Winston-Salem, and asked him to make an appointment that I might go, which he did. Then I asked the good Lord if it was His will for me to go to the church, to go with me and enable me to tell a part of the many good things He had done for me, but I have often thought since joining the church, how well they could make out without me, but oh how could I make out without them.

A few months ago while I was about my work, (think I told Sister and Brother Neal about this), I heard a still small voice say to me, "Child of God." What a wonderful thing it is to be a child of God. I looked around me, saw no one, then different passages of scripture were presented to my mind, with understanding; then the blessed promises that are made to the children of God. Oh, Mr. Gold, I can't tell it, it is better felt than told.

I have told Brother Neal that I wanted to live at the feet of the brothers and sisters, did not want to do or say anything that would bring reproach upon the church. I feel that I am just a drone in the hive and can't help out like I want to. I have lost all I had except my farm, but if not deceived, I have a good hope that I would not exchange for ten thousand worlds like this.

Since the death of Mrs. L. A. Walker, who before our marriage was Miss

Lizzie Long, ocured on the 19th of July, 1935, I want to say, just here, that a good woman has gone home to live with the true and living God, the One she loved to worship in Spirit and in truth, and sing songs to His holy and good name. But in her passing she has left an aching void that never can be filled. But I thank the good Lord for our four children and their husbands and wives. They are so good and kind to me in my old age, (believe I told you that I was past 75). I could not ask them to be any better, and I pray the good Lord to be with them, guide and direct them in the ways of all truth that they may earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to saints, ever giving God the glory; ever realizing that it is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profiteth nothing and that they may so live that their last days will be their best days and they will be prepared to die the death of the righteous and may the dear Lord hover around their dying couch wherever that may be and be with them in the trying hour of death, and when their time is no more on earth that He will be pleased to waft their souls home to God who gave them, there to sing praises to His holy and good name forever. Then at that time we will see Him as He is and be like Him and be satisfied, and that will be enough.

Yours in hope of a home with our good Lord beyond the grave.

L. A. Walker

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VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE
ELDER JOSEPH L. STATON**

I was born in Worcester County, Maryland, in the year 1836, on the 18th day of June. My parents were both Old School or Primitive Baptists before I was born, my father preaching the gospel before my memory commences, and likely before I was born. I have heard him say he was a bound boy in the State of Virginia, raised at hard work, with but a little to eat, and no education. When he was eighteen years old he came to Maryland and soon after married my mother, Mary Givin. He worked in pleasant weather and, when it was not fit to work, he went to school or studied reading and writing at home, until he could attend to almost any business and was elected to some prominent and important offices and entrusted with some very important business. He was of a bright, cheerful disposition and was an able, sound gospel preacher. He died in May 1854, being fifty-six years old. My mother was a quiet, unassuming woman. She lived twenty years after my father's death and died in her eighty-fifth year.

My first thought of leaving this world and of an existence beyond and after this for those who lived in this world was and is the first thing of interest my mind goes back to, and perhaps as early in life as I was capable of retaining anything. My older brothers and sisters say I was not over three or four years old; at least, my eldest sister says she carried me in her arms. One of our

neighbors was buried and my father preached the funeral discourse, or I suppose he did; but I remember nothing till we went to the grave and the coffin was lowered down into the grave. A strange, lonely, desolate feeling came over me and I wondered what would become of that man if they covered him up in the ground and left him there. I seemed to have some idea that the man would be very lonely and desolate there, covered in that dark cell and the people all going away to leave him. I wondered how he would ever get out of there. Also, a verse of poetry that my father read or quoted at the grave made a lasting impression, indeed sufficient never to leave me. I did not see it or know it was in print for many years after. It was this, "Hark! from the tomb a doleful sound; mine ears attend the cry; Ye living men, come view the ground, Where you must shortly lie."

I seemed to realize then and there that it was the way of all the earth and that there must be another world, another place of existence, somewhere, for human beings who left this world. Many, many times has my mind gone back to that time and place and I remember as well today how things appeared to me that day as how they appear to me today; the resurrection of the body is as great a mystery to me today as it was that day, although I do hope I have learned many things since then. I have learned in part to obey through the things I have suffered. My life since has been a mixture of joy and sorrow; of sorrow because of my wickedness; of joy because sometimes I am enabled by faith to believe that my eyes have been opened to see good from evil and to know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good

thing.

I have nothing special to say of many years of my life; only one continually wicked and seemingly careless, profane, thoughtless life; but, as I now look back in my mind, I know that there were many dark and sorrowful hours, even in my wildest and most thoughtless days and years; That I was constantly doing, saying, and thinking things that in themselves appeared hateful, which sometimes gives me the hope that in my youth I partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and became a sensible sinner or transgressor, and that I had a desire even then to do the things that I found I knew not how to perform.

You will see by the dates that I was not eighteen years old when my father died. Notwithstanding all my disobedience and wickedness as a child to my father, his death fell heavily upon me. I then knew that a great blessing to me was gone, never to return, a blessing which I did not appreciate rightly while he was living. I still lived with my mother and can recall many things in my wicked career that I am ashamed to speak of. Even then they gave me much trouble and I made resolutions that if I lived to be older and settled in life that I would reform and live differently; I even made calculations that a reformation would make me a different man, not only in the sight of man, but also in the sight of God; for I yet believed that Christians were good people, or at least they were not sinners transgressing the law of God daily, as I was. I wonder yet sometimes how the good Master above can be reconciled to, and with, such a sinner as I am, so unreconciled to Him and sometimes almost rebellious. It is indeed a great mystery,

God made manifest in the flesh. I forget sometimes that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and that He has only given us the word or spirit of reconciliation. We have received the spirit of adoption and, by that Spirit comes or springs the desire to be reconciled and to say "Thy will be done." The Saviour, whilst here, had a mind or will which He says He did not come to do, but the will of Him that sent Him.

After living with my mother five years, giving her a great deal of trouble and, I must think, not much pleasure, my mind seemed settled to try and get a companion to share with me the sorrows and trials of life, and the joys if there should be any in store for me. In this I was wonderfully blessed in a true companion and helpmate in life. Her name was Louisa J. Tilghman, a true-hearted, noble woman. Her mother was a Methodist; her father made no profession, but seemed to have an understanding of the truth. Not long after a great event in my life, my wife began at intervals to tell me her experience, which I am now satisfied was the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing her a knowledge of the truth. She soon became in sentiment a Baptist, received them gladly, loved to see them and hear them preach and talk. It seems to me now that my nature was such that I could not be as kind to her as I should have been; but the longer we lived together the stronger the tie that bound us seemed to become. We struggled hard together for many years, being blessed with eight children, of which five still live. Our experience seemed to be almost the same as we journeyed in life for years; but we could say but little to each other about the things of the Spirit. For myself, I could say almost nothing to her

of any trouble or sorrow on account of sin, for I thought she would have no confidence in my sincerity.

For the most part of the time, we kept going to Old Baptist meetings, and but little anywhere else; not knowing why we went or what we went for. I remember one morning we went twelve miles to meeting, when the forest was on fire and the smoke and sea fog were so thick it was necessary for me to walk ahead of the horse for miles, to feel the road, and my wife, sitting in the carriage, could not see me part of the time, although I had on a light coat. I have never seen so dark a time, before or since, day or night. When we got to the meeting, neither of us could tell any one why we were so anxious to go. We knew we loved to see them and to hear the preaching, but neither of us yet dared claim a hope in the mercy of God.

We continued to go to meeting and our interest seemed to get deeper and more heartfelt. I was looking forward to the time when we should be given a hope; for I did not once think of having a hope, only (as I would express it sometimes) a hope for a hope. I had a strong desire and a good hope that we should sometimes become Christians and fit subjects for baptism and make a profession of Christianity. I do not remember, in all these years, from 1840 to 1873, that I ever had a single doubt about who or where the church was, or of having a single suggestion to my mind as to joining any other persuasion or of making any profession, but having the hope of sometime being numbered with believers and, of course, was looking ahead with some anxiety as to when the time would come.

During these long, weary years we had many trials to endure, losses, crosses, and disappointments, los-

ing two of our children in the time; but we enjoyed many blessings also. We had reasonable health, success in business, and had accumulated something of this world's goods, for all of which we felt unworthy of and thankful for. It seemed to me that, of all men, I should be the most thankful, and never murmur again at disappointment or loss; but all at once it seemed that the greatest and saddest disappointment of all that ever had been or could come into my life was coming, or had already come. I had been hoping these many years that I should one day be a Christian and such an one as would be blessed with a name and place among them; but, instead of getting nearer the church, as I supposed I should, I was getting further away all the time and I had just now come to see it.

That was the way things appeared to me; for my idea was to get better by littles, until the fitness appeared for membership and I would make application for membership and be received; but to my astonishment, surprise, and disappointment, I had been, and was, going backward all the time, and here I seemed to lose all hope of ever being what I had hoped for so long; for I saw the perfect righteousness and holiness was required to see the Lord or to make a profession in His Name and, as I was all unrighteousness, even much worse than I ever imagined before this view of things; and my sad disappointments, as I remember them, seemed to destroy all hope either in this world or in eternity; yet the desire for holiness remained. If there could be any justification and forgiveness for such sins, I longed to know of it.

These exercises, I think were in the year 1871. About that time, I

trust, the eyes of my understanding were opened more clearly to see how sinners could be and were saved, or how the sinner could be and was justified before God and still be a sinner, even such as I was. I thought then that God could be just and also the destroyer of the ungodly. His righteousness seemed perfect and perfected in us. It exceeded the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees; for they only obey in the letter, while He obeyed in the Spirit and became our Saviour. There was really hope for sinners, and it was a lively or living hope; for, because He lives, we hope.

About this time, my mind was more particularly directed to the Scriptures; not so much to reading them as to meditating on what I had read, as they would come to my mind, so that I had read and did not understand and had uttered things too wonderful for me, although it seemed to me I could not make a profession, for I might be deceived; yet there was reason to hope for salvation from sin and for the vilest of the vile. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." My mind, for about two years, was almost constantly on the Scriptures, and my own duty concerning them and, whilst I was not ready or willing to make a profession, I found myself exhorting and advising others who seemed troubled as I was. I never shall be able to tell of my deep concern for two years, not only for myself, but also for others. The great moving cause of all things in the truth seemed dear to me and I was constantly trying to tell, in my blundering way, how things appeared to me. I frequently thought of preaching the gospel; not with any idea that I should ever be enabled to preach. Really, I do not think I had any idea

what preaching was; but I kept thinking about it and of what a glorious calling to be called to comfort those that mourned, and to open the prison doors to them that were bound. Everything else seemed to lose its beauty and interest to me. In my zeal I corresponded with some of the preachers, asking questions about the Scriptures until they would occasionally say something about my way of preaching, which made me think more seriously about what preaching really was. I soon began to think it was explaining the Scriptures and applying them in the promises to those who were in trouble and concerned about themselves and what the Scriptures contained; to speak comfortingly to anyone who was lost, was to speak of salvation for such; point them to the Lamb of God; tell them of the way I had found that sinners could be and were saved. I would have liked ever so much to do that, but I could not, for they seemed mysterious. I was constantly making inquiry myself and could not understand; certainly what seemed so mysterious to me, I could not explain to others. It seemed to me then that the ministers of the gospel understood perfectly all the Scriptures and that it was necessary that they should; but I fail to remember the questionings that were in my mind. Many of them have followed me until now, more perhaps than would be interesting in this narrative.

I shall now speak more particularly of my baptism and of the difficulties and trials after about the first of July 1873. While reading one evening in the hymn book, my mind seemed particularly drawn to the world:

“Dear Lord, the ardor of thy love
Reproves my cold delays.”

I was made willing then and there to ask a place with those that I fully believed to be His followers. The time was fixed, that the first opportunity should not pass; but I was disappointed in my first attempt, one of my children being so sick that it was imprudent to leave him. For two weeks the subject of baptism was on my mind and then I was privileged to go. I was received and baptized and became a member of a church that had no stated preaching, but which met once a month for prayer and praise.

Now came one of the most severe trials of my life, There seemed to be no gift in that church; at least, if there was, it was not manifest. Some of them would read a chapter; sing some hymns; then go home. Here my mind was directed to prayer. Many times have I prayed that my mouth might be opened to speak in prayer. I would have given anything and everything for strength to make the attempt, for I wanted to say something; but the meeting would be opened by prayer and that I could not do, for I felt sure that such an effort would prove such a failure as to mortify me and the brethren and tend to destroy their love and confidence in me, which love and confidence was very dear to me. Worst of all, it would be but mockery in the sight of God.

For about two years, I continued to go, hoping all the time to be strengthened to do what seemed my duty and a great privilege and relief. During this time some of the brethren in the ministry advised me to make the attempt, as the only source of relief. About this time, six members, including myself, organized, and a church was constituted in Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland;

Some of them from Salisbury, where my membership was, and some from other churches. We immediately called Elder T. M. Poulson, of Virginia, as our pastor. He accepted the call and appointed to meet with us one Sunday in each month. He served us as faithfully as possible, but, living a distance of twenty miles, occasionally he failed to come. At such times, I generally read a chapter and talked a few minutes, but never attempted to speak in prayer until the church made an appointment for me and urged me to comply with their request.

When I consented to do so, it was with a vow, if permitted to do so, to open my mouth in prayer. Then came a very severe trial for a short time in reference to my duty. I could think of but little else until the time came, when my mouth was opened and one of the most sincere, heartfelt, earnest prayers I ever uttered was then, and I found such relief that I hoped the trial was over; but I was sadly mistaken. I have yet many misgivings and trials in speaking in prayer.

The church continued the appointments for me and proffered me liberty to go wherever and whenever called by other churches. This was in the spring of 1879; and during the following summer, by request, some days I attended three appointments, two in the daytime and one in the evening. During this entire year my family was more or less sick and, on the twelfth day of August, my dear companion in life was called home, which seemed for the time more than I could bear up under; but the Lord sustained me by His grace, for He had not yet called for me. I was very often sick through the week, but always able to go to meeting when Sunday came. As I remember, I did not

miss an appointment on account of my own sickness.

In the fall of 1879 the Salisbury Association met with the church at Snow Hill, where my membership was, and I heeded a previous call from the church for my ordination. The presbytery was composed of a number of brethren and the following ministers; Elders Gilbert Beebe, William J. Purrington, S. H. Durand, A. B. Francis, E. Rittenhouse, and T. M. Poulson. I was then and there regularly set apart by prayer and laying on of hands to the work of the ministry and immediately called by the church at Fishing Creek (near Cambridge, Maryland) to serve them as pastor and to preach for them once in two months; which call I accepted and have served them as the Lord has been with me since.

In the Spring of 1880, the church near Newark, New Castle County, Delaware, called Welsh Tract, sent me an invitation to visit them once a month; also, the London Tract Church, Chester County, Pennsylvania, sent me the same invitation, both of which I accepted. I visited them several months, when both churches expressed a desire for me to move my family to Delaware and become pastor of those two churches. In the spring of 1881 myself and family moved to New Castle County, Delaware and settled on a little farm near Newark and I began serving those two churches regularly, in addition to serving the church at Fishing Creek, Dorchester County, Maryland.

During this time, or in the fall of 1880, the Lord blessed me with another companion in life, a good Christian woman and an established Old School Baptist, which has proved a helpmate indeed. I am at this writing, June 1, 1883, just forty-seven years

old, with a family of six children and a second wife, the youngest child being hers. Three of my first wife's children have passed away to be with their dear mother in the immediate presence of the great Judge of all things and the Giver of all good. I am yet serving the three churches from time to time as the Lord is pleased to be with me.

After speaking somewhat of the churches I serve and of their present condition, I propose to go back in my mind and speak somewhat of my trials, difficulties and deliverances in the ministry.

The Welsh Tract Church is the first Baptist church organized in America, and at one time before the division and separation, I think it numbered two hundred members. Since then the church and congregation has been much smaller. When I came here there were fifty-seven members. Since then three have passed away and three have been baptized, leaving the number the same, but very much scattered, several old and infirmed. Our communicants at our quarterly meetings seldom exceed thirty-seven and the congregation from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five.

The London Tract Church, also organized a great many years ago, has always been small, the present membership only seventeen, the congregation from seventy-five to one hundred. Many in each congregation seem to love the truth.

The Fishing Creek Church is very small, having since my recollection been sustained with from seven to twelve members and a congregation of seventy-five to one hundred, generally very attentive to the Word. The mercy of the Lord and the power of His grace have been wonderfully

manifest in sustaining this church under many discouraging circumstances, for years at a time with no male member or deacon, one of the sisters acting as clerk; yet they never failed to correspond with the sister church and to keep up their regular church meetings.

One of my greatest conflicts through life has been with my own evil heart of unbelief. I have often thought if sufficient evidence was given me that I was qualified to preach the gospel of the grace of God, it would be a great privilege and I have often said to myself that I had rather be a gospel minister to the children of God than the chief magistrate of the United States. Indeed, I never have desired any office in the gift of the people. I have always felt incapable of serving them well in any important office and hence have had no desire for them. The same feeling of insufficiency to serve the church has made me all through life very timid and backward. Whilst I remember and know that our sufficiency is of God, my nature has seemed to forbid me to trust; hence, the conflicts, and slow to believe what I knew must really be so. There is to my mind a great mystery in this, that whilst we know that salvation is of the Lord, yet we are constantly looking for something in ourselves to recommend us to God, and can scarcely understand how a helpless sinner can be saved, when they are the only ones that can be saved, as others have nothing to be saved from.

Just so it has been with me in reference to preaching the gospel. While I know that the Lord must fill my mouth, if it is profitable to His redeemed, yet I am always wanting something on hand to say, for fear He will not give it to me when the

time comes; but I think this all comes from that evil heart of unbelief and the doubt that remains in my mind as to whether the Lord has required this at my hands. I have never felt to sensure poor old Jonah much for trying to get away. I guess he was honest and conscientious in what he did and needed that much more experience to prepare him to pay his vows. In short, I will say that the subject of prayer and praise to God has been a very solemn subject and I have had a great struggle with myself, both in commencing the work and in keeping it up. I have spent many sleepless hours and sweated many big drops, and yet self seems uppermost in the very best of my performances. I know that, unless obedience is in the heart, the act is but mere mockery in the sight of God.

July 19, 1884

On the 17th of this month the good Lord gave us the care of a very promising little boy for a while; we know not for how long. This is the second child by my second wife.

Since the last writing in this book, I have had many conflicts, many dark hours, and some very bright and pleasant ones. The mercy of the Lord still endureth and my unworthiness is still the same. The brethren seem to understand what I mean to say and do not expect anything of me, only as the good Master above is pleased to grant them through me. If He opens, no man can shut; truly, if He shuts, no man can open. The Lord is good to them who put their trust in Him; but alas, man is so prone to err.

At present there are eight regular appointments for me to meet in each month, to preach as the Lord may enable me, and it is a blessing to me that no more is expected of me by the brethren than what He is pleased to

give. It is always a blessed privilege to me to deliver a message if I can feel that it comes from the Lord; otherwise, it is a hard, laborious task. The engagement in spiritual things, if indeed that engagement is mine, is more in feeling the power of the Spirit in my own soul than anything else. The company of the saints is very precious at such times, but sometimes the flesh so shuts out the light that I prefer to be alone.

Since the last writing, I have accepted the call of the Salem Church of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to meet with them every fifth Sunday, or four times a year.

July 27, 1888

There has been nothing of special note since the last writing. I am still serving the four churches at stated times, with such ability as the good Lord is pleased to give me. In these churches there is an ingathering, we believe, according as God is pleased to constrain by His almighty Grace.

September 20, 1889

Many days have passed since I wrote in this book. Very much of the time has been spent in doltary idleness, seemingly for want of ambition. The congregations and churches I am serving have kept up the usual interest. There have been occasional additions to them, the one in Philadelphia of which I see the least manifests the most zeal of any, having the most additions to their number, assuring me more and more that the good Master above is adding to the church daily such as shall be saved; that it does not in any sense depend upon my feeble efforts.

Joseph L. Staton

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Virginia, a presbytery met November 5, 1983 at the church for the examination of Brother Clyde Johnson, if found qualified with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of a deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Willard Cox. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders O. K. Tench, Rufus Brown, Larry Hollandsworth, Noel Connors, Willard Cox and J. R. Hollandsworth.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder J. R. Hollandsworth as moderator and brother Harry B. Cannady as clerk. Elder O. K. Tench was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Posey Poindexter having being duly appointed by Bethel Church as spokesman for the church delivered brother Clyde Johnson to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elder O. K. Tench. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Noel Conner delivered the charge to the candidate.

The moderator asked Bethel Church if they approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

The right hand of fellowship and

brotherhood was given to Brother Johnson and he was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth,
Moderator
Brother Harry. B. Cannady, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR October, 1983

J. E. Mosley, Al.....	\$ 3.00
Mrs. Dorothy L. Foster, WV.....	10.00
Mrs. Luther Procter, NC.....	1.00
Mrs. Mary H. Stratton, VA. . .	2.00
W. D. Brown, VA.	3.00
Mrs. P. J. Lawrence, VA. ...	3.00
Mrs. W. S. Shepherd, NC.....	6.00
Mrs. Nannie A. Carter, NC. . .	7.00
Elder G. R. Smith, LA.	7.00
Mrs. O. W. Parks, TX.....	7.00
John W. Payne, NC.....	2.00
A Friend, VA.	5.00
A friend, VA.	7.00
Mrs. C.R. Hollandsworth, VA.	3.00
Ernest Stone, NC.....	2.00
Elder Paul Poyner, KY.....	3.00
H. M. Summerlin, Jr. GA. In memory of Mrs. H. M. Summerlin ..	20.00
Mrs. Hixie Guest, AR.	3.00
Mrs. Irene Setliff, NC.....	5.00
Mrs. John Brown, VA.	12.00
Mrs. Dorothy D. Sieglaff, NC.	17.00
Mrs. Jean B. Moran, NC....	7.00
J. O. Sanders, AL.....	2.00
Robert L. Lovelace, NC.....	1.00
Mrs. Agnes L. Truitt, MD....	2.00
Elder Hassel Allen, NC.	5.00
Mrs. Susie Williamson, NC... .	2.00
Mrs. L. C. Watson, TN.	3.00

THE LOVELYNESS OF THE LORD

*Our Lord's more lovely than the beautiful rose
of sharon*

*More than the lily of the valley doeth He
shine.*

*Into Our heart and mind He sends His holy
spirit,*

*To cleanse Our soul by His grace, and love
divine.*

*As we live and breath the essence of His holy
power,*

*Bringing comfort to Our heart with peace
and rest.*

*Faith lets Us feel the effectual love of His
calling,*

*With a hope that We now live among the
Blessed.*

*We pray Thee Lord to guide Our feet and keep
Us humble,*

*May we help some Lamb of thine Who show
Thy grace.*

*May Thy spirit lead Our mind that We may
know Them,*

By the spiritual light of love upon their face.

*In Thy book We find sweet promise to Thy
children,*

*If some burdened Soul in trouble We should
see.*

*It is Our duty to give comfort and relieve
Them,*

*Thus We give honor, bringing glory unto
Thee.*

*O' precious Lord, Thou art Our King, Our
loving Shepherd,*

Ever tending Thy sacred office at the door.

*One by one Thy Lambs go in and find green
pastures,*

*To live with Thee in love and bliss, forever-
more.*

George N. Lee
2414 Buena Drive
Mobile, Alabama

OBITUARIES

ELDER WILLIAM ELMER PRINCE

Elder William Elmer Prince was given good liberty to praise God

and to edify the congregation when he visited the Union Meeting of the Soldiers Creek Association this spring. It was his last time to fill the stand. His sojourn in this earthly wilderness was ended on May 17, 1983. He was a long standing member of Cane Creek Church. He was much appreciated for his gentle and patient manner, both as an Elder and as a church member.

Although Elder Prince was seventy eight years old, he traveled considerably among the churches in Tennessee, Kentucky and south Illinois. He will be greatly missed. He is survived by his wife Dovie, two sons, three grandchildren and other close family members.

Respectfully submitted,
Wayman Chapell

BROTHER GEORGE E. JOYCE

It has pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst Brother George E. Joyce. Brother Joyce was born January 2, 1918 in Patrick County, Virginia and departed from this life August 14, 1983. His parents were the late Deacon Brother Rufus Monroe and Sister Mary King Joyce.

Surviving are his wife, Ollie May Joyce of the home, two daughters, Mrs. Shirley Littles, and Mrs. Mary Weiss, both of Patrick Springs and one son, Jimmy Joyce of Stuart. One son, Everett Cuper Joyce preceded him in death on October 22, 1978. Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Annie Lou Foley, Patrick Springs, and Mrs. Revie Sawyers, Stuart, and two brothers, Mr. Rufus Joyce, and Mr. Guy Joyce of Stuart and six grandchildren.

Brother Joyce united with Liberty

Primitive Baptist Church in July 1960 by experience. Appointed trustee in March 1961 and ordained as deacon on May 6, 1961. He was faithful to attend his church and the sister churches, too.

Brother Joyce was wounded during World War II in France, and lost a leg. He received several metals of honour, including the Purple Heart.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Bennie Clifton and was assisted by Elder John Wingfield. It was held at Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart and burial was in the Adams' Cemetery at Patrick Springs, Virginia.

We of the Liberty Primitive Baptist Church extend to the family our deepest heart-felt sympathy and hope they may be strengthened by remembering the faith and hope their husband and father had. We of the church will also miss him.

Done by order of the church September 3, 1983.

Submitted by: Paul Puckett, Clerk

BROTHER LEON THOMASSON

Whereas, by the request and common consent of the Liberty Primitive Baptist Church, it being our desire to render a written tribute of respect to the memory of our brother and friend, Leon Thomasson, we do hereby publish the following account of his life.

Brother Thomasson was born August 20, 1907 near Leatherwood, in Henry County, Virginia, being one of the seven children of Jesse B. and Ellen Eggleston Thomasson. On June 30, 1942 he was united in marriage to Sister Mildred Adkins Thomasson, who survives. To this union the Lord granted seven children, the six now living who are as

follows: two sons, Jerry Wayne and Wesley Damon Thomasson; and four daughters, Mrs. Marcella Dyer, Mrs. Evelyn Eggleston, Mrs. Brenda Bowles, and Mrs. Dale Burnette. He was also survived by seven grandchildren and two sisters; Mrs. Doris Gregery and Sister Nannie W. Rickman.

Brother Thomasson settled near the rural Henry County community of Preston around 30 years ago, where he and his wife brought up their fine family. He and his companion were blessed to live together for a space of 41 years. He made his living by working for several area furniture manufacturers, and after retirement, he worked as a security guard until the last illness which preceded his death.

For many years before joining the church Brother Leon went among the Old Baptists and was known as a firm friend of this people and their cause, in general. Some time after his sister and his wife joined, he asked for a home with Liberty Church in June, 1967, was received and baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton and Elder Ben Martin. He remained a loyal member the balance of his earthly life, and went in and out among us quietly and peaceably until the Lord called him away on August 2, 1983. Without being aware of it Brother Leon was blessed to faithfully apply the inspired teaching of the Apostle Paul, who wrote, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Romans 12:18)

After several months of declining health Brother Leon was admitted to Martinsville Hospital the last Friday in July and passed away on the following Tuesday. Funeral services were conducted at Roselawn Chapel

by Elders Bennie Clifton, Paul Hopkins, and John Wingfield, burial followed in the Roselawn Burial Park, where Brother Thomasson's body awaits the final glorious appearing of His Saviour.

Now, therefore, be it resolved:

First: That we acknowledge the wisdom and mercy of God in Brother Leon Thomasson from this world to one far better, and

Second: That we extend our sincere sympathy to his family and all near and dear unto him, and

Third: That we submit three copies of this memorial, one to be included in our church record, one to be presented to his family, and one to be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

Done by order of the Liberty Church in conference, the third day of September, 1983.

Elder Bennie Clifton, Moderator
Deacon Paul Pucket, Clerk
Submitted by: John T. Wingfield

RETHA B SMITH

I hold it true whatever befall;
I feel it when I sorrow most;
Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.
Tennyson

The above quote has meant much to me in the past ten months. Although at times it is difficult for me to agree with Alfred Lord Tennyson, especially when I think of all the beautiful memories I hold dear of my mother, Retha B. Smith, and the joys that filled our lives.

Sister Smith was born on April 16, 1900, in Wayne County, the daugh-

ter of S. H. and Margaret Sauls Blow.

She is survived by her husband, Eli T. Smith, Sr.; two sons, Eli T. Smith, Jr. and W. H. Smith; a daughter, Mrs. Sedalia Smith Green—all of Fremont, North Carolina. Four grandchildren, three great grandchildren; a half sister, Mrs. Margaret Coker; and stepmother, Mrs. Estelle Gooch.

Sister Smith united with the Aycock's Primitive Baptist Church in March, 1930, and as health permitted, was faithful until her death. Her father served as deacon of Aycock's Church longer than any other person. Her husband and son, Eli, Jr. are both active deacons.

For many years Sister Smith opened her home to friends, not only from her church but from many churches, to enjoy good food and fellowship. There were but few weekends that she did not have guests which were a joy to her because she was a gracious hostess and an excellent cook.

Sister Smith's funeral was conducted on Wednesday, January 26, 1983, at the Fremont Fernal Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes.

At the conclusion of a most beautiful and appropriate service, Sister Smith was laid to rest in Elwood Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, symbolic of friendships and love through the years.

Written by her daughter
Sedalia S. Greene

SISTER ANNIE MAYHEW TOSH

TIt is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister

Annie Mayhew Tosh; born April 6, 1896. She was the daughter of the late Robert Hill Mayhew and Laura Elizabeth West Mayhew. She was the widow of Willie Bennette Tosh.

Sister Tosh was a dear and faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by Experience and baptized July 11, 1937. Sister Tosh loved her church and brethren. She attended meetings regularly as long as her health permitted. I have sweet memories of Sister Tosh—I saw her many places and she was never ashamed to embrace and call me Sister—though I felt very unworthy, it made me feel a special love for her.

Sister Tosh passed from this life August 7, 1983. Her funeral was held by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench. She was layed to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Virginia. She leaves to mourn her, one foster daughter, Elizabeth Mayhew Jones, Euclid, Ohio, one foster grandchild and many friends. May each one be reconciled to her passing and say, Thy Will Be Done.

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

BOOK NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Having been requested by brethren and friends to leave upon record some of my experiences in the ministry, especially in relation to many of God's people being led to His house.

The book will have the following contents:

The testimony of many of God's people, in their exercises of Soul in being brought into the church.

My personal experiences.

Past Editorials written years ago on the following texts.

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- The relationship between Pastors and Deacons.
- Churches and Associations, and a number of other subjects relating to the Doctrine and Practices of Old School Baptist.

Record of the churches I serve becoming independent churches.

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Elder James F. Poole
P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D.V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, n. C. 27405.

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Route 1, Box 65

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YE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION

We stagger neath our heavy crosses,
Each one feels his own the worst;
We mourn and grieve our bitter losses,
And at times our hearts near burst.

On every hand we see around us
Heads bowed down with grief or pain,
Should these things greatly astound us?
We must suffer, rest to gain.

If we knew not pain or sorrow,
If we suffered not at all,
Would we then some glad tomorrow
Hail with joy our Father's call?

When He calls to all His treasures,
Rise my fair one and my love'
Come and share eternal pleasures
Praising God in heaven above.

Oh! call me soon my blessed master
From this cross, to claim my crown;
Speed the days and hours far faster
Till my armor I'll lay down.

Haste the day when pain is ended
When cross-bearing all shall cease;
When with Christ my spirit's blended
Eternally to rest in peace.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/84
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 46: 9, 10

Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else, I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

The above text of Holy Writ has been passed on to me for exposition. Al-

though I have been writing on this text (in substance) for fifty years, I confess my weakness, both in a natural as well as a spiritual sense to the extent that I have never been satisfied about what I have said. The subject is vast, for it covers the creation of the world, the supreme ruling of it by He that created it, to the last disposition of it.

The subject is so sublime that it covers every thing pertaining to time. That is, if inspiration is to be credited with giving us a clear picture of time. Now the question that we are called upon to settle is this, to wit: Has God declared the end from the beginning? Strictly speaking, I am not capable of answering a question like unto that. Yet, as one that has professed before men and before Him, I am qualified to say, and to declare with all of the mind and strength that I possess that God has declared the end from the beginning. I do not need to qualify my declaration of this vital truth. It is the most God dishonoring doctrine that has ever passed mortal man's lips to say otherwise. God has said that He did declare the end from the beginning.

I am treating on this matter by request (as the most of my writing is in answer to requests, but not to argumentation), and unless I am woefully deceived, I am led to a throne of grace to beseech my heavenly Father to tether my mind and my tongue that I not know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. God sent Him into the world to save sinners. In doing that He covered the ground completely. Not one word nor one step was in jest or in vain. He came according to divine prophecy; He lived and acted out His assignment from His Father. He declared while enduring the anguish of that work, that to this end was I born and for this purpose came I into the world. The purpose in Him coming was that He might bear testimony to the truth. Every step that he walked, every word that He said, all was de-

clared of Him before He was formed in the womb of the virgin. Verily, as it was said of Him, He ever was about His Father's business. Everything that was declared of Him in prophecy He had to endure. If He did not overcome everything related and connected with His people's warfare then He did not overcome all things for them.

In brotherly love I present to you that God declared the end from the beginning. The only reason for this statement is the plain unequivocal statement that He said that He did. Did He not do that? He said that He did. I have not got any reason whatever to argue the matter. The text at the head of this article tells us that He declared the end from the beginning. Can that be explained away? What will be your argument? Is it said anywhere in Holy Writ that he did not do that? The language expresses God as declaring the end from the end. Will ridicule do away with God's declaration? It does seem that if I could not answer God's sovereignty any better than that, I would leave it off. Perhaps this ridicule would sometime do that if it was not that their ridiculing God's statement that He did declare the end from the beginning also embraced their doing it.

According to the text God has been declaring this doctrine from ancient times. How far back? How remote has this declaration been made? If language means anything, and it does, then from all ancient times God has been declaring it. Not just at one period, or at one time, but from ancient times. Do you know how far back that goes? Do you know at what period, in dealing with His children, that He did not do that? If language means anything, and it does to those taught of God, then the ancient times are limitless, and without number, and these declarations cover all times. This declaration of the things, all of the things, not yet done, is now and continually.

Very well, if you do not believe this, what do you believe? If you do not believe this truth that God has declared so clearly, where does the doctrine that you do believe come from? It does not come from God, even the God of the Bible, because He has said in His Bible, which is the source of His doctrine, that He has declared from ancient times the end from the beginning. There is not any that can do this. He is the only being that can declare the end from the beginning. Is that denied? Has there ever been a creature that could do this? Well, can He do it? His comprehension was such that he declared all of the things not yet done. The important question, yea, the pertinent question is this: Did He declare the things not yet done? Let us remember that He said that from ancient times He had declared the things (how many things?) not yet done.

Let us look back in retrospection at the divine prophecy of God. Let us call upon the individuals of the present day. The many prophetic announcements concerning the Son of God's advent into the world. Those prophecies were all His divine declarations. Did one of them fail? Come dear readers, come and tell us one single declaration concerning the advent and departure of Jesus Christ that failed to come to pass. Remember that God declared before He came how He would arrive, how He would be treated, how and by whom He would be crucified. Did one event fail to come to pass? One important declaration made by God was that the wicked would do wickedly. Did they ever do a good deed toward Him? Did they ever receive Him with peace and joy? You may take each and every prophecy, or if you please, every declaration that God made in the life of Jesus Christ, follow it from its appearance until His rising from the dead, and the only answer you will ever get from Holy Writ is that it came to pass.

Come with me to Holy Writ. Let us

pick at random any Bible character. God sent each of them into the world to fill a certain purpose. In each case God laid out the events that would take place in their lives. Did each episode allotted or declared to follow him take place? In each and every case it is the same divine path laid out for the servant. Which one, in each of their lives, failed of occurring. Follow Joseph from birth to death, the things that God declared would occur did occur. Take any of the saints of old, and in the most minute detail every item declared as being a part of his life came to pass. How wonderful it is that in our searching of the Bible that not only are all things declared before they come to pass, but even the individuals of the Bible that God has declared the events of their life before hand, and that they come out and are displayed in the Bible from birth to death.

Now have you noticed the wonderful culmination of this declaration before of the events of time? God assigns His reason or purpose in this. It is that my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Whether it is God or man that has determined a thing that God meant it all for good, even the wickedness of Joseph's brethren. How often, how often in the last one hundred and fifty years have professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ have pictured the scriptural writers of the maligned writers in this periodical for saying that evil things wrought good for the cause of Christ. Yet, Joseph comforted his guilty brethren by telling them that although they meant it for evil that God meant it for good. There is not a logician on the face of the globe that could get Joseph down into Egypt after taking out one of the events in that of getting him down there. God sent Joseph down there. He selected and declared before hand how that he would go.

Did God determine the going down into Egypt of Joseph and not determine

the way that he would go? Did He? This was one of the most important events in the history of Israel. From a human reckoning, I would venture to suggest that it was second to the sending of Jesus Christ into the world. In fact, the first is a figure of the second. The certain outcome of each event was as much as the other. The same Being declared the coming of one that declared if of the other. There were saints and the vilest of sinful wretched involved in each event, the first meaning it for good, the latter meaning it for evil, and the Declarer of both meaning it all for the good of God's people and the others meaning it for evil.

One thing in particular about the predestination of all things that you will not notice among the family of God. Not a member of that family is going to lay their sins on God. It is true, I am sorry to say, some of the professing members of the body of Christ will do that way. Some of them will be so destitute of a wrought in experience of grace that they will boldly attempt to lay the blame on God; that He is to be blamed, that He is the cause of their wrong doing. David did not lay the blame on God when he was caught in a scheme to get Uriah's wife. Instead of shifting his sin off on God, he humbly confessed his guilt, saying, my sin is ever before me. Yet, it is expressly declared that God declared the end from the beginning, and there is not a pen of God, nor a tongue that the Holy Spirit has loosed, that wants to, nor that can tell who would have been the father of Solomon, or that can even tell whether he would have ever been on the face of the earth, or that he would have ever been born had David not got her to wife. David did not, and I do not, and no man or woman under the divine leadership of the Spirit is going to condone David's sin.

When God says a thing, that should (and it does) settle the matter. God's

taught children abide by what God said about it. God sent Joseph down into Egypt. He said that He did. He further told his brethren what actuated them in selling him into Egypt. They meant it for evil. What was it that they meant for evil? It was not for a righteous deed, but it was for their evil acts. Joseph told them, and thus God tells us that God meant it for good. That which they meant for evil God meant it for good. It was the same in both cases. The "it" that they meant for evil, the same "it" God meant for good. I have heard ninety five per cent of the predestinarian ministers in my life time, and with two or three exceptions I have not heard any of them say anything stronger about evil works than what Joseph said about his evil brethren.

God has declared the end from the beginning of all such matters. He clearly and emphatically and time and again said that He sent Israel down into Egypt and brought them out again. I am sure of how and by whom God opened up the way for them all to go, and I am likewise sure of how that He brought them out. I glory in this glorious work of God. All the bitter

writing and pulpit ranting by the enemies of God's doctrine hasn't made a dent in The declaration of God of things not yet done, saying that my council shall stand and that I will do all of my pleasure.

Let us, dear brethren, do the best that we can to ignore the cursing of those that know not David, that know nothing of the journey into Egypt, nor less of the deliverance from there, and let us by the grace of God do as our blessed Master, and as our dear fellow traveller, to wit, David, let us say nothing against them that would malign us, for we must ever recognize that we must expect that for if they do these things to the green tree we certainly cannot expect any less in dry branches.

His declaration of the end from the beginning will at a time unexpected and unlooked for, the Lord shall come again, and that those that have turned a deaf ear to the cry of the poor and afflicted people of God, will all be begging for the mountains to fall upon them.

In love and fellowship to the poor,
Elder W.D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Dan River Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in the year 1884. It is located on N.C. Highway 700 and Route 2, Ruffin, N. C. Their services are on Fourth Sunday mornings and Saturday night before and on second

Sunday nights of each month. They also meet together and sing every first Sunday night. Their present pastor is Elder David Spangler who has served this church for the past sixty years. This is also Elder Spangler's home church.

CORRESPONDENCE

There has been a lot of Scriptures that have crossed my mind that I thought I would like to talk about. But the time is passing on. Maybe I will talk to you a little while. The brethren were preaching this morning concerning Jacob and Esau. I could not help but remember that I heard a man trying to tell the difference between the two sons, the two brothers and he said after he talked a long time on the matter concerning Cain and Abel. He said he just did not know why that God chose the offerings of Abel and rejected the offerings of Cain, unless He liked lambs better than He did vegetables. The man had a point. If he had confessed God made choice between the two offerings it would have ruined everything he had peached all these years. If he had said God had elected one over the other it would have still ruined and destroyed everything he had been standing for and praching all had been standing for and preaching all those years.

I want to talk to you just a little bit about the fellowship that God has blessed us with, a fellowship that Paul expressed as a mystery, and it is a mystery. It is a great mystery how the Lord has chosen the people in the flesh and put His spirit in them to see one another as the angels of God and look at one another as the children of God and not after the flesh. Can you think of a greater mystery than that? We are all made of the same lump, naturally speaking, clothed and robed in the same robe of flesh. If one disagreed with the other then he would say that there is nothing to you anyway and they would go their way and never speak again to one another. If these brethren at my back and if you fell out with all the ones that disagreed with you in your

walk of life and what you believed pertaining to the Scriptures, where would you be? Would you be here today? I tell you of a truth that if we should fall out with everyone that disagreed with us on any particular, then we would all go our way and none of us would be here.

But think of it, what a mystery it is that God would bless us to overcome. That's wherein God blesseth his people to overcome that, that dewlls in us in nature and seek after those things that are of the spirit. We see one another as the children of God, a great mystery. Blessed, blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. I believe my dear hearers, that there is no people on the face of the earth that know the joyful sound as those who have been given to die to the things of the flesh. That's wherein the fellowship comes in. Paul said that I am crucified to the world and the world is crucified to me. What's he saying? He is saying that I am dead to the world and the world is dead to me. Our life is meeting Christ with God and he goes further. He says when He shall appear, then shall we appear with Him in glory. What a wonderful thing! Your life, my life, that we live in Christ is His promise. We walk by faith; we walk not by sight. That's why that in this fellowship of the spirit, fellowship of the suffering and that's where God brings His people to in that very avenue. I fine no other source in this Book, and you won't either, that God has brought His people together in this fellowship that we have been so blessed with during this association. By no other avenue can one enter into it except by the putting away of those things that pertain to the flesh. Our fellowship is in the spirit of God and the love of God is manifest. That's where God shows His smiling face upon us.

I have been trying to serve the spirit for about 21 years and I try to remind the folks that I speak to, of the peace that God has blessed us with and make

them realize that we are not to take our fellowship or our peace for granted. It is God Himself that keeps us in this unity, in this love, that we might seek the same thing through the love of God. Nevertheless, I believe that God brings things among us to stir us up sometimes that we may be more careful pertaining to this peace that God has blessed us with. Do you believe that? I do. He brings things. He sends things that make us to realize how precious that our fellowship is that we have to enjoy. Let us not my dear brethren and sisters and kind friends take what God has blessed us with for granted.

Two weeks ago I talked in a home for just a little while about us being together. This is the same thing, it's all together, the fellowship of the saints of God, their being brought together. He raised us up together and He has made us to sit together in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus our Lord. This meaning that there is no other way that one could ever be able to sit in a heavenly place in Christ unless He made us. I know that's contrary to the doctrine of the world but oh my friends, that's why Paul spoke about fellowship as being a mystery. Yet it is as plain as your nose on your face to us who are blessed with it. It seems like the whole world could see it. When Christ was talking to His disciples of His death and resurrection, He told them that the world would see Him no more but they would see Him. He was asked how He was going to manifest Himself to them and not unto the world? How is it that you can do this thing? He said We will just come and take up our abode with you.

Oh, my dear hearers, we are blessed with the greatest treasure, the greatest blessing that ny people could ever have on the face of the earth. That's why I believe that among our folks that you will find the carefulness, that we are careful as to what we say; we are careful

as to what we do lest it be offensive to our brethren. Those principles are made to abound in our hearts when these things come our way and we are blessed. Principles that you don't have to go and ask somebody if this is right or if that's wrong. It's laid there. That's why you'll find the tongues of His people are bridled by the spirit of God. What a wonderful thing, that's to the keeping of this beautiful fellowship that we have one with another, the family of God. Oh, how beautiful it is. Do you know what fellowship is? Fellowship, it's fellows in the same ship that share the same things that are given a oneness of mind by the same spirit, not different spirits but of the same spirit. This is why my dear hearers that we are made to be careful. Oh, my friends let us walk softly; let us be mindful to maintain this peace through our Lord Jesus Christ that he so wonderfully blessed us with.

There are brethren and sisters that have come from thousnads of miles away and yet we can come together. I am not talking about this togetherness as we are here together under these trees. I am not talking about that kind of togetherness. I am talking about a togetherness that is invisible to the natural eye. I am talking about the shedding forth from one to the other the greatness of the love of God. When we shake one anothers hands, do you think that it is just a habit that we have? Is it? When we meet with one another is it just a habit that we want to shake one anothers hand? Oh no! I go outdoors sometimes and I walk out in the yard. My neighbor will come over and I don't even think that I want to shake hands with him. I just don't. But when I meet with those that have been brought the same way that I feel the Lord has taught us, I want to shake his hand. There is an extension there from one to the other of the wonderful fellowship. That's what it is.

I remember years ago I went out into

the yard one day and my neighbor came over. We were talking about the church. He said, "You know we had our fellowship meeting at our church last night."

I said, "Oh you did."

"Yes we did and I thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship."

And I said, "That's good, that's good, what did you talk about?"

"We talked about what we had done in the past several weeks and what we planned to do in the weeks to come. Oh, it was just a lovely fellowship meeting."

Is that what you call fellowship? If it is my dear hearers, you know nothing about the fellowship that I'm talking about. It's a complete mystery to you if you have never entered into the realms of the sweetness of the love of God. Neither do you know anything about the rest that He has given to His people

Oh, my dear hearers, I think of it so many times when I meet brethren from afar off. The first thing I want to know is the welfare of their salvation. I think that is our chief concern. You know I think some get the idea that they are just members of the church and are free to say what they want to. It's up to the pastor and to the deacons to keep peace in the church. It's good to look to your pastor and to your deacons. But let me tell you something my dear friends, this thing lies with the duty of every member that composes the body that we be careful not to be offensive to the church. That's the thing, think about it my friends that this fellowship and this love may continue and that we might live together in peace. Just let something come along and let some brother or sister set forth something that he wants not having the welfare of the church in mind but something he wants and he has already caused trouble. I hope these things will sink down into the ears of every one of you that we might live by them and that we might live in peace. I don't know of a time in all the world that we need one

another more than we need one another now. That's why I say let us be careful to maintain this fellowship that we have existing one to the other. Oh, what a wonderful thing it is. Just let us get in the flesh and we have already caused trouble with ourselves and with the church, but may it be the will of our heavenly Father that He may continue to bless us with those things that will give us peace with one another and with Him. When He gives us peace with Him, we are going to have peace with our brethren. How many times have you seen the love of God separate brethren? How many times have you seen that happen? None, but just let the flesh begin to work and already there is something working. Oh, my friends, I thank my heavenly Father for the peace that we have and I feel that all you visitors here have certainly found the hearts of this association open to you in peace. That's all we want to have among us is peace. Let us be careful.

ELDER H. W. WRAY

REPENTANCE

Repent or repentance is regret and sorrow for having done some deed. It is not always used for Godly repentance, which means such sorrow as shall cause a complete change of action.

If by the grace of God we are convicted by our own conscience, which is the Spirit of God in a poor sinner's heart, then repentance, which is Godly sorrow for his children, must suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

I Peter 4:15; "But let none of you suffer as murderers, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."

Jesus said unto the pharisees in St. Luke 16:15; "Ye are they which justify

yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”

I know I have had an experience, and I hope it was of God. I find recorded in I John 4:1; “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

I remember when I was a lad of a boy working alone in my daddy’s tobacco field, I believe I was given to see myself a sinner naked before an allwise God; and I was walking according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and was by nature a child of wrath.

I believe, by the grace of God, I was blessed to fear the Lord in fear and trembling, with repentance in my heart and not from lying lips. II Corinthians 7:10; “For Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

I have walked many times with a bowed head and heavy heart. I believe I have been blessed to know the meaning of repentance, and I hope I am thankful for this blessing. Hebrews 12:6; “For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

I feel that where there is no chastisement there is no repentance, and where there is no repentance, there is no evidence that the spirit of God dwelleth in one’s heart.

I feel, if not deceived, I have been blessed with many precious experiences along life’s pathway that I would not trade for the treasures of this world. St. Mark 3:36; “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

Sometimes I feel blessed to glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulations worketh patience and patience, experience, and experience hope, and hope

maketh not ashamed. I am not ashamed of my hope, Those who have no hope have no conscience and those who have no conscience have no repentance. For repentance is Godly sorrow and does not come from lying lips. God is the God of love and peace, and not the author of confusion.

I find recorded in Proverbs 6:16; “These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him.”

Proverbs 6:17; “A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; 6:18; “An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief; 6:19; “A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

Ezekiel 14:6; “Therefore, say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord God; repent, and turn yourselves from you idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.”

St. Matthew 10:16; “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” 10:17; “But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.”

Hebrews 13:1; “Let brotherly love continue.” I believe that repentance and forgiveness are inseparable, if they are of the Lord. Where there is Godly sorrow, there is Godly forgiveness, and brotherly love will continue.

St. Luke 17:3; “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.”

St. Luke 17:4; “And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.”

John 4:20; “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.”

I Kings 22:36; “And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the

going down of the sun, saying, "Every man to his city, and every man to his own country."

St. Luke 15:7; "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." For he that is wise in his own conceit knoweth no repentance.

Clifton Robertson
Rt. 1, Reidsville, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

In thinking over the experience given me recently I write: This to all who may read these lines from the pen of a poor and afflicted sinner, in hope of the finished work of the blessed Redeemer, when He hang on the cross saying, "It is finished." What is finished? The work given Him of the Father to do here on earth. I speak of the God of heaven and earth. He gave this work to his Son Jesus Christ to do. To save His people from their sins is what He was given to do and finished here on earth. I do not understand that all of His work is completed. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father making intercession for Gods humble poor and suffering little ones. Oh, how they do groan within themselves and often fearful to cast their eyes upward, feeling to know the God who has all power is able to cut their puny life off in one moments time. This work will not be completed until Jesus presents His bride, or all of Gods children to God without spot, wrinkle or blemish.

Now I want to pen down something as I hope was given me recently, just two or three weeks ago or just before the third week of November, 1983, I was given this dream.

I was before this huge mountain and

as I started to ascend the mountain, there before me was this narrow path and in the ascention, I was carried in a way it appeared as a winding stair. When the summit was reached, there I saw people I knew, two dear sisters and this dear Elder whom I have known and loved for thirty-three years, and who preaches the whole council of God, one who has been persecuted in many ways and yet Jesus shines in his countenance. If I know what this spirit looks like, it causes one of Gods ministers to change appearance before the congregation. When Jesus speaks in them and they give to the ones before them the food they are hungering for. Oh, how it causes the hearers to rejoice. This food comes from a storehouse that never gives out. If not deceived we are given a love for all of God's humble ministers. This golden chain of love is precious indeed to ones who are made to feel it. While on this mountain top, I was given a view of Heaven just beyond the top of the mountain. It appeared to the right of the mountain as pure gold and so beautiful my poor tongue or pen could never describe it. I asked the dear sisters who were putting food on this long table, "Oh, don't you see what I see?" and they said, "No, we don't see it." This dear Elder D. V. Spangler stood smiling and nodding his head in agreement that this was also in his view. I then started off the side of the mountain with no fear of the distance down. It was rocky and rough, yet on down I went to the foot of the mountain. There was this river clear as could be and my feet were in the edge of that river. Then back on the mountain top I was carried in a flash of time, and the beautiufl view of Heaven was again just beyond where we stood on this mountain.

I awoke with a feeling of love in my breast for all the household of faith. Where ever you may be, dear child of God, I hope I love you with a God given

love and when I am called to leave this world of woe, I hope there will be a feeling in me that I experience from time to time of having nothing against one of God's humble poor, what ever faction they be in, I hope I am given the fruit of the spirit to love you. Perfect love casteth out all fear.

We hope there will be a day of rejoicing as we felt on that mountain top, when hope turns into reality and we are carred home where there will be no more sorrow, heartaches and tears. May God continue his blessings on you, and you and I hope poor and sinful me.

Your little one in hope,

Mrs. Fred (Louise) Cobb

Camden, N. J., June 29, 1901

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:

Feeling in the mood for writing, and my mind reverting continually to you, once more I address you as above, for what purpose I know not, only that I desire to hear from you, and take this means of getting a thought or two from your pen. Were you to meet me on the highway and greet me with the usual salutation, "How are you?" I scarcely know how I would answer you. No very deep trials, spiritually or otherwise, have stirred my mind since coming within the portals of the Zion of our God. My chief uneasiness is felt when I am brought in contact with the world around me. This hurts me. Imagine how sensitive the body would be were the outer or scarf skin removed, and you will have a very clear idea of my state of mind when in the course of my daily

walk, I am brought in contact with unbelievers, or what is worse, the adherents of popular religion. I think it would be more in conformity with the experience of the saints, were I to realize more intensely that my worst enemies are "those of my own household." The children of God seem to talk more of their peculiar trials of mind while I have none. Surely there is a lost chord somewhere. "If ye be without chastisements, thereof all be without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Do such Scriptures as these apply to me? Evidence seems to point that way, yet something within me thrusts them from me, and will not accept them.

Both of my parents were Old School Baptists before I was born. As soon as I knew anything at all, I was taken by them to Old Baptist meetings. Every Sunday found them in their place, and of course, I with them, for none of us children were permitted to stay away unless in the event of its being dire necessity. Now, under such training as this, how could I turn out to be anything but an Old School Baptist? I sometimes fear my knowledge of their doctrine is all in the head and not in the heart, where it ought to be. In a very weak and unsatisfactory manner I will endeavor to lay before you what I hope has been an experience of grace in me, but will leave you to decide whether such is the case, or if it be but a wild fancy of the imagination.

To the best of my recollection, I never heard any other than Old Baptist preaching until about fifteen years old. Naturally, having never heard any other, I thought the Old Baptists were all right, but I could not comprehend them. While I thought their religion was a mighty good thing for them, it was not for me. They seemed above me, exalted to heights that I could never reach, nor did I care to reach them at that time. I was satisfied with myself as I was. My parents being

blest with the gift of hospitality, our home was always open to the brethren far and near, so that from hearing their conversation I became intellectually familiar with the various points of their belief.

Just when I began to think of eternity and the life hereafter, I cannot say. I sometimes feared that I would die in the night. At such times I would not go to sleep, lying face upward, thinking this position more than any other favored death, and might tempt the "Black Angel" to visit me. Such superstitions would haunt me at times, but would all vanish with day-dawn, and not for some time later would I have such thoughts again.

Desiring from early years to become a teacher, I began attending a normal school in my native State, to prepare myself for the work. Here the rules were such that every student must of necessity attend service in one of the many churches of that vicinity, every Sunday morning. No Old Baptist church existed in that place, I was forced to attend other denominations, and here for the first time I heard other preaching. I recognized a difference in the preaching almost as soon as I heard it, not that I thought it was contrary to Bible teaching, but that it was more interesting to listen to, and more calculated to keep one from sleeping, than what I had formerly been accustomed to.

Unevertfully my student days passed on until the "week of prayer" in the fall. The cards issued as invitations to the meetings and scattered promiscuously among the students, bore this inscription at the top: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."—Numbers 10:29. Suddenly a determination to attend these meetings seized me. The motive that prompted me was possibly one of curiosity, as I wanted to see what effect such meetings would have upon me. Not because I realized the need for salvation did I attend these meetings, but as I

have said, simply to see how such meetings were conducted, and whether I would be in any way affected by such proceedings. Thus I began attending the sessions of the so called "week of prayer." At the close of the first meeting all who desired to be saved were asked to stand up. Immediately I asked myself, Shall I stand or not? Do I want to be saved or not? Why certainly, what sensible man would not want to be saved? Therefore I stood with the others. At the second meeting all who stood at the first meeting were requested to remain at the close and consult with the professor who had the matter in charge. Feeling that I now had gone too far to draw back, I remained in my place at the close of the meeting. When all who were not interested had left the room, the professor made a prayer and talked to us about what we should do to be saved. Belief, he said, was the only necessary qualification for salvation, and it was for us to say whether or not we would be saved. I was willing, I thought, to be saved, but how to make myself believe in something that I knew nothing about, I could not understand. However we were requested to sing a hymn. The one selected had for its theme the giving of one's self to Christ, inviting him to enter and make our heart his home, &c. "I bleieve," "I trust," "I own," "I want," and other like expressions were scattered throughout the hymn. How can I ever express my feelings while singing this selection? Here my pen fails when it attempts to portray in black and white the revelation manifested in my soul at this time. Something said to me, "You are lying, yes, lying, and that in the face of a just and mighty God. You say you trust in his name. You do not. You say you believe that Christ died for you. You do not. You are standing up boldly in the sight of God and telling a bare faced lie." Such agony as filled my soul I can never express. Hitherto my dealings had been between man and

man. Now, in the twinkling of an eye, the scene was shifted, and my dealings were between God and man. He was just and mighty, true and tood, holy and undefiled. But I, what was I? Alas, a poor, wretched worm of the dust, crawling on the earth, striving in vain to seek a hole to creep into away from the fierce outburst of God's righteous indignation that had suddenly engulfed me, and was sweeping me to everlasting destruction. Yet I said it was righteous and just. I was the one that was altogether out of the way.

*"And though my soul were sent to hell,
His righteous law approves it well."*

Just how long I was in this state of anguish I have never been able to remember. How I managed to get out of that meeting and to my room, I do not know, but when I did get there I threw myself upon my bed and wept long and bitterly, much to the surprise of my roommate, who became much alarmed, thinking that the meetings had worked me up to such a pitch that I was going crazy over religion. He advised me not to attend any more of the meetings, and I did not; not because I feared insanity, but because I could get no comfort there. Gradually time wore on. Instead of getting better, I got worse, and my burden was fast becoming more than I could bear. The professor before mentioned, seeing I was under conviction, kept telling me that if I would but give myself up and believe on the name of Jesus, I would be saved. He asked me what I was waiting for? I said, "A revelation. When I see Christ and know that he died for me, then I can believe, not before." He then accused me of stubbornness, and so we parted, and never again came together in any other relation save that of teacher and pupil. At last I thought, what would I not do to be rid of this burden? O, if only Christ was my Savior. O, if he only had died for me. "Lord, thou canst if thou wilt make me clean." Now, to my

mind, if relief were to come, it seemed to me it must come by a revelation, and that so vivid and so startling that I never could doubt my being saved. I had come to the place where I ceased to work, or to try to rise from the depths to which I had fallen. All my efforts had availed me nothing, so I ceased to do anything, and was waiting; waiting for what? For that revelation so startling and so sure that it would dispel all my gloom and save my soul from hell. While watching for this vision, I opened the Bible, and my eye fell upon these words, "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision: and it shall be dark unto you that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets and the day shall be dark over them." Alas, I was waiting for something that was not to come. I wanted a vision; I would have none, because the word of God coming to me with power told me I would not. Thrown down from this hope, vain as it had proved to be, I now suffered more than ever.

One night, laying upon my bed, I could not sleep. My troubles were fast getting too severe, and I verly thought they would be the death of me. They were gripping me by the throat, and I could feel my breath fast leaving me; I was dying. My mental anguish had brought on bodily suffering, and I had a raging fever. Now, surely, unless relief came, and that quickly, I should perish, and with that it seemed to me I or something within me cried, "Peace!" In the twinkling of an eye I was at rest. All my burden had gone. Hardly realizing my state, I tried to bring back my troubles, but could not. They were gone, thank God, for ever. Happy and as free as a bird, I fell asleep and slept till morning. And now again I cannot express my joy upon awaking. The sun never shone so brightly: all nature was at her best and rejoicing with me; I felt the power of the resurrection within and around me, and

that the gift of eternal life was mine through the blessed sacrifice of God's only begotten Son, who was offered up for me. Shout, ye heavens, and listen, O earth, Christ died for *me*. Such were my feelings at that time. Now I was not aware that there was another being on earth that had passed through what I had. Upon going home to spend a few days at Thanksgiving, I talked all the time to my parents of my feelings, and they rejoiced to see me rejoice. I soon saw that they had experienced the same things that I had. When I returned to school, I took with me a book written by our beloved pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, entitled, "Meditations on Portions of the Word." For weeks this was all the preaching I had. I soon saw from his writings that he knew all about my feelings from having experienced the same, and I loved him. It was in this way, through hearing them preach, and reading their writings, with the understanding that I now had given me, that I came to see the Old School Baptists as the only and true church of the living God, because it all corresponded with holy writ. Knowing this I loved them because I could not help it. No other people that I have ever met could understand my feelings. Loving them, I knew I had experienced the new birth, for "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." I did not go before the church at this time. Had I been near them when in the first flush of love, I know not what might have been the consequence, but, as I have said, I was not near any of them, and when I did get back to where they were, doubts and fears had so assailed me that I verily thought I had been deceived, and as for being baptized, I had not thought of it. The very idea was absurd. Nevertheless I have always attended Old Baptist meetings whenever an opportunity presented itself, never having attended regular service in any other denomina-

tion since leaving school, but my unworthiness was the barrier that separated me from them. However, in the fall, while attending a yearly meeting, I lost sight of my unworthiness, and longed all at once to be baptized. This desire kept increasing in spite of the temptations Satan put in my way until at the regular meeting at Southampton, Pa., I related my state of mind to the church. To my surprise they received me, and on the third Sunday I was baptized. Thus far the Lord hath led me on, as to the next step, I know not what it will be. I look to him to be my Guide. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Yours in hope of eternal life

HORACE H. LEFFERTS

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

TO THE DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:

Heb. 2: 10-12, which reads as follows:
"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."

I am well aware that this, as well as all other of God's holy inspired word, is a very great text, and I know that I am not in any sense of the word capacitated to understand this great and glorious subject without the divine light of God's Holy Spirit. I desire that the Giver of every good and perfect gift will enable me to see, understand and write of some of the glorious doctrinal and experimental phases that are taught in this scripture.

First, I will say that the stern, inflexible sovereignty of God is taught, and there is no mincing of words in it for he says, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things." I feel that the promoun HIM is applicable to the Father, God, the Creator. The word became, means becoming to him in his glorious and perfect character, so it was becoming to God to have all things as they are, to properly and perfectly bring out and reveal his glory, and not only so, but it also was becoming to make the captain of these many son's salvation perfect through sufferings. So with all that is connected with, and that caused and brought forth his great sufferings, there can be no doubt that it was becoming to the revelation of his glory to have it this way. However, I feel sure that no one would think for a moment that I am trying to justify the wicked and heinous crimes committed by the betrayers and murderers that killed the Prince of Life as is set forth in the Acts of the Apostles 3:15. Jesus also said, "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born," and there are other numerous scriptural witnesses to these things. The prophet also said, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him," so it must have been becoming to God to have it that way. or it would not have pleased him to bruise him. When the blessed Savior fell upon his meek

and lowly face in that humble petition of sweat and tears and said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," do you not feel that it would have passed, had it not become him for Jesus to suffer as the perfect captain of their salvation? When it was becoming to God for him to suffer.

There are so many things relative to this subject that it is impossible to mention all of them for the lack of time and space. What was the cause of his sufferings? Would we not most assuredly have to say from a Bible standpoint that it was for sin that he suffered, then had there been no sin there would have been no suffering and no need for salvation, no need for that great Captain of salvation, but it became him that it be this way because he plainly and emphatically said so in this text. Some would say, well it was becoming to God that sin enter into the world, and death by sin. I am quite sure had it not been, there would not have been any sin in this world. Let me ask the question, if it was not becoming for it to enter, then does it glorify God to contend that it would have been better for it not to have entered? It seems to me that this would place God in the position that he was helpless against sin's entrance into the world. Do you think, dear reader, it would become the glorious character of God to show him helpless in anything even the entrance of sin into the world or any other circumstance, thing, being or creature? Would it become God in his perfection and glory to have to say he could not have prevented sin's entrance? You might as well join the arminian and say, God wants every one to be saved but he is helpless to do it. It would be no different to say that God was helpless in the beginning of this world than to say he is helpless now, so let us examine ourselves whether we are in the faith or not, as Paul admonished.

In order to prove that there was a pur-

pose for the entrance of sin into this world we have only to refer you to Paul's language in Rom. 5:20, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound." Whose purpose was it for the offence to abound? I am sure you will admit that it was God's purpose, for he was the giver of the law to Moses as well as to Adam and Eve in the garden. In Revelations 5:6 it reads, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain," and in chapter 13, verse 8 it says, "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." These two passages prove that Jesus actually stood in the mind and purpose of God, as he had already been slain even from the foundation of the world. What for? For sin that was to enter in through the transgression of Adam. God's holy purpose in it did not cause Adam's sin in the immediate sense of the word, but the serpent and his beguiling influence, and the appetizing influence of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was the moving cause of it, and Adam and Eve and all their posterity were and are held accountable for it, because they are and were guilty and will ever be except through the sufferings of the blessed Savior of sinners, the Captain of their salvation. Certainly you could not say there would have been anything if there had been no God, but because of this fact there is no room to say that God is the author of sin if we will read Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The disobedience of one man, not by one God. Let us not run off into arminianism and deny the truth concerning God's sovereignty in order not to be accused by them of believing that God is the author of sin. We

do not believe it, neither do we teach it, but that does not keep us from being accused of it, neither did it keep the apostle Paul from being accused of it. You will note in Romans 3:8 it reads, "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."

I am sure that no one would accuse us of believing that God's purpose was the immediate cause of Judas Iscariot's betrayal of the Savior, but all can readily see the thirty pieces of silver as the cause, and no wonder Jesus said, "He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." It was sin to betray the Savior and Judas was under its penalty even though it became God to have it that way as he said in this text. I am sure it was wrong and wicked on the part of Ahab's prophets to wickedly deceive Ahab by their falsehoods and lies as they prophesied victory and prosperity and caused Ahab to go into battle. (Read 1 Kings 22:23) It must have become God to have it that way because it reads, "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." The Lord told the lying spirit to go forth and sew this wickedness. Had it not been becoming to the revelation of God's glory to command, and use this lying spirit in this manner I am sure it would not have occurred as you will see by reading his holy inspired word. This is the doctrine that is taught and that is and has been believed by our people all the way down, even the ancient confessions of faith show this very clearly. I ask the reader to read the London, Fulton and Philadelphia confessions, as well as the Bible, and let us not vary to the right nor the left from the doctrine in all of its phases of it, the Lord willing. I do not want any one of God's dear children to be offended at me, but I feel that I must contend

earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

Pharaoh, King of Egypt, was very wicked and oppressive to the children of Israel, bitterly bound them in slavery, evilly and cruelly treated them, murdered them and destroyed their young through their midwives. In all this if we believe God's holy word and teachings we must assuredly believe that it was becoming in God to have it this way. He says in Romans 9:17, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the earth." If it was not becoming in God to have it this way why did God command Moses to say, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go," Ex. 5:1, yet he hardened his heart so that he should not let them go. "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go." Ex. 7:13-14. If it was not becoming to God to have Pharaoh's heart hardened, why did God harden it? Certainly no one would say that it was unbecoming to God to do this, except those that will say that he is unjust, that he is the author of sin if he does these things; let us not charge God with being unjust and the author of sin, but let us not deny his holy word in order to keep from being accused of these things.

Joseph's brethren sold him wickedly into Egypt, deceived their father, making him think his son was dead, and the evil and wicked lie of Potiphar's wife caused him to be so unjustly and wickedly cast into prison. Were not these things according to the purpose of God, and is so was it not becoming to God to have it this way? "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Gen. 45:7. Do you think it

was becoming to God for him to use such wicked things as these to fulfill his purpose and to save and preserve their lives in Joseph's wicked and heinous abuses by his brethren, and Potiphar's wife's lies and all the wickedness that was done? The Bible says these things were done and said. Were they becoming to God or were they unbecoming? God forbid that I should say they were unbecoming, but that it was a most glorious and blessed token of God's power, wisdom, righteousness and also of his mercy, his justice and the preservation and deliverance of his people by his miraculous power.

Everything that God has ever done in all his holy purposes is most certainly becoming to God, and he is righteous and just in manifesting his purposes either in wrath and justice, or in righteousness and mercy. Each attribute must shine in the revelation of his holy nature and character in all things, and it is all becoming to him in every detail as is shown in Rom. 9:22 where Paul asks the question on this very subject. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." As hard as this does seem God is perfectly righteous, and it is most certainly becoming for him to have it this way. Who would rebel and say this thing is unbecoming to God in his righteous character? Those who have never known him in all his goodness and mercy; those who are born truly of God, and have been made to see their just condemnation before God. How dare they make any plea except that he is altogether righteousness and if he in justice should send their soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well. Then all things appointed, purposed or predestinated of God, and they are becoming to him.

On the other hand I desire to call your attention to the truth as I see it. Sin is

never becoming to any one from the standpoint that it is right. Certainly not, it is the transgression of God's holy law, and it would still be wrong even though there was no law. Could any one doubt that the crucifixion of the Savior was purposed, predestinated, appointed, ordained or ordered of God? From a scriptural standpoint I cannot see how any one could deny this as it is said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Zech. 13:7.

This sword was commanded to awake and it did awake, and it did smite that great shepherd of the sheep. David tells us who that sword is. It is the wicked, the men of the world. Was it becoming on their part to crucify the Lord? No, in no wise, it was sin in the very deepest dye. They desired to do this wicked thing, their hearts were hardened by the brightness and glory of God made manifest in the ministry and miracles of the blessed Lord and they selfishly hated him without a cause. They wanted to do away with him because he righteously rebuked them in their wickedness, and because God gave him the Spirit without measure and they could not resist his words and doctrine: they lay in wait to deceive on every hand, they were selling sheep oxen, doves and pigeons, and had in their employ the money changers. Jesus had made a whip of small cords and drove them out of the temple and their deepest wrath was stirred. They did not know him is cited as the reason they crucified him, or rather it is stated that had they known him they would not have crucified him, or rather it is stated that had they known him they would not have crucified him. All this wickedness and sin was very treacherous and wicked on their part, and it was very unbecoming in them who

did it, but I think it was all righteous, just and holy on the part of God in the righteous revelation of his wrath on such wickedness, and such sin and treachery as they carried on in his crucifixion and death. It was sin without justification on their part because they all knew that it was wrong to do these wicked things as it was the very essence of their law that they professed to know and keep, as it is said, "Thou shalt not kill." Ex. 20:13.

It was unbecoming that Judas betray the Savior for thirty pieces of silver, but God had said by inspiration that he would do it, and had even said it would be thirty pieces of silver that he would get. It also showed that Judas would hang himself and what the thirty pieces of silver would be used for. Was it not becoming to God's glory that he suffered Judas to do this wicked thing after God had showed it beforehand? Who could say that it was becoming and right on the part of Judas? Also who could say that it was unbecoming on God's part when the text we are writing from says, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." That was what the wicked act of Judas and the crucifiers of Jesus were doing, they were bringing his suffering that God had purposed, and God was rendering his righteous judgment upon them for their wickedness.

The sufferings of Christ were for every sin that his people has or will ever commit. God's goodness and mercy was manifest towards the vessels of mercy, was being extended through his sufferings and on the other hand his wrath was being displayed upon them who were wicked, treacherous in physically wallowing their hands in the precious blood of the Savior. No wonder Paul said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How

unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33.

Then all things are for God and all things exist by him. There is no way around it. No matter what kind of a so-called theologian you might be, but because all things are for him and by him, in some respect, as this text says, that should be no encouragement to any God fearing, God loving child of God to sin, no a thousand times no. My experience is that I have sinned so long and so much I would give everything under the shining heavens, if it were mine, if I could know that I would never sin any more. Oh, that I could know I have that new covenant in my heart the stipulations of which are, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Dear and precious brethren and sisters, it is so wonderful and glorious just to hope to reach that righteous and peaceful shore where sin and all of its horrible consequences are no more, and to be like Jesus, the great Captain of our salvation to see him as he is and to be at his precious feet: to feel his blessed and glorious presence in that bright and eternal home where all the saints of all ages will be around that great white throne of God: and where the eternal anthems of his worthy praise shall engulf all the redeemed before God and the Lamb. What a wonderful hope is this for a poor sinner to have. All this is brought about through the suffering of Christ, and it was becoming to God's glory to have it this way.

Another comment that I would like to make concerning this text is on the words BRINGING MY SONS UNTO GLORY. It is very comforting and assuring to the hope of God's children to notice the significance of this language. It does not in any way signify failure or uncertainty. Neither are we left to think, according to this language, that the sons have anything to do within and of themselves in going to glory, but this

language says what God does in bringing them to glory. Then according to this language God is bringing many sons unto glory. Not that he is trying to bring them, neither is it in any way intimated that he is helping to bring them, nor that he desires to bring them, but that he is bringing them and will bring them unto glory. No help nor partnership in the matter, no agency or organization is depended upon, just what God himself does in bringing them. Another thing is that they are not brought just half way unto glory according to this language, but all the way unto glory, and God is the only one known in their bringing. No room for that doctrine and commandment of men and devils that God just helps so far and then we are dependent upon conditions the rest of the way.

I feel there is not a more comforting phase implied in this text than where it is acknowledged that all things are God's or that they are for him. Then if everything is for him, for him IN BRINGING MY SONS UNTO GLORY, there is nothing that is against that bringing them unto glory. No wonder Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28. Because all things are becoming to God in bringing the many sons unto glory Paul said again. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" God is for bringing these many sons unto glory and he is for them and nothing can be against them, but all is for their good, and all things are becoming to the glory, majesty and dominion of the God who is all powerful, eternal, all wise and who never sleeps nor slumbers, but "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1:11. Then is it not most wonderful indeed to contemplate the glorious consequences that are expressed in these wonderful things?

Dear child of God, truly that scripture is correct where it says, "Happy art

thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." Deut. 33:29. They are saved by him alone, and all things are for him and by him in bringing them unto glory. Then, dear child of God, fear not, all things are in his hands and he will do all his pleasure "in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doeth thou?" All things are for him in bringing many sons to glory, and all things work together for the good of these many sons. Oh that I could have that blessed assurance that I am one of those many sons that are under consideration. If I but knew then would I know all things are for my good.

One might say, but I am such a sinner, so am I truly as Paul said, "O wretched man that I am!" but that is why Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, suffered on Calvary's cross, that poor sinners be free and that they be brought unto glory. This is the only hope that I have of entering that peaceful home of everlasting bliss and felicity. It was becoming to the glory, mercy and peace of Almighty God that Christ Jesus suffer for his people, that he cleanse them with his precious blood, that he wash them and redeem them from all iniquity. Oh, the ravishing thought and hope of being as though we had never sinned. Oh, the precious anticipation that we be like the precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that the Father spoke from heaven and declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." I am so tired of myself in my sins. I long to be free from them. I long to see his blessed face in peace. I long for that blessed abode where no sorrow can come, no pain, sickness or death, but where that blessed love of God will swallow us up, where we will ever sing his eternal and worthy praise forever and ever around that eternal throne with all his saints of all ages. Amen. (Elder) R. W. RHODES

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in February. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

NOTE: See Elder David Spangler's Book, Page 48 in this issue.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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ceded him in death in 1965. On August 11, 1965 he married Lillie Mabe Robertson who is left to mourn Brother Newnam's death along with five step-sons, three step-daughters, three half sisters, 16 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, and 4 great-great-grandchildren.

Brother Newnam was a firm believer in salvation by Grace. He loved, stongly advocated and was blessed to be willing to defend this doctrine. Nothing pleased him more than hearing the Sovereignty of God and total depravity of man expounded upon. He was also blessed with a great love for the brethren of like precious faith. On August 10, 1958 he was united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

Brother Newnam died at his home in Pelham, N. C. on August 30, 1983 making his pilgrimage here 98 years, 8 months and 9 days. We will greatly miss our brother in Christ, but I am made to feel our lose is his eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and makes no mistakes.

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by Elder David Spangler and Elder Wallis Smith. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Dan River Church cemetery to await the glorious Resurrection.

Written by Sister Sara Collie at the request of Dan River Church in conference held October 29, 1983.

Moderator: Elder D. V. Spangler
Clerk: Boyd Minter

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."
Mat. 7:12

OBITUARIES

JOHN EDGAR NEWNAM

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst one of our oldest members, John Edgar Newnam. Brother Newnam was born December 21, 1884 in Eden, N. C. to the late Suzie Angeline Williams and George Peyton Newnam. He was the oldest of eight children, 6 boys and 2 girls, of whom only one sister, Clara Saunders, survives. On November 4, 1908 he married Bulah Glass who preceded him in death October 14, 1959. From this union Brother Newnam is survived by sons: John Walter, Sr., Gaither T. and George E. Newnam and daughters: Mrs. Suzie White and Mrs. Hugh S. Pryor. In March, 1960 he married Gracie Price who pre-

SISTER HILLIE ADKINS WADE

Our beloved Sister Hillie Adkins Wade was born in Henry County, Virginia, August 21st 1898. She died

August 11th 1983 at Memorial Hospital in Martinsville, Virginia.

Funeral Service was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler and H. W. Wray. She was buried in the Church Cemetery.

Sister Wade joined Dan River Church July 7th 1929. She was married to Ben Wade. Brother Ben Wade was a former Deacon of Dan River Church, Brother Wade Died Oct. 7th 1956. One son James Wade preceded her in death.

Sister Wade was a pleasant Woman and enjoyed meeting her brethren and friends and having them visit in her home.

Sister Wade is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Dover of Reidsville, N.C. One son B. F. (Binky) Wade of Eden, N. C. Four brothers; Rorer, Clyde, Andrew and Frank Adkins all of Eden, N. C.

Sister Wade was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace.

She will be greatly missed by her family and friends, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Written by order of Dan River Church October 22, 1983.

Elder D. V. Spangler (Mod.)
Boyd Minter (Clerk)

GARDNER BRYANT HOUSTON

God saw fit to call from our midst the beloved husband and father Gardner Bryant Houston, to his eternal home. He was the son of Chancey and Emmer Houston. He was born January 28th, 1905. He departed from this earth on

March 6th, 1983. He was married to Nora Summer Houston, who survived him along with three sons, Tyson, Bryson, and Rickie, and four grandchildren.

He joined Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on November 10th, 1946, and was a true and faithful member until his death. He loved his church and manifested it in many ways. His walk in life was softly and humble. He believed in the sovereign power and grace of our Heavenly Father. He served the household of faith with love, grace and humility.

His funeral was conducted at Edgerton Funeral Home, by Elder D.B. Stokes and Elder Mike Nikirk. He was laid to rest at East Duplin Memorial Garden beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the return of our Lord and Savior.

The family, church and community will miss him; but we hope to be submissive to God's will and made to feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his son and daughter-in-law
Tyson and Lillian Houston

WOODIE C. SMITH

The Paran Primitive Baptist Church near Hawkins, Texas sustained a great loss in the death on October 15, 1983 of this longstanding and highly respected member.

Brother Smith was born February 19, 1903 in Louisiana. He was married to Collena Love in 1927. To this union were born the following four sons and two daughters: Paul, Kenneth, Daniel, David, Mrs. Marie Rufener and Mrs. Jean Mailanen. He also leaves behind the following three brothers and two

sisters: Jimmy, John, Louie, Mrs. Nora Phillips and Christine Cartledge all of Louisiana.

Brother Smith united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1920 being a faithful member for sixty years. He moved his membership to Paran Church November 30, 1968. Details are not available of the beginning of a work of grace in his soul but it must have been from a young age.

He had a keen appetite for spiritual things. He was a quiet, humble, sober man; a great lover of the truth. He was never absent from church except through some real hindrance. He was often called on for prayer and his prayers were always sweet and humble.

The preciousness and suitability of the Lord Jesus Christ was a very sweet theme of his; indeed the enjoyment of his soul therein was often portrayed in his countenance. His humble, meek, and gentle countenance will live with us as long as memory serves us. We feel our loss is great, but his gain is greater, for we believe he is with Christ which is far better. He was a constant reader of the *Signs Of The Times* and fully enjoyed its contents. His mortal body was committed to the silent tomb in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life.

Written by his pastor and one who loved him.

ELDER JOE L. HAMRICK

SISTER
MARTHA MADELINE LILLARD

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write this memorial of Sister Madeline Lillard.

Her heavenly Father called her away

from her sufferings on September 24, 1983.

Sister Madeline was born Martha Madeline McKinney, May 6, 1917, the daughter of David and Lillie Dix McKinney.

She had three brothers, Woodrow, Lafette, and Bruce. She was survived by her husband, Willie W. Lillard, one daughter, Beverly Lillard Paschal, one son, Allen, also five grandchildren.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, June 9, 1963 and remained a lovely member until her death.

She was loved by all who knew her, and was widely known in her community for her thoughtfulness of others. She was a loving companion for her husband, a tender caring mother, and always concerned about and helpful to her host of friends.

Sister Madeline was unable to attend church during her last months but she always longed to go.

She was always asking about the church and its members, and wanting to know if there was anything that she or Willie could do to help financially or otherwise.

She will be sorely missed by her church, her family and all who knew her and loved her so much. We trust that she is resting now in the peace, love and tender care of Christ.

Her funeral was conducted at her Church, Dan River Primitive Baptist, September 26, 1983, and was buried in the church cemetery.

Written at request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in her conference, October 22, 1983.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Written by a brother, in hope
Coley S. Strader

<i>BOOK NOTICES</i>

is RFD #6, Box 270 Beechwood Lane,
Danville, Virginia 24541.

Editors

ELDER DAVID SPANGLER'S BOOK

Elder David Spangler has published a book containing approximately 128 pages and is now ready for distribution.

It contains his own personal experience in life and the ministry; also the experience of others as they were brought into the church. There will be several of his editorials as they have appeared in the "*Signs Of The Times*"; articles of various customs and practices among Old School Baptists.

Elder Spangler has been blessed to serve in the ministry for over 60 years and editor of the *Signs Of The Times* for 40 years. He has visited among the Primitive Baptist churches from the mountains to the sea shore and from the east to the west. He is loved and held in high esteem by all those whose lives he has touched. He has a good report without as well as within the household of faith.

I have agreed to help in the distribution of these books. They are available for \$5.00 each to cover cost of printing and mailing. Please send your orders to me:

Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard St.
Greensboro, N. C. 27405

A list of all purchasers will be forwarded to him.

P.S. Elder Spangler has recently had surgery and hopefully by the time you read this will be home from the hospital. I'm sure a note from his many friends will be appreciated. His mailing address

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84 Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1-(901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, n. C. 27405.

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A SUBJECT OF GRACE

A child of Jehova, a subject of grace,
A'm of the seed royal, a dignified race;
An heir of salvation, redeemed with blood,
I'll own my relation, my Father is God!

He loved me of old, and he loveth me still;
Before the creation, he gave me my will,
A portion worth more than the Indies of gold,
Which cannot be wasted, nor mortgaged, nor sold.

He gave me a Surety, a covenant Head,
To live in my name, and to die in my stead;
He gave me a righteousness wholly divine,
And viewed all the merits of Jesus as mine.

He gave a Preceptor infallibly wise,
And treasures of grace to be sent in supplies;
Yea, all that I ask for, my father hath given,
To help me on earth, and to crown me in heaven.

He gave me a will to accept what he gave,
Though I was adverse to his purpose to save;
He wrote in his will my repentance and faith,
And all my enjoyments for life and for death.

My trials and sorrows, my conflicts and cares,
The spirit of prayer and the answer of prayers,
The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote in his will.

My cross and my crown are both willed by my God,
He swore to his will and then sealed it with blood;
Tis proved by the Spirit, the witness within;
Tis mine to inherit; I'll glory begin.

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 EDITORIAL

Excerpt from a sermon on
James 1:22 and 2:24 Delivered by
ELDER JOE L. HAMRICK
At Hopewell Church, October 9, 1983

I'd like to read some in the book of James. I feel like the book of James may be neglected to some extent. I trust that I believe in predestination of all things and I can add the word absolute to it. I don't think that it makes it any stronger because God's predestination is just as strong as it can be because it is of God. But I think it helps to identify it maybe from some of the others who claim to believe in predestination and yet have a tendency to weaken it some in their estimation of it. So the word abso-

lute more or less identifies or shows a person exactly where you stand on predestination. I think predestination is beautiful. I think foreknowledge, I think election, I think the sovereignty of God is the backbone of our doctrine. I also believe there was many other phases of our doctrine that are very important, or should be, to the Lord's people. I feel maybe some of these areas have been somewhat neglected, even though all areas of true doctrine are engulfed in God's sovereignty. The Apostle Paul charges Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," and that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness."

I pray to God that He would give us light to see the precious food that is couched beneath these verses of scripture. I'd like to read one verse, the twenty-second verse of the first chapter of James. "*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*" Notice what it says, Now let us read the twenty-fourth verse of the second chapter of James. It says, "*Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*" You might say, well, how about the Apostle Paul? What did Paul say about works? I want you to realize one thing that Paul and the Apostle James are absolutely in complete harmony with each other because they were both inspired by the same Holy Spirit to write. Therefore, they are in complete harmony with one another. The fact is, James and Paul are perfectly reconcilable, and they are viewing truth from different standpoints. Surely James does not intend to lead us to such a belief that there can be any merit whatever in any good works of our own.

What seems to be the difference is that the Apostle Paul is speaking of

works before a man has been quickened to divine life, and a man still in his natural state. Paul says, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.”* There is no such thing as good works in order to gain salvation. I don't care what a man does, I don't care how he may be esteemed in the sight of society, in the sight of man, as far as his works are concerned towards his salvation, they are all as filthy rags in the eyes of Almighty God. They can't be anything but that because *“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* And we know also that *“the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”* *“Not of works lest any man should boast.”* In other words, these works we have tried to do and people by the millions are trying to do this very day and time for their salvation, these works are as *“filthy rags in the eyes of God.”* These works are what I believe the Apostle Paul was speaking of, the works of man, unregenerate man. These works cannot and are not of any benefit towards his own salvation.

Now I will admit that they are beneficial as far as society is concerned. We would much rather live next door to a man who is a good neighbor, whose walk and conversation is good in the eyes of man. But as far as these works toward his eternal salvation are concerned, if he is in his natural state still dead in trespasses and sin, all his works again are as filthy rags in the eyes of God toward his own eternal salvation, not in the eyes of society, but in the eyes of God (according to scripture) toward his own salvation. This is the reason why the scripture says *“with man it is impossible.”* It is impossible to work for,

merit, and secure his own salvation, it is all in the blood and righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So I believe these are the works the Apostle Paul was bringing forth.

James is looking at man in a completely different state here now from the Apostle Paul. He is looking at the man who has been quickened by the Spirit of God. He is looking at the man whom *“God is working in both to will and to do of His own good pleasure.”* Now I know and you know by our own experiences and by the word of God that we can not ourselves, independent of God, do these good works. We may try with all our might to do them but fall far short. This is why the Apostle Paul says in the seventh chapter of Romans, *“For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not/ but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.”* Now that is the creature alone, that's the creature within himself. But my dear ones, those that are born of the Spirit of God, God moves them, and that's the reason the Apostle Paul was able to say, *“But I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”* That's the reason why the Apostle Paul said, (and I believe that this same thing applies to all of God's quickened family, maybe not at all times) *“I can do all things.”* Well, now this same Paul says that *I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not..”* This same Paul now says, *“I can do all things.”* How? *“Through Christ who strengthened me.”* My dear ones, I believe this is what Paul taught. I believe the scriptures teach this and I believe our own experiences have taught us that. I believe in good works, but I believe that these good works come by the grace of God through faith and this is not of

ourselves but it is the gift of God, not through our own efforts. We have neither power nor knowledge to do good; but faith gives us both and faith is a gift of God. James by no means says by works faith is created, but faith becomes perfectly manifested in the works.

Now let's go on. What does this twenty-second verse of the first chapter say? "But be ye doers of the word," what does that mean? You are doers of the word. Does that mean you are sitting down upon what you have been accused of by some, upon the stool of do-nothing? No, it doesn't say do-nothing; it says "doers of the Word" so it must have some meaning there. What is the meaning of that? You know a lot of people this very day and time are taking this passage of scripture and they are attempting to lead the blind, "the blind leading the blind." This work belongs to the Holy Spirit of God. "For with man, it is impossible." You may ask did not these all work? Yes, as thieves and robbers, aiming at heaven; not by the door of mercy opened by the blood and righteousness of Christ; but who are attempting to climb up another way, which is the way the blind are leading the blind, the way of eternal death. Did God work in them by faith? No! Do these legal workers submit to the sovereign and good will of God? No! They blasphemed the counsel of his will, they are still dead in trespasses and sins, and contend for their own dead works. When James refers to "Doers of the word", he is speaking of a people who have been given spiritual life, people who have been quickened by the Holy Spirit. "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruit of his creatures." So do we not see that this begetting the Word, "is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." James speaks here in the twenty-first verse, "As receiving with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls." Does this not show how the word must be received? Not by the wayside, or

upon stony places or among thorns but upon ground that had been made good by the Holy Spirit. None but the divine husbandman can engraft the word into our hearts. Then if we have been given by the grace of God to be "doers of the word" it is because "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The Lord's people are engrafted into Him by the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus was pierced by the sword, yes, he was cut, His precious blood came forth from His wounded side. He was pierced and also His people are pierced. They are pierced by His holy and just law. They are brought down, they are killed and brought down to nothing, yea, less than nothing. This is shaping them to become lively branches being engrafted into our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the mind and purpose of God, this was done from all eternity but is made manifest in the life of his people, This is being in Christ Jesus and "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things become new." According to scripture, the children of God are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Surely good works should be of great concern to us. We read in the twenty-sixth verse of the second chapter: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead." Also in verse seventeen it says, "Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead being alone."

Let's look at a few examples here. This is in the second chapter of Joshua. I would like to read while I am speaking. I think I can give you examples from the Bible a little better. "And Joshua, the son of Nun, sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, go view the land, even Jericho." Now these two men were sent out. They were of the Lord, remember this. Now remember that the Lord

promised Abraham that his seed would inherit this country, this kingdom, this land of Canaan, even Jericho. "And they went, and came into an harlot's house named Rahab, and lodged there." I want you to notice here how faith is given unto Rahab. Now faith is a gift of God. We cannot reach out and catch ahold of faith anytime we so desire. It is a fruit of the Spirit and it is a gift of God. But God gives His people faith. He gives them faith according to the measure that is needful in whatever circumstances it is His will for them to be involved in. So He gives that amount of faith. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, there came men in hither..." See these men came to Rahab, the harlot. They came to her house. "And it was told the king of Jericho saying, Behold, there came men in hither tonight of the children of Israel to search out the country." They were sent there by Joshua.

Now put yourself in Rahab's condition for just a moment. Here she is a native of this country and the two men have come into her home and they are spying out the land. What if two men had come into the United States spying it out and they were going to overrun your land and your people? Now that's the position that Rahab is in here at this time. But there is something greater to her than all that. Now let's see what it is. She was given faith to believe in her God, that whatever her Lord's work consisted of, it would work for the good of his people. It surely seems that the Lord's favored people had become more important to her than the people of her own native land. "And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are intered into thine house; for they come to search out all the country. And the woman took the two men, and hid them." In place of exposing them, in place of turning them over to the king and maybe receiving a reward from the king for do-

ing so. No, she hides the men, and says this, "there came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were." Well, she is telling a little story here. "And it came to pass about the time of the shutting of the gate when it was dark, that the men went out; whither the men went I wot not; pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them." She's still putting them on the wrong course. "But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords; and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof. And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land.."

Now how did she know? Of course, it was revealed to her and she was given what? She was given faith to see. Why was just one person in all this land, a harlot at that, given faith here to believe in her Lord and Savior, to believe in Almighty God, to believe that this land had been given? She had heard, no doubt, of the children of Israel being delivered from the Egyptians and how they were saved at the Red Sea. She had heard about this and she was given faith to believe. Now if she had not believed it, she would not have acted. Now faith without works is dead. Her faith was alive because of what? Here are her works demonstrated. Are they not? She took the men, she hid them, and later on she let them out and doing all this she exposed her life because if she had been caught, no doubt, she would have been murdered by the king. Here are works of faith, are they not?

No wonder James could say, faith without works is dead. What if she had been given faith and no works. She would have sat down there; she would not have received the men at all in her

house, she would not have hidden them. Don't you see here what we are speaking of now when we say that faith without works is dead being alone. Will faith without works save you? No, it will not. If it is dead, how can a dead thing do you any good? Therefore, don't you see how it takes action along with this faith and that is the reason why the Apostle Paul could say, "I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which is in me." If we are given faith and grace, my dear ones, are we to sit down and do nothing, or are we to go forward and attempt all that is within us to do that which is God's revealed will? Are we to do these things? Are we to attempt to do these things? Do we know when we attempt them, we can do them? But should that keep us from it? Did Rahab know that she was going to succeed in hiding the men where they couldn't be found? I don't know if she knew or not, but did that keep her from striving to do it? No! God gave her the success of it, did He not? And that's where your success will come from, too, when you have been given successfully to do the works.

Let's go on. I would like to bring forth another one, Abraham. Abraham was a man of great faith. He was the father of the faithful. God gave him faith. He had promised Abraham that in his seed, and Isaac was his seed, would be multiplied as the stars of heaven. And yet this very same lad that the promise was given, Abraham was told to do what? To sacrifice him! What did Abraham do, did he sit down and not do it? No! he took the lad to the place that God designated for him to take him. He was about to sacrifice the lad when the angel spoke to him and stopped him. But look what faith he had. Did that faith produce works? Yes, it produced every step he took in the attempting of the sacrificing of Isaac. Everything that he did, the wood that he carried, everything that he did my dear ones was consisting of works that he was doing.

Works, and faith without these works is dead. Abraham's faith was not a dead faith, was it? He had faith in his Almighty God. This faith was given him from above and this faith was so strong that he believed the promise of God. He believed that his seed would be multiplied as the stars of heaven through his son Isaac and yet he was here to sacrifice him. But he told the ones who were in attendance down there holding the mules that I and the lad will return. So he was given faith my dear dear ones that if the lad was sacrificed, God would bring him back to life. Abraham was given real faith from God. If there were no faith, whence could the works come? We have neither desire nor power within ourselves to do good; faith gives us both. James by no means says by works faith is created, but faith is shown to be perfect in the works. Therefore Abraham's faith was the faith of God's elect. This faith is the only faith that springs from saving grace. It is a lively faith, produces good works, and comes from God, both to will and to do. "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." What was Abraham's works? The work of Abraham was his obedience of faith. Abraham obeyed God, and went out at God's call not knowing where he was going. He walked by faith and not by sight. Was his going according to his own free will? No! He depended on the wisdom of God.

We have others. Let's turn to the fourth chapter of John. Let's begin with the forty-sixth verse. "So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum." The son was sick and if you read more about it, you will find out that his son had been given up by all of the other doctors. All the others had given him up as dying. He wasn't dead yet but they had given him up, all but his father. Now we find faith working in different degrees here. When this man heard that

Jesus had come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him. Now, why did he go? Faith! His faith was not a dead faith. It was live faith and live faith brings forth action. Does it not? Faith by his works, his going to Jesus shows that his faith was not dead. Live faith comes from Almighty God: it produces. "When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death." I think according to history, it is about fifteen miles from Cana to Capernaum. I don't know how he went, but he went. "Then said Jesus unto him, except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed..." Here again is faith in action. "And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him..." Now it doesn't seem like he was nearly in as big a hurry to get back as he was to go. Here we see a little faith move him enough to go to Jesus. Now it seems like he has more faith because he believed his son is healed and he is evidently taking his time in going back. "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house." This my dear ones, is faith with works and that's what James is bringing forth, faith with works. "But be ye doers of the Word..." Again we saw these examples, did we not, Abraham, we saw Rahab, we saw the man here with his sick son and we can find many, many more through the

scriptures where He said thy faith has made thee whole. The woman who touched the hem of His garment. All these are examples, my dear ones of what I believe James is bringing out, and remember now these don't only apply to these people but they apply to God's people in all ages of time, those that are given true faith.

Oh, I look at myself; sometimes you may look at yourself in all these things and say, oh me of little faith, poor me of little faith. I don't even have faith enough that when I see promises of God in his written Word that it has much meaning for me because I have so little faith in His Word toward me. All through the scriptures you can read in every letter of Paul's written to the different churches you will find promises all through them. Read them. Do we have any faith in these promises and commandments? You might say again, well how do you get faith? Well, all I can say is faith is a gift of God. Does that mean that we should attempt to do His revealed Word and keep His commandments? I say we should attempt to do them. I am not saying it will be accomplished. If God blesses us by giving us strength, we will do them. Has He not promised us "My grace is sufficient for you" "My strength is made perfect in weakness."

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only deceiving your own selves." There are many different types of "doers" as recorded in scripture, but the word of God divides them into two classes. One is called a saint separated to do God's service, to grace here upon earth and to glory hereafter, according to the purpose of God. God preserves them because they are washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. This man is a doer of the word in true faith and is blessed in his deed, not for it, for all that are of true faith" are blessed with faithful Abraham." His ears have been circumcised to hear the word, believe it, and hold fast to it. This man

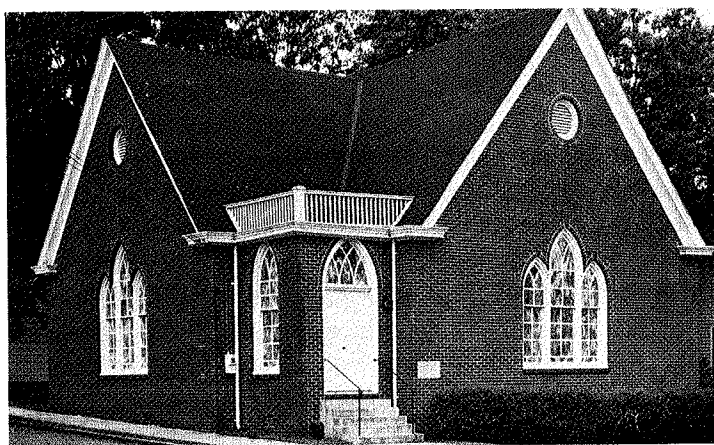
sees and feels his self-righteousness to be an old filthy garment, he "has no confidence in the flesh and rejoices in Jesus Christ." He is one called out of the world by God, given to walk by faith and not by sight, and given that blessed hope of eternal salvation. His heart has been circumcised to love God and His precious truth. He is a tree planted by the Lord, purified by faith and he brings forth good fruit. He has been given by grace to see his ruined, lost condition and begs his God "to be merciful to me a sinner." He can never see himself as doing good and is ready to ask, "Lord, when did I do these good things?" Look at the seventeenth verse of James and remember that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of light."

The other class is like the proud Pharisee, 'who stood and prayed thus with himself.' He told God of the many wonderful deeds he had done. This man walks in craftiness and handles the word of God deceitfully. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully." This man works to be seen of men and

you will hear him boasting of the many good things he has done, as did the Pharisees. He is in bondage to sin, Satan, and the world despising both the true gospel as it is in Christ Jesus and the heirs of promise. he expects to go to heaven by legal works, works of the law, dead works and is usually very proud of all his accomplishments assuring him of his salvation. He will be ready to say, When did I fail to do all these things?

But by the grace of God, we would all be in this same class, if we profess to be religious at all. I just hope that God has given me the grace to bring forth the truth. If it's not this way, I don't know which way it is, I'm in error and I apologize. All I know is what I believe the scriptures bring forth and I trust God has given me light to see. I want to know nothing else. I am full of error. I can only speak truth as the Spirit guides me, and if so, may it all be to his honor and glory. I won't have time to get into the other verse at this time. Read the second chapter of James. May God bless the truth and pardon any error is my prayer. May God bless you all. Thank you.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in the year of 1907. It is located on the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, N.C. Their

services are on the first Sunday morning of each month. Their present pastor is Elder Kenneth R. Key and associate pastor Elder Leonard Key.



ELDER DAVID SPANGLER

“Through the years of my ministry, if I am in it, I have had great wrestling with the flesh, and but for His great grace would have fallen by the way, yet I have that

blessed hope that I will some day see the King in his beauty, and praise Him as I ought.” (A quote from Elder Spangler’s book.)

Elder Spangler, at the request of so many of his friends, has published a book containing 132 pages and it is now ready for distribution. It contains his own personal experience in life and in the ministry; also the experience of others as they were brought into the church. There is several of his editorials as they have appeared in the “*SIGNS OF THE TIMES*”, and articles of various customs and practices among Old School Baptists.

Elder Spangler has been blessed to serve in the ministry for over sixty years and has been editor of the *SIGNS OF THE*

TIMES for forty years. He has visited among the Primitive Baptist Churches all over the United States and Canada. He is loved and held in high esteem by all those whose lives he has touched, and has a good report without as well as within the household of Faith.

His book is available for \$5.00 each to cover cost of printing and mailing. Please send your remittance with order to:

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

CORRESPONDENCE

Castor, La.
November 2, 1983

Dear Elder Spangler:

Hope this finds you and your folks well. My wife and I arrived home safely from the meeting in Alabama. I came home feeling that you had been made to be a fisher of men and I was given a great love for you. I have written the following for publication if you see fit.

I hope it is His will to enable me to write some of the thoughts and revelations given me about Him and His doctrine as recorded in St. Mark 10: 17-27. I have had a few impressions that this one may have been one of those that the scripture speaks of in the Psalms, 107: 23-24. They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep.

The scripture says, there came one running and kneeled to Him and asked Him, good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? In another place the scripture says no man can come unto me except my Father who sent me draw him. And another reads that all the Father giveth me shall come to me and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

According to these scriptures, I believe there was good evidence that he was a child of God and that he was drawn to Jesus by the Father, even though at this time he just thought he knew something (of a spiritual nature) but actually he knew nothing yet as he ought. I believe he had been smitten of God and caused to run in his heart to Jesus. He had great possessions, was rich in what he thought was good works, hence him calling him good master was in the flesh, but Jesus who was talking with

him was as Peter said of him, thou knowest all things.

When the one that came running said that he had observed or kept the commandments from his youth, this was just some more of these possessions that he was trying to bring forth as trading material, but the way we see it and try to describe it to you is that he was only getting himself ready for a real God given chastisement. Oh yes, there was much he ought to know, but he was talking with one that teaches.

Then Jesus beholding this one loved him and must chastise him for the scriptures says, whom he loves he chastens. This he did when he said unto him, one thing thou lackest. This was for his own good, this sinner as he stood there in his carnal nature, Then Jesus said unto him, and I believe it was a command and must be obeyed, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor and thou shall have treasures in heaven, and come take up thy cross and follow me. Now let us come to the meaning of this. Jesus himself is the way and in order to obey this, one must go in the spirit. We find him in many places in the scriptures telling his chosen ones to go thy way. My belief is that Christ was in him causing him to sell all, take up the cross that his children all have, and they also give to the poor. Its like the Lords servants who go forth and are caused to preach a much edifying sermon. About all he can remember is that it was the power of God and he cannot retain any of it for futher use.

The one that has to sell out, soon finds his former love for many worldly things is gone and what he formerly hated, he is now made to love. He feels there has actually been a selling out, and also he begins to feel a touch of sorrow and grief which makes him wonder if he has taken up the cross that he was commanded to take up. The scripture says, Jesus whom he was commanded to fol-

low, was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

It is recorded in the scripture that the one that received these commands went away sad, and grieved for he had great possessions. The statement that he went away does not tell us where he went. It just is a statement that he departed or went from something. What was it that he went away from? It was not from the Lord. Let us quote the 13th Psalm, 7th verse. "Whither shall I go from the spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence: If I ascend up into heaven thou art there, If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." He could not go away from the Lord. He did not have any desire to go from the Lord or his teaching, but he was forced by that higher power to go away from that man made religion with no tools to work with. Jesus had made him to sell out. He went away from those things he once loved and had no more desire for them.

All of what I have written of this one in Mark 10, came to me about 1928 when I was about twenty-four years old and I will state here that I walked directly in this ones tracks. I can truthfully say that I am one that went away sorrowful. I can therefore tell you that at that time I knew nothing about what I have been trying to write. All this was to be taught me later and I was in so much trouble that in the morning I wished for evening, at night I would wish for day and in the day time I would wish for night. I was continually being shown my sins and vileness, and also my weakness, for I was still trying to perform something good of myself, but this time I was being prepared for something better.

I went to bed and dreamed I was in a low swampy place near our home and I was lying on the ground and I felt like I had not a friend. I was in a very low state and I spoke these words very plain, Lord, I just cannot stand it any longer. I

was then picked up and stood on the ground and was caused to look toward the sky and saw what looked like a dove very high coming toward the earth and it came straight to the top of my head, fluttered a little and disappeared. I felt something invisible like a clear plastic sack coming down over me. I was raised off the ground about six inches and there was what seemed like a sealing operation. This was to represent (I believe) being baptised with the Holy Ghost, and I being completely enclosed said, how sweet is Jesus. I was then gradually released from this and woke up.

It was a little over forty years before it was revealed to me the meaning of, "go thy way". My wife and I united with the Primitive Baptist about fifty three years ago and we are nearing our seventy-ninth birthday. If it should be the Lord's will I would like to at a later date take up from this and tell some of my experiences these last fifty-three years.

Your little brother,
James D. White

SPACEMEN FIND UNIVERSE'S LOST DAY-IN BEGINNING OF PROGRAM

Mysterious events in space exploration found a missing day on the universe to prove supernatural phenomena, reported in the Bible but classified as myths by many scientists and students of religion, according to a long-term space program consultant.

Space program consultants in orbital mechanics for 11 years—since the Mercury-Gemini program began, said God gave the missing day to Joshua and Isaih.

Mysterious events took place as astronauts and space scientists in the space Astronomy Laboratory at the University

of Wisconsin, checked positions of the sun, moon and planets 100 and 1,000 years from now.

“WE HAVE TO KNOW THIS, so we don’t send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite and where the planets will be, so the whole thing will not bog down.”

Astronauts and space scientists reportedly ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and it came to a halt, then the computer stopped and a red signal indicated something was wrong, either with information fed into the computer or the results as compared with the standards.

The service department checked out the computer and computer programming by the space team, then reported, “Its perfect.”

Nobody was able to explain “a day missing in space in elapsed time,” but a space team member referred them to Joshua 10: 12-13 in the Bible. The biblical reference tells of God stopping the onslaught of the nightfall to give Joshua “about a day” of extra daylight to help his army overpower the enemy.

SPACEMEN CHECKED the computers, going back into the time of Joshua and found their calculations were close—but not close enough. The elapsed time missing in Joshua’s day was 23 hours and 20 minutes—not a whole day.

The space consultant said astronauts and scientists remained puzzled and “still in trouble because if you can’t account for 40 minutes in space science, you’ll be in trouble 1,000 years from now; 40 minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits.” The space team was then referred to II Kings 20: 3-10 when God “Let the shadow return backward 10 degrees for Isaiah”. Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes. Twenty-three hours

and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in II Kings make the missing twenty-four hours the space travelers had to log in the log-book as the missing day on the universe.

EXPERIENCE

“**M**an, said a thoughtless, ungodly English traveler, to a North American Indian convert, -- “Man, what is the reason that you make so much of Christ, and talk so much about Him?”

The converted Indian did not answer him in words. He gathered together some dry leaves and moss and made a ring with them on the ground. He picked up a live worm and put it in the middle of the ring. He struck a light and set the moss and leaves on fire. The flames soon rose, and scorched the worm. It writhed in agony, and after trying in vain to escape on every side, curled itself up in the middle, as if about to die in despair. At last the Indian reached forth his hand, took up the worm gently and placed it on his bosom. “Stranger,” he said to the Englishman, “Do you see that worm? I was that perishing creature. I was dying in my sins, hopeless, and helpless, and on the brink of eternal fire. It was Jesus Christ who put forth the arm of His power. It was Jesus Christ who delivered me with the hand of His grace, and plucked me from everlasting burnings. It was Jesus Christ who placed me, a poor sinful worm, near the heart of His love. Stranger, that is the reason why I talk of Jesus Christ, and make much of Him. I am not ashamed of it, because I love Him.”

“Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”

Mat. 7:12

PROPHETSTOWN, II.

It is written in the book of Isaiah ix. 6, 7, "*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*"

O, how precious are the gifts of a sovereign God to fallen man. We are the creatures of his care; he sent the light to shine in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.

In beginning my story about this marvelous light shining into the heart of lost and sinful man, my mind is carried back to a scene when I was a little child not many months over three years old, it being the only thing I seem to remember at that age. It was at the meeting-house of the Old School Baptists in Olive, N.Y. I remember sitting on my mother's lap, and afterward on the seat. My eyes seemed riveted on the minister, and after the sermon he came down from the pulpit and began breaking bread, the emblem of the bruised and crushed body of the Lord Jesus; also pouring out the wine, the emblem of his blood so freely shed for the sins of his people. My parents were members at that time, and when the deacon passed the cup to mother she looked down at her child and then at the deacon, mother-like, as if asking if it would be right to give it a sip, but the deacon shook his head. Then of course it appeared it would be wrong for me to taste. That must have been the first dawn of the bright and glorious day of the Lord. I do not remember any other events connected with my early days in regard to the progress of the light grow-

ing in my heart till I was old enough to read the Bible and other books. The Bible and Pilgrim's Progress were always interesting to me, and when visiting my young friends I would hunt around the house for the last named book, although told by them that it was nothing but an old dream. To me it seemed a revelation from God, put by him in the form of a dream. Now in reading of the creation of the world, and then the destruction by flood of all but Noah and his family, because he called on the name of the Lord by reason of the sin of the people, and found favor with God, it began to be plain to me that I was always a sinner, and that I must begin to do something to gain the favor of the great God of the universe. So I read very carefully the law of Moses, and did really think I would have to live in that way to gain the favor of God. But where is the man, I would think, to teach me to do them? Surely, I thought, there must be some person somewhere, who understood these things, and then I would think I was too young to do them, and would try to put away the feeling, and think of other things, but very often my thoughts would return to God and his greatness. Then I began to fear I would not grow to be a man to do these things. So my trouble grew from day to day. My thoughts would be on God, and I desired to become good and be found in his favor. Often when my parents and the others would go to church I would ask to stay at home alone so I might read the Bible and pray in my childish way to God, for I began to see that I was a great sinner, far from God, and no way to find favor with him but through the law of Moses. All this was yet when I was very young, under thirteen years, and attending school about six months a year. As I grew older my trouble became worse, and my sins worse. Often, I thought I did not care to live, and would seek death to hide myself from God and his

wrath. But I was very careful to hide all my sufferings from every one. Many mornings, after lying awake all night, thinking of my lost condition, my pillow would be wet with tears, and I would fear that my sister would see it when making the bed. In about my twelfth year my trouble and exercise of mind came oftener, and I was led to read of the coming of John the Baptist; how he preached in the wilderness, "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast in the fire."

I remember well one day I delayed starting for school till after all had gone, for that morning I wanted to be alone to meditate on my God. It was a most lovely morning in the month of June. There was a stretch of woods on the road to school, and about half way through I had laid a flat rock on which to kneel and there try to offer up myself to God, for I thought I must have some form, like Abraham and the prophets of old. When I came to that place everything in nature was so fair and beautiful, but I was feeling in such distress of soul that I thought I would never be permitted to reach the school-house. I must stop there once more to pray God for his mercy. As I knelt on the rock it seemed that I was such an awful sinner that this would be my last, God would take no notice of me, and it seemed I would sink into the ground. I was so overcome with my dreadful condition I could say nothing. My mind was all taken away, and I became as it were dissolved in darkness, In a twinkling all things flew away, and I felt as though I were borne up from the earth, and instantly there was a brightness more than the sun, although it was shining in all its splendor. All things now seemed to be praising God. The trees, all covered with a brightness, were waving toward the tree at which I knelt. A great calmness and peace of mind settled over me, whether in myself

or out I could not tell, but surely, I thought, this is the glory of God. Presently I arose and made my way into the road; as I went the great brightness seemed to pass away, but my sorrow was all gone; God was making the sufferings of Christ appear pain, for the remission of my sins; the love of God was revealed to my soul, and all things seemed new. Then a voice seemed to come with these words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." And it surely seemed as if I was filled, for I felt so happy I could not stir from the spot, till all at once the tempter came as if from my heart, saying, "You are just imagining all this you have seen, and the voice you heard was your father's, who is behind the stone fence." I immediately got on the wall to see if any one was there, but though I saw no one, the doubt would not down, so strong was the impression that the voice was father's. I determined to satisfy myself, as I knew where father was at work ploughing corn when I left the house. It was more than a hundred rods from where I then was, in the opposite direction from the voice I heard. I went back until I could see him at work, then I was satisfied it was not him. Then I thought it was none other than the voice of Jesus, for with the thought came again the words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," and now the whole sermon passed before my mind, and a great peace was with me. I thought, How can all this be; such a sinful creature as I saw myself to be a short time ago, when as it appeared I had done nothing to be worthy of all this peace and joy? I went in at the school and took my seat as usual with my back to the whole school. Joy and fear passed alternately through my mind, and I had to get away or expose myself to the school, so I got permission to go out till my mind was more settled.

Now, this was on one of the meeting days of the church, and I had a great desire to tell what the Lord had done for me, and as at noon some of the old church members passed by I thought first I would ask them if I might not go along, but something held me back, although now it seemed as if I must follow my Lord in all his commandments. It was plain to me now that Jesus had fulfilled all the law, and magnified it. The thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah tells a great deal of my experience.

I know I am a sinner, and if saved at all it is by the grace of God, who first loved us, and gave his Son for the ransom of his people.

Yours in hope of everlasting life,

HIRIM BOGART

Nitro, West Virginia
September 14, 1983

It is on my mind to write a few lines. When I was a boy about ten years old, my father or mother would correct me for some mean thing I had done and I would go out in the woods and get down on my little knees and promise God I would be a better boy.

The next day I would do something just as bad or worse. About that time I was seeking relief for my troubled soul. One day stands out in my mind. When I got on my knees a great load was lifted off me and I felt like shouting for joy.

I went on sinning and begging for mercy. I would do all I could to be good but felt worse all the time. It seems I was without hope and without God in the world. In 1930 there was a light in the heavens and it was shining brightly on me and my father and mother. I saw this in the night. The next morning, I praised God, my troubles were gone. It seemed to me that the leaves on the trees and the birds were praising God. Everything that moved, even the rocks and streams of water were praising God.

That lasted for about seven days, then I was back to trouble again. Some thing within my soul was telling me I would have to preach God a sovereign God in all things. How could I do that, I was too bad a sinner to do it, didn't have book learning to preach; and not worthy even to be with the good people of God. Yet I was going to the mountain and praying to God and preaching to those trees that were praising God in my experience, I have had some good meetings with my God, He and I all alone.

Then I had a great burden in my heart to join the church, but felt not worthy to be with Gods good people. I would worry from one meeting to the next and say to myself, the next time I will offer to the church. But when I got there something would keep me away. I was like Jonah, trying to go the other way; but the time that God had ordained before I was born for me to join that church, I could not stay away any longer.

Some people say that God made sin, I dare not say that. How could a righteous and holy God make me do the things that I have done. James 1:3, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin. Genesis 3:13, "And the Lord God said unto the woman, what is this that thou hast done?" The woman said the serpent beguiled me and I did eat. She did not say that God beguiled her.

When Peter denied the son of God, he did not say God made him sin. Romans 7:16, "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good. Now it is no more I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

Luke 15:14 (this is some of my experience) "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land and he began to be in want and he would fain

have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat and no man gave unto him." No man could give me anything. I was perishing in that land until God showed me my Fathers house. I was like the dear one, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Oh, I felt so unworthy. I didn't even feel worthy to ask God for mercy. This is what did me good, gave me hope. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

When we can stop laboring and feel assured that our soul is in the hand of God, that is surely rest for our soul. Praise His holy name.

Elder R. H. Pennington

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE OLD AND THE NEW

Beloved In The Lord:—

In the word and in the works of the Creator, there are many twos or couplets, and almost all things are in pairs; but others are in triplets. So there are three that bear record in heaven; and three that bear witness in earth; yet these are one, and agree in one. Thus we are presented with ones, twos and threes. Besides these, both nature and grace are shown to us in sevens. There are the seven prismatic colors, as shown in the bow in the cloud, the seven spirits of

God, and time is measured by sevens. So seven is full and perfect measure, embracing all. True, seven is repeated many times, but it is still seven in all.

But let us here go back to the simplest division, and consider the twos. These are presented in many simple forms of expression in the two books, the natural and the spiritual, both of which are of God, who is one. The simplest and final is, the first and the last. So we have day and night, and next to these, light and darkness. So we have sunshine and clouds; heat and cold; also solids and fluids. Then there is strength and weakness; health and sickness; life and death.

Coming to the book of Revelation, its Author has given us first, the old, last, the new. In these there are the two most prominent of all else, "the first man," and "the last Man." The first is earthly, and the second is heavenly. So, in the very beginning "God created the heaven and the earth." Thus heaven occupies the first place, being the most important, and the earth is last and least. And so it is written, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the last Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." This shows clearly that all other men are included with either the first or the last of these two men, and are either earthly or heavenly, as they are related to the first or the last, to Adam or to Christ. The first man is the figure of the last Man. But the last is as high above the first as heaven is above the earth; and yet the first is taken up into the last, and changed into the image of the heavenly Man, so the two become one. "This is a great mystery."

Following on, we are presented with a group of twos: Moses and Jesus, Mount Sinai and Mount Calvary, the law and the gospel, works and grace, the old covenant and the new covenant, condemnation and justification, the ministration

of life. All these sum up the old and the new. The old began with the first man Adam, and concentrates in Moses; the new began with God, and concentrates in Jesus. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." So Moses is the greatest man in the Old Testament, but Jesus is the greatest man in the New Testament, and he is as much exalted above Moses as the Son and heir of God is above the servant of God. Yet Moses was the chosen and honored servant in the house of God; and the law of God, which was given by Moses, had its honored place, and it reflected God's glory. The law of God is both the measure and the ministration of his strict and perfect justice. It demands no more than this, but will accept no less. Perfection is its measure, and this it must have. So it marks every failure against man, and charges all sin to him. The law justifies God as holy, but it condemns man as guilty. This is his province and mission. And it can do neither more nor less than this. It protects the righteous, but it justly punishes the guilty. The law of God cannot accept of any imperfect or faulty act or deed, because then the law itself would be imperfect and faulty. For this reason the wicked must be punished, and the punishment must continue until the law is fulfilled and justice satisfied. If this were not required, then God, who gave the law, would cease to maintain the righteous claims of his holy law, which he cannot cease to do, because he is holy. Jesus therefore said that the law shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. But no sinful man can fulfill it. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin," says the word.

Now, let us remember the first man Adam is under the law of God, and is held by it in all his powers and faculties until it be fulfilled. And man is natural as born of the flesh, and is only natural

and fleshly in all his attributes and being. For Adam and his family are not spiritual, but natural. So all the deeds of man are fleshly, and they are measured and tried by the law of God, under which God made man. And so the first man is only natural and fleshly and legal in all his life and deeds, in all of which he ever comes short of the perfection of the law, and therefore the law marks him as faulty and sinful in all his works; "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Paul therefore again says, "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." This includes all men in the flesh, and all their fleshly works. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," or through the sinful weakness of the flesh, etc. All this shows the hopeless helplessness of the first man. He is not only condemned already as sinful in all his nature, but is under death, and all his works are "dead works." The righteous sentence of the Judge is, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "There is none good but one, that is, God." "He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." But as to man, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." There is no hope, then, for man in man, nor in his works.

All this is the woeful truth concerning the first man, and the first covenant. These are "the old." "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." This is the word of the Lord, who himself "hath made the first old." There are but the two covenants, the old and the new. So there are but the two headships, Adam and Christ. The first is the *creature* of God, the last is the *Son* of God. Adam is the natural head, Christ is the spiritual Head. All human life is from the first man; all spiritual life is from the second Man, the Lord from heaven. The natural life is received in the first birth, which is of the flesh; the spiritual life is received

in the second birth, which is of the Spirit. These are the old and the new, but both are united in every son of God, and every one of his children is as really one with Christ as with Adam. So the word tells us of the flesh and of the Spirit, of the outward man and the inward man, and of the old man and the new man. Yet the son of God is but one person, being one with Christ in his life, and one with Adam in his life and death—and Christ is but one. Therefore, his brethren are the many members in him—in his one body, the church. His word to them is, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” He lives, to die no more, and their life is hid with Christ in God. Yea, Christ lives in them, and they live in him.

Thus the people of the new covenant and the children of God are not only partakers of the flesh and blood, as born of the flesh, but they are also made partakers of the divine nature, as born of the Spirit, and the life of the holy Son of God is made manifest in their mortal flesh, as says Paul in 2 Cor. iv. Now, therefore, the flesh and the Spirit are the only two sources of all religion and religious works among men. Paul most forcibly expresses this truth in Gal. v., enumerating first the works of the flesh, all of which are corrupt; and then the fruit of the Spirit, namely, “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” How blessed is the state of those in whom the fruit of the Spirit is manifested, for Paul says of them, “And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” But of those in whom the works of the flesh rule, he says, “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” This shows the impossibility of any one obtaining any favor of God by his fleshly works, all of which are legal, conditional and rejected as sinful by the perfect law.

All that any man is capable of religiously, must arise either from the life of Adam in him, or from the life of Christ in him, because it cannot be in part a work of the flesh, and in part a fruit of the Spirit. For of these two opposites Paul says, “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary, the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that you would.” This one text entirely demolishes the flesh-pleasing notion of free will and free moral agency. And to show that the flesh does not aid the christian at all, Jesus said to his apostles, who could not watch with him one hour, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” So the Scriptures make a clear distinction and a strong contrast between the flesh and the Spirit, as between Adam and Christ; and also between the old covenant and the new covenant, the law and the gospel, the works of man and the grace of God. For none of these are mixed and blended, neither is there any similarity or harmony between them. Earth and heaven, sin and holiness, death and life, are not farther apart in their character or nature than these.

It need only be asked, Is obedience by Adam, or by Christ? Is salvation in Adam, or in Jesus? Are we saved by the works of the law, or by the grace of the gospel? Are christians under the old covenant, or the new? Is condemnation by the law of Moses, or by the gospel of Jesus? Does the law of works save, and the gospel of grace condemn? Which way is it? A babe in Christ can answer. The Spirit of truth testifies of Christ, saying, “Neither is there salvation in any other.” So then, our salvation comes to us in Christ. Of God’s people it is written, “And their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” “By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.” This proves that all

disobedience is in Adam, in the sinful flesh, and that all obedience is in Christ, even as all righteousness is in him. and all redemption unto salvation. Another simple question: Have we any gospel of salvation out of him? Is Christ the Mediator of the old covenant, or of the new covenant? One answer only can be given. All spiritual blessings are in Christ; out of him there is no gospel; and he is the Mediator of the new covenant; ye, God said, "I will give him for a covenant of the people."

Now we are brought to this one strong and clear point, from which there is no evasion or turning away; Christ and his new covenant are yea and amen, positive and sure, and absolutely unconditional; and the gospel of Christ, which is the gospel of salvation, belongs entirely to the new covenant, but in no sense to the old covenant; therefore there is no conditional gospel, and no conditional righteousness and salvation. The new covenant is one of mercy and grace alone, and it is from all conditions clear; but the old covenant was legal and conditional, and it depended upon the people who were under it to keep it, or suffer its penalties, and the whole house of Israel broke it, with one exception; the Son of Mary kept it, fulfilled it, and took it out of the way. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." This second and new covenant in Christ is established upon better promises than that first and old covenant with Moses, by how much also Jesus is the Mediator of a better testament. The old was weak and faulty, because it was conditional and its people were sinful. So they broke the covenant, as was indicated by Moses breaking the two tables of stone on which the covenant was written, for their works were sinful, like themselves, and the Lord regarded them not. So it is yet with all fleshly, legal and conditional works, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. Paul confessed that in his flesh

dwelt nothing good, and that with the flesh he served the law of sin. As a believer and minister of the gospel he therefore said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." So faith is of grace, but not of works, and both are of the new covenant, but not of the old, and the three are of Christ, but not of Moses. "Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." In this righteousness only will God accept us. but not in our own, nor in our legal works, which are in their very nature always conditional.

All conditional salvation and its benefits, depend necessarily upon conditional works of righteousness, which are essentially legal and selfish in their nature, and, when done, the doer is of right lawfully entitled to such salvation as a reward for his works. Conditionalists are consistent and honest, therefore, in holding to the principle of rewards for works of righteousness, and in claiming that conditional salvation and its blessings are received by them as such conditional rewards. But in doing so, they are fallen from grace, or have gone back from the new covenant of grace to the old covenant of works. "This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Paul here pre-

sents this whole issue, and states it truly and just as it is. There are but the two doctrines and ways, he shows; and the Spirit and faith are the way of the new covenant in Christ; but the works of the law and the deeds of the flesh are the way of the old covenant in Moses. "For these are the two covenants the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage.*** But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Paul, the apostle of grace and faith, presents the two in very forcible contrast, saying, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." Besides these two, there is no other principle, doctrine or way of salvation; and between these two there is no union or harmony, but one excludes the other altogether. The words of Paul are so positive and plain they can neither be mistaken nor perverted. Grace only, grace without works; or works only, works without grace, is the only principle and way of salvation. It would be foolish to say, that salvation by works is certain and unconditional; and it would be equally foolish to say, salvation by grace is conditional and uncertain. All know that grace means salvation, sovereign, full or free. All as well know that works mean conditional and uncertain salvation, according to the righteousness of him that worketh. His reward is of debt. Grace is not in his works. He and his works are outside of the new covenant, and if he is saved, it is by works of righteousness which he must do. His conditional covenant has no mercy for his unrighteousness, and he receives only so much of salvation as his good works entitle him to. He has turned away from the new covenant, which overflows with mercy

and grace for the unworthy, and turned to the old covenant, which rewards none but the good and worthy. His boasted free will has led him to the law of works, so by the law must he stand or fall. He is flattered by that conditional hope of reward in the old covenant of works, which tells him, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." This suits the fleshly mind and legal spirit much better than to be a beggar at the door of Mercy and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But Jesus says that this poor sinner was justified, rather than the self-righteous man, who made mention of his works as the ground of his exalted standing before God. These two are typical men, and they truly represent the two classes of professed worshipers of God that are now in the world, and have ever been since Cain and Abel. Cain brought his own works as an offering, on which to obtain the favor and blessing of God; but Abel offered the lamb which God had provided for him, and through it his faith embraced the Lamb of God as his salvation. The religion of Cain is the religion of all who work and worship that they may be saved; but the religion of Abel is the religion of all who work and worship because the Lord has blessed them with his salvation.

The old legal way says, "The man that doeth these things shall live by them." The new gospel says, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." The old talks much of man's ability to do the conditional works of salvation; the new tells of Christ's power to save to the uttermost. The old proclaims aloud that great things we are doing for the Lord; the new delights to sing and preach what great things the Lord has done, is doing and will do for us, thereof we are glad. The old glorifies the conditional works of the so-called church; the new is to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Such is the difference.

O, ye people of the new covenant of grace, let us rejoice in the gospel of Paul, who said, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This one in Christ has been born anew, has been given a new life, a new heart, a new spirit, and has entered into a new kingdom, a new home, and his people and kindred are all new. His home henceforth is the New Jerusalem, the Holy City of our God, and this new man in Christ Jesus has come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. The Lord has made this new covenant with him, even in his heart, and says, I will be his God, and he shall be my son. And now, that all things are new, this new man no longer serves God in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit. "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."

O how beautiful and lovely, holy and good and blessed is *the new way!* May our new Master and Leader and Brother ever say to us, "This is the way, walk ye in it." "I am the way."

Your brother in the bonds of the new covenant,

DAVID BARTLEY

MEETINGS

The Lord willing on Sunday, April 15, 1984 at 3:00 p.m., an ordination service to set apart Brother Cleo Robertson to the work of the ministry is to be held at the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on Pacific Avenue, Durham, North Carolina.

All ministers and friends of our Faith

and order are invited.

D.V. SPANGLER - Moderator
 CATHERINE HUMBAGER - Clerk

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Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in March. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

NOTE: See Elder David Spangler's Book, Page 57 in this issue.

OBITUARIES

OREN MINTER

In writing this memorial to our deceased Brother Oren Minter, our minds dwell more upon the work of grace wrought in his heart, and manifested in his life, than upon his earthly life, and career.

He was born March 16, 1900 in the community of Sandy Level, Virginia. He lived and died in the same community where he was born.

He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leff Minter.

On May 6, 1925, he was united in marriage to Miss Jesse Inman, who survives him.

To this union was born three children, two daughters who survive are, Mrs. Frances Whyte of Wilmington, Del. and Mrs. Jo Anne Burnette of Stuart, Va. His son, Oren Minter, Jr. is deceased.

Though his father was a devout member of the Old School Baptist Church and would spend his last dollar in ob-

taining a way to his meetings, this did not impress our Brother, though they lived in the same home.

Brother Oren united with a church near his home, not of the Old School Baptist, and became an active member. When the church decided to build a parsonage, he agreed to furnish one half the rough lumber for it. (Later when he left them to unite with the Old School Baptist, he still agreed for them to have the lumber.)

One night God showed him his standing before him, and the power of that experience was so great, and convincing, that he began to inquire where the Old School Baptist Churches was, as he had not had enough interest before to even know their locations.

One night he called a neighbor, Reubin Davis, (not giving his name) and inquired where there would be an Old School Baptist meeting the next day.

From that day forward, he began attending the services at various churches and receiving the doctrine of Grace, as a thirsty man to quench his thirst.

We believe that divine providence led him to Dan River Church. It did not take years for God to establish him in the doctrine of grace. Our dear brother and his dear wife were led to become members and were baptized at the same time.

His illness confined him to his home a long time, and he was the most hungry person to talk and hear the word of God talked in his home I have ever seen, while confined in his illness.

May we bow in submission to the will of God, and look forward to that blessed day when all the redeemed shall awake in the likeness of our blessed Lord.

D. V. Spangler

SISTER IDA MAE THOMPSON

Sister Ida Mae departed this life August 15, 1983 in a nursing

home in Jackson County, Altus, Okla. She was born September 18, 1908 to Franklin and Laura Burkhalter. Sister Ida Mae was united in marriage to Herman Thompson, October 3, 1943 at Livingston, New Mexico.

Sister Ida Mae joined Little Flock Church in Altus, Okla. June 22, 1968. Was baptized by her pastor Elder C. M. Haygood. She was a faithful member as long as her health permitted. She lived all her married life in Tipton, Okla. Surviving are her husband, Bro. Herman Thompson, one brother and four sisters.

Funeral service was at Tipton Methodist Church with Elder Joe Hamrick officiating.

She was laid to rest in Hess Cemetery near Tipton, Okla.

Written by Church Clerk

Sister Ava Stewart
Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla.

VIVA SURFACE WADE

Sister Viva Surface Wade, daughter of the late Fletcher J. and Mary Elizabeth Keffer Surface, was born April 14, 1907 in Catawba, Virginia, and passed away in a Salem, Va. hospital November 8, 1983. Making her stay her on earth a few months more than 76 years.

We feel she has been called to her eternal and long awaited Home, "Where congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths never end."

She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Ruth Beheler, Roanoke, Va.; four sons, Clifton L. Wade, John E. Wade, Leonard J. Wade, all of Roanoke, Va., Haden E. Wade, Salem, Va.: Seventeen Grandchildren and seventeen Great-grand-

children. A twin Sister, Mrs. Iva S. Dutton, Hampden, Maine.

Sister Wade joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church June 3, 1945 and was baptized by the late Elder J. F. Stegall on July 22, 1945. She remained a very devoted and faithful member. Not only to her home church was she faithful, but attended faithfully the nearby sister churches.

The last year of her life was of afflictions and she only attended her church a few times. One year to the day from the time she first entered the hospital, she was taken by the Heavenly Father from this time world.

Her funeral was conducted at Oakey's Funeral Home November 10, 1983 by her pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, who spoke so comforting to the family, brethren, sisters and friends. After which she was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery by the side of her husband. There together with Brother Wade, she sleeps, to await that bright and glorious day when Christ shall descend from heaven and take them home to Glory.

May her beloved family be blessed to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

Submitted by Mrs. H.C. (Rlee) Houchins

TIBBIE JANE MILLER

In love and memory of sister Tibbie Jane Miller. She was born February 24, 1905 and departed this life August 3, 1983. She was the daughter of William Brantley Houston and Octavious Kennedy Houston of Duplin County. She Joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Sand Hills of the White Oak Association on September 13, 1931 and was sound in the doctoring of salvation by grace. She married John Ander Miller on March 13, 1926 and to this union was

born nine children I dearly love. They were all obedient to her. She ruled her house well, seven sons and two daughters; William Rue Miller, Brantley Roe Miller, Robby Lee Turner, John Issac Miller, Kermit Edward Miller, George Washington Miller, Furnie Alton Miller, Carol Jane Williams and Bobby Ray Miller; Nineteen grand-children and three great grand-children.

Her funeral service was conducted on Friday, August 5, by Elder Owen Kennedy and her grandson, Woodrow Miller. Her body was laid to rest in the Sand Hill Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers to awake the morning of the resurrection when all the Saints shall rise and their bodies change and be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ to be in the presence of God and at the right hand of God where there is peace forever more.

Written by her sister, Kathl en Johnson

ADDIE K. KENNEDY

She was born September 8, 1918 to Ashlely and Laura H. Kennedy. And departed this life August 2, 1983.

She was married November 6, 1937 to Jim Kennedy. And to this union was born two Daughter's, Lois and Mavis Kennedy.

She united with San Hill Primitive Baptist Church, November 28, 1963 and was baptized by her Pastor Elder L.L. Yopp.

She united with Sand Hill Primitive as long as God saw fit for her to go. But when illness kept her home, she never lost faith in God. And endured her sickness with patience. Willing to accept God's Will.

Funeral services were held in Community Funeral Home with Elder Mike Niekirk officiating. Assisted by Tommy

Tripp. Her body was laid to rest in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Pink Hill, N. C.

Written by her Husband,
Jim Kennedy

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Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84 Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1-(901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard St., Greensboro, n. C. 27405.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 65

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If I could sing, I'd sing of grace
that saved me from the fall,
Maintain the honor of His word,
And crown Him Lord of all.

He came to me in the mid of night
when trouble around me rolled,
And said fear not for I am with you
And eased my weary soul.

If I am His and He is mine,
I'll be in heaven on high,
When I close my eyes to this sinful
World, and bid my friends good-bye.

I hope that when my savior comes,
and calls His elect home,
That I will be in that number
And see Him on His throne.

Jessie W. Ray

Sister Mabel found this poem, believed to have been written by Brother Jessie during his illness.

The Editors

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in April. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/84
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

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 EDITORIAL

“**A**nd we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Whether this is the time or a likely subject for thought I know not, but as there seems to be a burden for me to express my feelings on the above, I'll attempt to write as my mind leads, if not directed.

I believe we with the apostle Paul at times do see all things working together for good to His people. Let us notice this *all* which denotes to me nothing under God's creation that is not included, and also working, not happening. As much as natural work requires effort on the

creature, God is the source of all the energy that makes the all things come into play or action, the moving force that brings the working together of all things.

We know that all things could be working, and not together, or working together but not for good. Can we not see His hand a must in all this from beginning to end according to His purpose and pleasure. Whom does it effect, but them that love God, the called according to His purpose. The called will surely declare that all are not called therefore this work is good only to those intended.

Them who will dare deny that He yet rules and reigns in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. What could be beyond His control, if this scripture is true, and it is, but we as carnal beings can't see the good or even the working together for good to any things or person, yet we know it is or the record would be incorrect.

Did not all the travels of the children of Israel work for their eternal good, even down in Egypt the burdens laid on by the taskmasters made them willing to leave at the appointed time of God. As also the apostle Paul being struck down, Job's afflictions, Jonah's travels, Naomi losing her Son-in-laws and so many other instances. These all working together for good.

It took every happening, no more or less to bring about the purpose of God in the end.

We believe that is the case today. We are made to act as all events are constrained, to bring about the working together of all things for good to them that love God, whether we be one of that number this work is for, we know not.

The strongest bond of this text seems to be that its all based upon them who are "the called", not just a called group but the called according to His purpose, let us realize that all of the foregoing comes about to accomplish the deter-

mined purpose of God for His people.

We know not at the time or even of the many trials and sorrows among those that show the mark of being His people, why they have to be, other than we truly believe to accomplish His purpose which in the end, if not at present, working together for good to you, if you are one of the Elect.

Even the work of death on these bodies, will bring the uniting of His people with Him, which is good.

Elder J.R. Williams

2nd Corinthians I:17, 22

When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea and nay? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

There is not any place for mirth in presenting the lovely doctrine of grace. Illustrations that tend to tickle the fancy of sinners does not belong in the Bible, nor do they belong on the printed pages of our periodicals. Telling anecdotes or illustrations in the pulpit in order to gain attention of gainsaying humanity shows our lack of knowledge of the serious frame of mind that a born again sinner is in. I am glad that Paul is careful to disabuse the mind of readers or listeners in regard to mirth and lightness and flippancy in the sacred pulpit. In this concise and clear presenting of the gospel truths there will be at least a

true regard for the better things of the gospel.

Every phase of gospel truth is to be presented in an atmosphere of a broken and a contrite heart. Any effort to disregard the solid and fundamental principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour is an effort to confuse, and then take advantage of the confusion that is made by wresting the true facts in the case. Let us rest assured that any obstruct placed in among the beauties of the gospel will readily be seen and discarded by the hearer.

Everything that God has given or promised to give is in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In his preaching of the gospel the apostle did not make a single reservation as to anything coming from him. I call your attention, dear people of God to the careful presentation of the gospel of Christ. Did I use lightness? There is not a sin practiced in the pulpit like unto a misleading of the hearers. Did I use lightness in presenting to you the precious truth of He that overtook me on the Damascus Road? Did I come before you making my arguments based upon flesh? Did I leave any of the truths attended with my knowledge of language that would lead you to think that anything I am preaching is that way because of what I have done. Have I presented the gospel of the grace of God in such a subverting way so that my preaching and my writing sound as yea and nay?

These cogitations are recorded here to comfort and instruct the poor servants of God today. The apostle's reflections of mind are the same as ours are today, that is, if we are called of God. How wonderful that the Spirit moved him to say, But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus. It was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him

are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

God's promises in Christ are all yea. The things of God's all belongs to the children of God. Their coming into possession of them are based on Jesus Christ, even upon His work here in the world. His finishing of the work assigned to Him forever forbids any negative promises to His brethren. The glorious caption to what Jesus accomplished in His coming to this world is entitled The Finished Work of Jesus Christ. This promise of the finishing of His work was promised before the world was, and fulfilled when He spent His life here. I must urge that the law His people were placed under was a holy law. Not a single word of criticism can any bring against that law. It was holy and just and good, but none were able to keep that law. We all sinned and come short of the glory of God. As far as the Israelite nation were concerned or able, they could not redeem themselves from the curse of the law. Partial payments would not be acceptable in the court of divine justice. Once in the end of world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. 9:26). As Israel could not make partial payments on their indebtedness, just so the whole indebtedness had to be paid in full. Every nay against the church of God had to be removed. It took the death (sacrifice) of the One that was both the Offering and the Offerer. This Offering was complete in every detail. Every promise of death was removed by the death of the One Offering. Not a promise that God had made could be denied now.

Come near dear brethren and sisters, here is an everlasting boon for the guilty. He fulfilled every single obligation that you did not nor could not fill. Our text becomes precious to poor sinners. Every child of God had forfeited every promised blessing in keeping the law. There was not anything left, there was not any

yea promise available to any of the sons of Adam. Let us lift our feeble voices in lofty praise to God, let us tell it on the housetop that the broken commandments by us brought the nay doctrine against every member of the body of Christ. Then let us speak in every nook and corner of the New Jerusalem that One was ever with the Father rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth and that he was even delighted with the sons of men, yea, even then delighted that He was the one to give to his brethren not only the yea to every promise that God had made to His chosen people and that eternity echoes with His well pleased Amen to the giving of every promised end.

The Saviour openly and freely declares in a positive manner that I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. If there ever was a case of perfect unity it was between the Father and the Son (See John 10). The Saviour, in describing their relationship said, I and my Father are one (verse 30).

Not only were they, Father and Son, forever together, but they were equal in power and glory. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father (Phil. 2:5, II).

How vain is the learning of men to describe this glorious unfolding of God's irrefutable yea and Amen promises to the children of God. However, one might read time and time again of these promises and there would not be anything spectacular about them to the carnal professor. It is when they become ours, when we are led into deep experiences of life as it is lived as a follower of the precious Son of God that they become meaningful to us. As we rest in the promises of God, let us look at them once more, for they never grow old, and they never get out of date.

If all of these promises were established but one time or for one event, it would be a constant source of worry and uncertainty to the poor and needy, to all of those that felt unworthy of the fulfillment of even one promise. But what is that promise that I hear falling so gently from heaven? Let us listen: For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us (Cor. I:20). But is it true? Are these promises really and truly carried out like unto this? Are these things true in the experiences of God's dear children? Will you rest in the word of the chiefest of sinners? Would you receive comfort and joy and peace from the testimony of he who is the apostle to the Gentiles?

Let us see if the promises of God were yea and Amen to the glory of God. Let us remember that all of the promises of God are in him yea and Amen. That is a good testimony to comfort a poor feeble sinner. That is the fountain source of the yea and Amen promises. It is much better to go to the beginning of the fountain of water or truth or anything issuing forth to the poor and needy.

"Now he which stablish us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." Go over the journeys step by step with the apostle. Who was it that plucked him as a brand out of the seething furnace of condemnation and placed him as the

bearer of the good news of the gospel? What a high display of the yea and Amen promises of God. God was in every nook and corner of the globe making arrangements (always according to purpose) for the preaching of the cross of Christ. Everywhere that God sent Paul, everywhere that He established him, He previously had established a place for him to preach and to be heard. Take a journey on paper, following Paul everywhere that he went. A place for meeting was established for him before he got there. This promise, each time it was verified, was always in Christ. He went before; He opened the door. He promised to be with the apostle, God said Amen.

He that anointed him to preach was God. No man can preach the gospel without his anointing as was Aaron. This anointing is only done acceptably by Jesus Christ; it is a promise made for the benefit of God's people both under the law and under the grace dispensation. This promise of God is yea and Amen to the glory of God. This blessing is in God and in His Son, each equal with the other in the giving of the gifts of stablishing and anointing.

These yea and Amen promises never end. They will run the length of the journey of the New Jerusalem church through this time state. This time state is the setting of these promises that keep us hoping and looking for that day wherein time and timely things will be done away, but the final two yea and Amen gifts insures the whole harvest. One that is to be gathered before Him in the final day are sealed for that time. There is not any breaking of the seal, for all the promises are yea and Amen. All sealed, all ready, all washed in the blood of the Lamb all being kept in a state of readiness.

To put the final glorious capstone to all of these promises is the giving of the sealing of the blood bought children. All of the promises come through Christ.

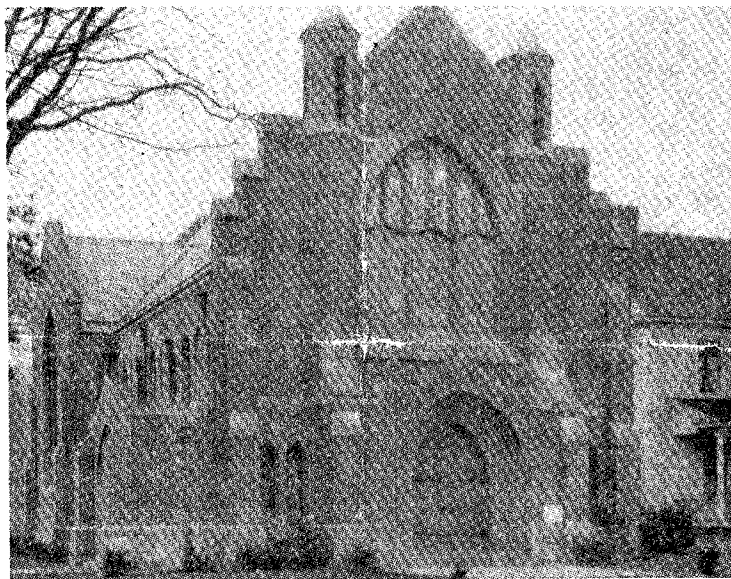
Each promise is yea, and God being in agreement with the Son and the Son thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, how could it ever be otherwise than Amen. Men may, and do seal things, but not having the power, they do not stay sealed. Whatever the promise contains it will stay sealed. Why? Because the promise is yea and Amen to both of them, and there not being ANYTHING before God, therefore, there is not anything to cause the unsealing of every

heir of promise home to glory.

When God purposed to choose and save a definite number of the race of Adam, He gave a pledge for them, and that pledge or earnest was Christ. The family of God is safe in Him, for He is the earnest of the inheritance. That promise is still good, and it is yea and Amen to the glory of God.

In much weakness but in hope,
Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Wilson Primitive Baptist Church was organized 1756 with Elder John Thomas as its first pastor. It is located on Tarboro St. in Wilson, N.C. Their

sevices there are on the second Sunday afternoon at two-thirty o'clock and Saturday night before. Elder D.B. Stokes is the present pastor.

 CORRESPONDENCE

January 24, 1984
Route 1,
Reidsville, N.C.

**THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE
BEGINNING OF WISDOM**

Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever."

Hebrews 12:28: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear."

Job 4:17: "Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his maker?" Job 4:21: "Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? They die, even without wisdom."

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. This wisdom is a spiritual insight. I Corinthians 3:19: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. It is written, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." I Corinthians 3:20: "And again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." I Corinthians 3:21: "Therefore, let no man glory in men."

I John 4:4: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: (Them is referring to the spirit of the antichrist) because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." I John 4:5: "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." I John 4:7: "Beloved, let us love one another: (Note this does not say each other but one another), for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." I John 4:8: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

This does not mean to love disorder and ungodliness. Proverbs 3:13: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the forward mouth do I hate."

Revelations 2:9: "I know thy works, and tribulations, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Revelations 2:10: For none of those things which thou shall suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

Hebrews 11:24: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Hebrews 11:25: "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

St. Luke 6:44: "For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes." St. Luke 6:45: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."

Proverbs 20:17: "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel."

I have heard that some who bear the name Primitive Baptist are campaigning for membership and evidently more financial support. They are advertising to join the church and your troubles will all be over. This is not in accord with my experience, nor do I find any scripture to support it. How weak can one get? The things money can buy are the things that are seen with the natural eye, and some day these things will be seen forever no more by those who have no confidence in the flesh.

Titus 1:7: "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, not striker, not given to filthy lucre;" Titus 1:8: "But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;" Titus 1:9: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus 1:10: "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:" Titus 1:11: "Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

The definition of filthy lucre is dishonest gain, whether it be not paying your honest debts, or lying to gain popularity.

I feel I can witness with Jonah: Jonah 2:6: "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." Jonah 2:7: "When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine Holy temple." Jonah 2:9: "But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

I oftentimes feel so low and lonely and so far off that I wonder if I have a friend on earth or one in Heaven. I try to pray as we find in Psalms 51:12: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

I Peter 4:1: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." I Peter 4:2: "That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God."

St. Matthew 24:24: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets,

and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

I know the elect has to suffer many false accusations and insinuations. Revelation 12:10: "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

Romans 8:35: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Romans 8:36: "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Romans 8:37: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

St. Matthews 5:10: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." St. Matthews 5:11: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." St. Matthew 5:12: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

The second epistle of Peter 1:20: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." II Peter 1:21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

II Thessolonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the tradition which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." I John 1:3: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:30: "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Romans 8:31: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

I know that we can not separate the tares from the wheat, for that will be done at the day of harvest.

St. Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

If we are blessed to serve God, we serve his people in love and fellowship. If we serve mammon, we are as Saul in Acts 8:3: "As for Saul, he made havock of the church entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison."

Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego were cast into the burning, fiery furnace because they were blessed with wisdom to worship God in Spirit and truth. Not a hair on their head was singed.

The fear of the Lord is and endless subject that cannot be put on paper in its fullness. I John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin."

Clifton Robertson

EXPERIENCE OF
ELDER D. R. CABBAGE
Part 1

Maynardsville, Tenn.

Brother and Sister Hocutt:

Will try, if it is God's will, to put a few words on tape. We received the anniver-

sary gift. Made our hearts rejoice. And when I saw the blank tapes, tears began to flow. I have had meditations for some time about making an attempt to put some of my experience, if it be Gods will, on tape. It might be of some interest to the children of God scattered abroad.

The things that we feel that God has blessed us with. We have many experiences, but would like, if God will enable us to go back to the beginning of our early childhood.

I was raised and brought up in the Missionary Baptist Church. I love the people and esteem them very highly. I understand as they do on many of the scriptures. That is where I was taken to church and carried there before I could walk. And I might say that I am thankful for parents that are interested in taking their children to the house of the Lord.

I began somewhere, I don't know what age, very young. Up until that time, I don't remember that I had any fear of the hereafter or had never been into the trouble that I was in at this time.

It seemed to be like the scripture that Christ quoted to Nicodemus, I couldn't tell from whence it came or where it went, but that it rolled up on me, just a little boy. It does me good sometimes when I go to thinking about a God that is able to work in the hearts of children as well as he is able to work in the hearts of elderly people, to teach them and cause them to know that he is God. There is none like Him. He does his will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He works and none can stay his hand. While this trouble was upon me, or this great burden, as we lived in Black Fox Valley out the road just a little way from where Dotson Creek Primitive Baptist Church is now located, there was a little cove, a grove of trees back behind the house. On the hill there and through the day, I would slip out there and call on God to have

mercy on me, the one that instructed me. I hadn't told anyone that I was in this condition. I believe that the same God that found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness lead him about, and instructed him. I believe that He was the same God that found this little boy and lead him about and instructed him and caused him to feel that he was weak and undone, and as far as I felt, forever gone, if the mercy of God didn't reach my case. I tried everything that come into my mind to get relief from that burden. I felt like, as I heard Elder Hollandsworth say in Alabama one time, I felt like at that time, there was a hell. I felt like that without the mercy of the almighty God arrest my case, that hell would be my home. I feared that was where my destiny would be and I called up on God as much as he would enable me. I believe that God leads one in such a way that he realizes his helpless condition and that he is made to put his trust in one that is able.

I don't know how long a period of time that this went on, it seemed like a long time. But the Bible says work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God that worketh in you both the will and the do. I believe that God put the fear there and caused me to tremble and caused me to do and to try all these things which as far as I am concerned, it never brought relief. No, I tried every last one of them that come into my mind to get relief from that burden but I come to a place that I was at the end of my wits. I couldn't go any further, yet in the dead hours of the night, when all the family seemed to be asleep, here was a little boy that was in sorrow, here's a little boy that was in trouble, yes, Dad and Mother didn't know anything about what I was going through, at least I never told them. But along in the dead hours of the night I heard a sweet voice that I had never heard before, speak unto me and said, you are saved, your sins are forgiven. I

want to say to you I believe I was like Israel was when they came to the Red Sea, they couldn't go any further. They had to stand still and see. Moses said stand still and see the salvation of God. When the old servant of God stretched the rod of God across the sea, the water rolled back and Israel walked through on dry land. Here is a God that said, "I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. But I'll go with you all the way even into the end of the world." Bear with me. I don't want to worry you. I want to get on with the experience. My mind goes back to the scriptures. I can't help it, they are founded there. They are a comfort unto me. Because I find my experience along the travel of God's children. I find them in the travels of the servants of the Almighty God. But I never told anybody about that experience for many years. I grew up into teenage, yet never owned I had a hope in the Lord. I went out into the world. As I grew up into teenage and into the 20's, I went out into the world, as far as anyone could go. I strayed in, I believe into that far country where the prodical son was. A certain man had two sons and the youngest said, father give me a portion of my inheritance, and the father divided them their inheritace. Many days after the younger one took all he had and went into a far country and there he wasted it. I believe that I have been in that country to where this man was, I believe that I experienced the famine there that he was in. I want to say to you, I believe that man was out in the world. I don't believe he can come back by himself. I believe he has to be brought back to the fold. I believe the Prodigal Son stayed down there in that country until the famine came, and I believe he got hungry.

He had once ate at the father's table. That has been my experience, I had tasted God was gracious. I believe that the Prodigal Son had once eat at his fathers table and it well set with food.

But now he said. I will arise and go to my father. Why did he say that? Because he came to himself, his mind was carried back to his father's house. Then he said, I will arise and go to my father and say to him, I have sinned, against heaven and in thy sight. I am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me one of thy hired servants. I want to say to you that his mind had been carried back there, and a child of God out yonder in the world has stayed there until his mind returns back, he will stay there, but God loved him. His father saw him afar off and ran and met him and kissed him and fell on his neck and said, "I will go kill the fatted calf, let us make merry, this my son was dead and is alive, lost and is found." The father said unto his servants, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him and put shoes on his feet, put a ring on his hand." Here was one that was helpless. The robe had to be brought for him. It had to be put on him. Shoes had to be put on his feet. How helpless are the children of God?

I want to say to you the ring represented the Love of God. It is round, no end to it. There is no end to God's love. God loved his children in the annuals of eternity before the world began. God loved them when he sent Christ to die for them and God still loves them and watches over them.

God found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness; led him about, instructed him, kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them upon her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him and there was no strange God with him. I don't believe one ever gets out of the sight of God. That old mother eagle represented God. Her eyes are sharp, she watcheth over them when they are in trouble. She comes down with those great wings and picks them up and lifts them up and carries them on the Love of

God. His wings represents love to me. If God will enable us, let's go on a little further with this travel. I got ahead of myself there.

I went on for years out there in sin before my mind was carried back to my father's house. I went out so far in sin, I forgot that I had ever been purged from my old sins. But I believe that God still loved me. God still knew where I was, God still knew all about me, all the wicked things that I had done.

The time come when I had to have a back operation. It was in 1957 when I was in the hospital suffering from the operation. I believed it was there that my mind was carried back where I felt that God had blessed me with spiritual blessings. I had a desire to return unto the Lord. I had a desire to live a Christian life, to live a different life. I'd had all of that I wanted. I had gone as far as I could go. I didn't want anymore of it. The nature had been torn down and taken from me. I began once more as Jonah said, "I will look again toward thy Holy Temple. I will pay that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord." I tried with all my might, my experience just don't add up with the doctrine of the world that you hear said, if you want to, you can but I am going to tell you that here is a man that wanted to. He wanted to return back to Zion. Back to the Bethel spot and be a different man, but I couldn't, I tried. I tried these things. I know how far a man can go. I know that it is not in man to direct his steps. I know I tried. I went so far that I forgot I had been purged from my old sin. That I even had a hope. I prayed to the Lord to give me one. Everytime I prayed for God to give me a hope that my mind would go back to the same spot where I heard that voice speak to me. I don't believe it will ever leave you. It will get weak, it will get little, you'll get low. But I want to say it will always be there. I don't believe it will ever leave you.

When I began begging for renewal of my hope, I could see a little spark begin to rise back there at the same place where God said, "You are saved, your sins are forgiven." There was something spoke to me in that hospital and said "you can't go now," Now I know this is contrary to the doctrine of the world, or other doctrine that says you can if you want to. I believe, God is my witness, with all my heart, I wanted to... I wanted to be a Christian. I wanted to live a different life. But something spoke to me while in that hospital bed and said, "You can't go now!" Have you ever been there? Is there anyone like me? Have you ever walked that road? I came up against a wall, I couldn't go any farther. Why? Don't ask me, I don't know. But I know what I believe. I believe in God almighty from the annuals of eternity, that timed every step I'll ever take in this time world and everything that I will do. A time that we'll have to wait, a time when God teaches us. I believe that I came to that place that I couldn't go any farther. Something said, "You can't go now." This scripture is sweet to me. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings as eagles; They shall walk and not faint."

I believe I had to wait upon the Lord until the appointed time; that God himself appointed.

(To be continued)

Greenville, Ala.

Dear Elder Williams,

Please renew the Signs for me and use the rest as needed.

The January Editorial written by Elder Richard H. Campbell were sweet precious words to me. I had to drive to work alone on the morning of Feb. 18, 1983. The 25 mile drive was spent singing praises to a Great and Holy God. I sang one verse all the way. It just seemed to be what I needed at that time.

*Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of thy redeeming love.*

I received the word of my precious sons death in Memphis, Tenn. that morning around 11 o'clock. In our grief and haste to leave, I forgot my address book. It seemed almost hopeless that we would reach Elder Campbell. God, who is so rich in mercy, heard my prayer from the depths of my soul as I cried "Oh dear God please don't let me leave Tenn. without hearing what I love and believe. I need it so." The two beautiful hours we spent with Elder Campbell were of much comfort to us. Isaiah 54-7 and 8—7. For a small moment have I forsaken thee but with great mercies will I gather thee. 8. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

I've missed the trips to Memphis. It was always such a joy for me to visit a precious son and the dear Brethren and sisters of Memphis church. I always received such a spiritual uplift in being in their midst.

Dear Brethren, The Streams of God's Mercy never cease. Remember us in your prayers and visit us in the Ebenezer Association. We love you.

In Bonds of Love,
Emmie L. Grayson

TO OUR READERS:

Some of our readers will probably wonder why I have not kept up my personal correspondence. I underwent major surgery the latter part of December, and I have not been able to keep up my correspondence.

I have received cards, letters, gifts

and other communications, (over two hundred and fifty) and each have been appreciated more than I can tell you.

This will acknowledge all, and I thank you from the depths of my heart.

Elder D. V. Spangler

EXPERIENCE

I am very fearful when it comes to relating my experience. I will have to go back when I was about eleven or twelve years of age. One night just after everyone had retired, something struck me like a bolt of lightning. I cannot describe what happened but I know sin was made exceedingly sinful. I called everyone in the house and made them promise they would live a better life that hell was an awful place. They said they would try; no one ever said anything about this as I remember. I drifted away from this experience but never did I forget it. I tried to be like other young people but this experience always stood in my mind. Later after I married, my husband came in at lunch and said a boy wanted to sell him a Bible. I said all right if we can afford it. It was hard times then. So he brought the Bible home. We were not concerned at that time but later I became very concerned about my soul. I had thought I was as good a person as any but as I began to read the Bible, everything I read condemned me. I began to think I was going to die and didn't have long. In mid October 1928, I came to my wit's end. Today I must die. I think I saw death, hell, and the grave and I wasn't fit for anything but hell and God's righteous law approved it well. I was lying face down on the floor; all my strength was gone, I could not move even one of my fingers. I was sure I was dying, when I was given to hear a voice. I said Lord, have mercy on me a sinner. This I repeated three times when I heard a voice

from heaven saying, arise and take your Bible for you shall find relief today. I arose and took my Bible but the thought came to me that always before it had condemned me. I just let it open where it may and my eyes fell upon where Daniel was cast into the den of lions and how the Lord had kept him safe. I heard the same voice again saying if I can go with Daniel in the den of lions, surely I can help you in your little troubles. I will never be able to describe the feeling that came over me. I, for the first time, praised God with all my heart. It reminded me of a poor wayfaring stranger out in a hot desert with no food or water, facing death; when all at once, a fountain of water flowed freely out to him. What a relief! After this, my Bible seemed like a new book. What great promises for God's children! I read about the false prophets who would arise and deceive many. This concerned me greatly. I had a thought that I could never go to the Primitive Baptists, I could never be good enough to measure up to have a home with them. (Even now I feel undeserving.) Then I tried to pray for God to show me where to go to church. I had a night vision, I thought I was in a large church of another faith. I had given some thought of going there and I was there this night in my vision. They were playing the piano singing their songs with their bright lights. A voice spoke to me and said you can call this any church except Primitive Baptist, they are not here. Then all the lights went out and this voice spoke again saying their lights will never shine again. I was praying for God to show me the true church when I was carried out of that church as the wind carries a leaf through the air. I was shown a lighted path so narrow I could only put one foot in front of the other. It led me to the church I joined in 1942.

Minney L. Foley

THE MIRACLE OF THE INCARNATION

From Thomas Watson (c. 1620-1686)

Behold here a sacred riddle or paradox: "God manifest in the flesh." That man should be made in God's image was a wonder, but that God should be made in man's image is a greater wonder. That the Ancient of Days should be born; that He who thunders in the heavens should cry in the cradle; that He who rules the stars should suck the breast; that a virgin should conceive; that Christ should be made of a woman, and of that woman which Himself made; that the branch should bear the vine; that the mother should be younger than the child she bare, and the child in the womb bigger than the mother; that the human nature should not be God, yet one with God; this was not only *mirum* but *miraculum* (i.e. not only wonderful but a miracle). Christ taking flesh is a mystery we shall never fully understand till we come to heaven when our light shall be clear, as well as our love perfect.

From hence, "God manifest in the flesh," Christ born of a virgin, a thing not only strange in nature but impossible, learn that there are no impossibilities with God. God can bring about things which are not within the sphere of nature to produce; as that iron should swim that the rock should gush out water, and that the fire should lick up the water in the trenches (I Ki. 18:38). It is natural for water to quench fire, but for fire to consume water is impossible in the course of nature; but God can bring about all this. "There is nothing too hard for Thee." "If it be marvellous in your eyes, should it be marvellous in My eyes? saith the Lord."

How should God be united to our flesh? It is impossible to us, but not with God; He can do what transcends reason, and exceeds faith. He would not be our God if He could not do more than we can think.

He can reconcile contraries. How apt are we to discouraged with seeming impossibilities! How do our hearts die within us when things go cross to sense and reason! We are apt to say as that prince in 2 Kings 7. 2, "If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be!" It was a time of famine, and now that a measure of wheat, which was a good part of a bushel, should be sold for a shekel, half an ounce of silver, how can this be? So, when things are cross, or strange, God's own people are apt to question, how they should be brought about with success.

Moses, who was a man of God, and one of the brightest stars that ever shone in the firmament of God's church, was apt to be discouraged with seeming impossibilities. "And Moses said, The people among whom I am are six hundred thousand footmen; and Thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?" (Num. 11. 21, 22). As if he had said, in plain language, he did not see how the people of Israel, being so numerous, could be fed for a month. "And the Lord said, Is the Lord's hand waxed short?" (verse 23).

That God who brought Isaac out of a dead womb, and the Messiah out of a virgin's womb, what cannot He do? O let us rest upon the arm of God's power, and believe in Him, in the midst of seeming impossibilities! Remember, there are no impossibilities with God. He can subdue a proud heart. He can raise a dying church. Christ born of a virgin! The wonder-working God that wrought this can bring to pass the greatest seeming impossibility.

For Christ to be made flesh was more humility than for the angels to be made worms.

Thomas Watson

 VOICES OF THE PAST

 "he being dead yet speaketh"

"IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE."

(1 Corinthians xv. 22.)

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Inspiration reveals the truth and the work of God. Not one word of all that he has declared shall fail. The reason is, the Holy One is the I AM, the Almighty. Both is wisdom and power the Most High is unlimited. With Him is absolute sovereignty. In all his attributes God is limitless, perfect and sovereign. To deny this is a denial of both his sovereignty and his Godhead.

It is an absolute truth, therefore, that the omnipotence of the Almighty is equal to and co-extensive with his omniscience. So not one thing of all that God hath spoken shall fail to come to pass. For his power is infinitely above and greater than all other powers. His kingdom ruleth over all, and his dominion subjects all beings and things to his "eternal purpose." This was fully proved in the person of his incarnate Son, whose voice at once subdued and controlled all creatures and things to whom he spoke, whether animate or inanimate, raving devils and men, warring seas and winds, hopeless maladies and remorseless death, all yielded at once to his simple word. Jesus spoke but once, the Lord makes no efforts—never tries. Of himself he says, "I will." To his people he says, "You shall." "He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast." "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." This is our God, the God of Israel his people, the Lord God omnipotent. He is the

Rock, his work is perfect. He is our refuge, our salvation, our defense. O how safe and good it is to be sheltered under his almighty wing!

How fearful and woeful to us is our relationship in Adam! Our whole lifetime in the flesh is but the realization and experience of the solemn fact that we are in Adam. Here we sow in tears. Thorns and thistles abound. All the mighty works of merciful power which Jesus wrought, blessedly healing all the afflicted and raising up the dead, were overcoming and removing the ruin that is ours in Adam. So all these gracious miracles of the second man are typical of his mighty work of redemption. To his wondering disciples he said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Salvation, therefore, is the work of Jesus—the salvation of his people. They are his people in every dear and sacred relation and meaning of the term "his people;" yet they are sinners. The text shows that their sins and death are because they are in Adam. Therefore they are born of the flesh, and are flesh. So Jesus taught. All in Adam die. Here none are exempt. "By man came death." "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All sinned in the one man Adam. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "For the wages of sin is death." "That as sin hath reigned unto death." All this solemn fact is positive and absolute, unconditional and irresistible. This is the dominion of sin by man and in Adam. "There is no discharge in that war." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Whence, then, cometh obedience and righteousness, salvation and life? Not from Adam, nor from any who are in Adam, nor from the flesh; for in the flesh dwelleth no good thing, said Paul. Jesus

who spake as no other man, makes a clear distinction between "that which is born of the flesh," and "that which is born of the Spirit;" for he says the one "is flesh," and the other "is spirit." Therefore, that we may have life and obedience, righteousness and salvation, we must be in Christ. It is a divine mystery, not known to the wise of the world, that we who now dwell in the flesh are in Christ Jesus and he lives in us. Paul thus states this truth: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All this we need, and need it because "In Adam all die;" but this is all we need and shall receive. Our God has made his and our Christ all this to us, and it is of the Father that we are in Christ. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings according as we were chosen in him. This choice and these blessings are positive and sure, therefore, because they were vouchsafed to all the chosen of God in Christ before the world was. This blessed fact places all spiritual blessings infinitely above every conditional principle and basis, and secures them to us, "not according to our works" or obedience, but according to God's choice. And since all apiritual blessings were given us in Christ according as God hath chosen us in him, these blessings are no more conditional or contingent on our part than the choice itself. And more than all spiritual blessings we do not need nor shall ever receive. Where, then, is there any place or need for conditional spiritual blessings? And since all spiritual blessings are ours in Christ according to the will and choice of God, why should it be thought that God bestows them upon us according to our will and choice? In this connection Paul goes on and says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleas-

ure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." In all this way of life and salvation unto sinners, the sovereign choice and pleasure and power of God supremely prevail, and all "according to the riches of his grace." In the wisdom and love of God he ordained it thus, because "so it seemed good in his sight," and he saw that there was no other way that would glorify him and bring them into the blessing of life.

"In Christ shall all be made alive." But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." The clause "in Christ," qualifies and limits the "all" that shall be made alive. It is because they are in Christ that they shall be made alive. None who are not in Christ shall be made alive. All die in Adam because they are in him. They could not die in Adam unless they first lived or had their being in him. When a living tree dies, all in it die, because the life of the tree is the life of all its members. So it is with all in Adam. "Even so shall all in Christ be made alive." In Christ is perfect obedience, holiness and life. So all in him shall be made righteous by his obedience. All sin and death shall be separated from them, and they shall be perfected in the holiness and life of Christ. His unfailing word to them is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting live." This one falls asleep in Christ, but is not dead. For in Christ is no sin nor unrighteousness nor death, but righteousness and life and peace. The sin and curse and death are in Adam—in our mortal flesh. So for the sins of his people Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, to die no more. Thus our

risen Lord made an end of sin, and abolished death, for his people.

In his resurrection Christ was the firstborn from the dead among many brethren. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Now, all that Christ is in holiness and life and power, he is all this to all in him, and they shall know the power of his resurrection, shall be perfectly conformed to his divine image, and shall know the glory of his ascension into heaven. All this is by the power of the Lord God Almighty and the riches of his grace.

The death of all in Adam is the time present—"all die;" but the text and its connection show clearly that the resurrection unto the life in Christ, of all who sleep in him, is in the future time—"shall all be made alive."

"We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." In our mortal flesh we cannot thus see the glorified man Christ Jesus. John was given a glimpse of him in his glory; but he said, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." Paul said, "knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. * * * For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." For this the holy Son of God prayed, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundatin of the world." "Afterward they

that are Christ's at his coming." When they die in Adam, at the dissolution of their mortal man or body, they fall asleep in Christ, and in him they shall be made alive when he shall come the second time without sin unto salvation. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This will be the perfect fulfillment of the Lord's prayer for us, and we shall be with him where he is and behold his glory. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "Have borne," is past, "shall also bear," is to come. We now bear the image of Adam after the outward man, and the image of Jesus after the inward man; so we now, in part, bear the image of the two heads, the earthy and the heavenly. But God has predestinated his foreknown and chosen people to be entirely conformed to the image of his Son, whom he raised up from the dead. This good work of grace in us shall be gloriously finished in us when we shall receive the adoption, for which we now wait in hope, "to wit, the redemption of our body." This will be our change, of which Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O

grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then, *O then!* "In Christ shall all be made alive." "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed in death." The infinite and almighty wisdom and power of God in Christ Jesus our risen and glorified Redeemer, shall gloriously triumph in the fulfillment of all this great and wonderful mystery of godliness, according to his own will, notwithstanding the opposition of all the wicked, who hate God and his sovereign power, and the unbelief of some of his own people. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." Paul again says, "For our conversation" (our citizenship and inheritance) "is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." In the divine assurance of this faith and hope, afflicted Job said, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." And David said, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." So shall we all.

Hoping to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead," yours in Jesus,

D. Bartley.

July 1, 1932

Elder O. J. Denny

COUNCILS-CHURCH SOVEREIGN

Council. "1. The great council of the Sanhedrim, which sat at Jerusalem.

2d. The lesser courts (Matthew 10:17; Mark 13:9) of which there were two at Jerusalem, and one in each town of Palestine.

It will be seen from the Bible references to councils they were what we call courts for the trial of cases or charges vs. the people.

In sending forth the apostles, Jesus said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; etc. Matthew 10:17-17.

Benedict, historian, say Councils (pre-sming to regulate the affairs of assemblies of the saints) commenced in Greece in the second century. They were first local, and rather offensive when first adopted. As they became entrenched with power, and their numbers grew into hundreds and thousands, in some cases their findings became binding on their subjects, and their enemies or those who would not bow to their edicts were sorely persecuted, and many of them were put to death.

The poor people in all ages who have believed in the sovereignty of their local assemblies or churches, have been sorely persecuted, and yet through it all, many of them, to this day, refuse to be bound by the laws of councils by whatever name they are called.

Councils and other groups have from time to time dared to assume very dictatorial attitude toward individual churches or assemblies, and such attempts have usually met with much opposition and the result has been more and more confusion. Religion, pure and undefiled, cannot be legislated into nor taken out of the hearts of the Lord's people by those who assume the role of dictators, let it be one, or many combined to the same end.

The first council of Nice was held in

the year 325 had in it 300 bishops and the meeting held for a year.

The Council of Placentia was held in the open fields, and there were present 200 bishops, 4000 other ecclesiastics, and three hundred thousand laymen. The council of Constance began in 1414 and lasted for four years. The famous Council of Trent lasted for 18 years.

One might think that with such vast numbers, in council, and with such long deliberation that nothing but good could come out of such meetings. History shows that the Christians were slain by the hundreds of thousands who failed to abide by the laws and regulations imposed upon them.

Historians say the Romans borrowed the Council idea from the Greeks, and later the Protestants borrowed it from the Romans.

Benedict, after reviewing the history of Councils, said, "Churches founded on congregational or independent principles, cannot consistently have much use for councils and I think the fewer there are among the Baptists the better."

Mosheim, a Lutheran historian, while not friendly to the Baptist people, though in his day they were called by other names, He said. "The assemblies, were intensely and entirely independent, each one being governed by its own rules, and had no sort of supremacy over others, not the least right to enact laws for them. He says further that Bishops as they were then called, (now called Elders) acted not with the authority of masters; but with the diligence and the zeal of faithful servants."

We might well consider the prudence of these early servants of the Lord, and it ought to put to shame trouble hunters, and trouble makers who run to and from trying to look after everybodys business but their own.

Let us see what the scriptures say of such. Proverbs 20:3 "It is an honour for a man to cease from strife; but every fool

will be meddling." Proverbs 26:17 "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife not belonging to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ear." 1st Thes. 4:11: "We beseech you brethren, that ye increase more and more. And that you study to be quiet, and to do (attend to) your own business, and to work with your hands, as we command you, that you may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may lack nothing."

We seem to have those who have little following at home and therefore little of their own business to attend to unless they were to go to work, who cannot stay away from trouble and usually leave it far worse scattered when they go hence than it would have been if left to local people to settle local troubles. How long, oh, how long will we suffer in silence, the work of such trouble makers. 2nd Thes. 3:11: For we hear there are some which walk disorderly, among you, working not at all, "but are busybodies. Is not history repeating itself. Have we not, now in the world, much of the spirit of intolerance, and oppression so evident in former centuries? How often we see it manifest that if you are one of our crowd you are all right, and minor departures from the straight and the narrow path of rectitude matters little, is of little concern; but presto; let the same man fail to trail in their wake, and lo, he becomes all that is undesirable, and should be put out of the running. Or to be more specific he should be excluded or withdrawn from.

The early Christians are called by various names, and we read, that the beginning of the thirteenth century saw thousands of them burned or hanged whose whole crime was that they believed in and trusted the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and renounced all the vain hopes of self righteousness and idolatry.

Of these early churches, or assemblies as they were called, Robinson says, "When

congregations multiplied so that they became too numerous to assemble at one place, they parted into separate companies and so again and again; but there was no schism, and a member of one assembly was a member of all." Should it not be so today?

He says further: "One assembly never pretended to inspect the affairs of another nor was any dominion over the consciences of others. The only discipline was the exclusion of those who committed overt acts considered unbecoming of all follower of Christ.

The religious world persecuted those who would not bow to their acts, forms or regulations, and said of these early Christians, that they had neither head nor tail, neither princes nor legislators, and consequently no slaves, "all being equal. As a reproach, they were called 'Melchisdecians' for like Melchisedec they were without father, mother, and without beginning of days for end of life."

We have often been approached in regard to the advisability of our calling a council meeting in order to reach a better understanding among our people. If the Lord is in the move it would be all right; but if it is for the purpose of passing on fellowships, and abridging the rights of the independent churches to regulate their own affairs and discipline its own members, or to outline the times and places where gospel ministers may preach the word, saying in substance, go here and not go there, lest you bring down upon your head our displeasure, or to say in substance your gift and preaching must conform to our liking or we will call for your credentials, if such is the attempt thus putting to naught the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in Matthew 28: 19-20. Go ye therefore (only where the councils say you can go) no, not that; but obeying the divine head of the church of God. "Go ye therefore, and teach all the nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe" (the rules of the council or association) No. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of thee world."

If a church is composed of baptized believers in Christ, it is, with few exceptions, able to attend to its own affairs; but if those from without go and meddle, with their business, usually the trouble spreads far and near, like an old sore, trouble makers keep scratching around, and will not let local troubles heal. I had rather risk any individual church to settle its troubles alone, if left alone, than to risk a council of hundreds from without.

I am not empowered to act for my church, and certainly not for any association, in the absence of definite instructions and for me to go far afield and take part in divisions, set up one party to a local trouble must be so regarded by other churches or associations, and even so far forget my true position in the church as to say come on and I will see that you and your faction is received and seated, thus presuming to speak for my church or association, should at once disqualify me for leadership in any group of old Baptists.

Such things are being done, if correctly reported, without any labor whatever with those supposed to have been withdrawn from. Is not such proceeding disorderly on its face, and one error is never corrected by continuing to do other acts which are unauthorized and thus can but be classed as disorderly acts.

David said, "Walk about Zion, and go around about her; tell the towers thereof, Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generations following. For God is our strength; He will be our guide even unto

death.”

Brethren everywhere, let us plead with you to stop the troubles so often caused by our people trying to attend everybody's business but their own.

O. J. Denny

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MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union will hold a two day meeting, the fifth Sunday in April 1983, and on Saturday before. Services will begin at 10:30 AM each day.

Dan River Church who are celebrating their 100th anniversary this year will be host.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder D. V. Spangler
 Pastor

ORDINATION OF A MINISTER

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church Durham, N.C., in their conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in December, unanimously agreed to request a Presbytery of Elders to meet with the Durham Church, the third Sunday in April, 1984, to inquire into the qualifications of licentiate Cleo Robertson, and if found qualified, to set him

apart to the full function of the gospel ministry.

The hour of the ordination has been set for three o'clock at the Durham meeting house on Pacific Ave., Durham, N.C.

This will be an all day service beginning at 10:30 A.M.

A general invitation is extended to our brethren to attend, especially our ministers.

Elder D. V. Spangler
 Pastor

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER JOE HAMRICK OF WINNSBORO, TEXAS

Wednesday Night April 25 at Greensboro Church.

Thursday Night April 26 at Malmaison Church.

Friday Night April 27 at Laurel Ridge Church. Supper will be served at the meeting house at five o'clock—The public is invited.

Saturday April 28 at Staunton River Union Meeting.

Sunday April 29 at West Country Line Union Meeting.

Sunday Night April 29 at Reed Creek Church – Service at seven o'clock.

CONTRIBUTIONS

**CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR
 JANUARY 1984**

- Mrs. Arless Hiatt, VA.....\$7.00
- A Friend, NC 13.00
- Mrs. Claudene B. Conner, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Oza Hill, TX 7.00
- Davis Mordecai, AL 7.00
- Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA 8.00
- Mrs. Ruby Feltman, WA..... 3.00
- Mrs. Joyce Farley, TX..... 7.00
- Jasper Oxley, WV..... 2.00
- E.C. Redman, AL..... 2.00
- Calvin F. Jones, DE..... 3.00

 OBITUARIES

 SISTER EUGIE KATE WORLEY
TUCK

Our hearts are saddened by the passing of a dear Sister, Eugie Kate Worley Tuck. Sister Tuck was born July 14, 1895, a daughter of the late Drew Worley and Pattie Shelton Worley. She was married to Anderson C. Tuck, who survives her. Sister Tuck's survivors include one daughter, Margaret DuBose, Danville, Va.; two brothers, Edward Worley, Fort Pierce, Fla. and Victor Worley, Newport News, Va.; one sister, Sister Jennie Denton of Gretna, Va.; three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Sister Tuck was a dear and faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptized September 11, 1937. She enjoyed attending meetings as long as her health permitted.

Sister Tuck passed from this life December 25, 1983. Her funeral was held by Elder O. K. Tench and W. D. Lilly. She was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Sister Tuck will be sadly missed by her Bretheren, friends and family. May God reconcile all who mourn her.

Written in love and hope by
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Modrator: O. K. Tench
Clerk: Oscar D. Pickral

RAMON VELES

Shepherd Fold Church sadly grieves the passing of our precious brother, Ramon Veles, who was born in Madrid, Spain, March 26, 1894 and departed this life November 16, 1983. He was the only surviving offspring of his immediate fam-

ily and a descendant of Spanish royalty. His father was Juan Veles and his mother was a Franco (first name unknown). At 3 years of age, while fleeing Spain during a conflict involving the Franco family, Brother Veles and his parents boarded a ship unaware of it's destination. The ship was sunk in a storm in 1897.

Upon arrival in the United States, he was a child and alone. He was put into a Catholic orphanage in San Francisco. A man by the name of John Beatly adopted him and that is where he resided until he was about 11 years of age. Again, alone and no money, his Lord enabled him to build a good life.

Brother Veles served in World War I in 1917 in the Ambulance Corps. He was disabled in LaManns, France in 1918 driving an Ambulance. The Lord continued to direct his steps and lead him into the love of the old Baptist and their doctrine. Each time it was my privilege to converse with him he always mentioned the leading hand of his Lord in all his trials and travels throughout his lifetime.

Brother Veles was thoughtfully intuitive of the Churches' needs; he was outspoken and most helpful during Church conference; he also held the office of Trustee and did the work of a deacon, although he was never ordained to that office.

Brother Veles married Myrtle Smith on March 24, 1934 in Conroe, Texas. They had 48 years of marriage that was sanctified by their Lord. Brother Veles' wife, Myrtle, preceded him in death by 10 months. They are survived by four beautiful daughters; Mrs. Hannah French of Seattle, Washington; Mrs. Romona Sikes of Channelview, Texas; Mrs. Betty Anne Webb of Houston, Texas; and Mrs. Alicia Nilson of Biloxi, Mississippi. Twelve grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Glen Dale Funeral Home in Houston,

Texas, November 18, 1983. Attending ministers were Elder C. M. Haygood, Elder Gerald Shipman, and Elder Jim Hamrick.

Written by
Robbie Holloway

ZACK C. NORRIS

By the request of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church. The Lord willing, I will try to write a few words in memory of our brother in Christ, Brother Zack C. Norris. It pleased our heavenly Father to call him from our midst on August 15, 1983. Age 96 years, 8 months and 27 days.

Brother Norris was born November 19, 1987, in Macon County, Georgia.

He died in a nursing home in Arlington, Texas, August 15, 1983. He joined Pilgrim Rest Church in March 1965 by letter from Macedonia Church. He was a strong believer in predestination of all things. He confessed the love for his church so many times. Our little church loved him and will miss him. He was married to Stella May Dean in 1915. Mrs. Norris passed away in 1945.

To this union six children were born. One child died in infancy. He is survived by three daughters; Ethel Thrash Davis of Mineral Springs, Ark., Sarah Cullum of Fort Worth, Texas, May Johnson of Duncan, Oklahoma. Two sons: Jack Norris of Venus, Texas; Joe Norris of Anchorage, Alaska. Nine grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren.

Brother Norris was laid to rest at Duncan Oklahoma.

Benjamin Lloyd of Lloyd Baptist Hymn Book was his great-grandfather, or great-great-grandfather.

Elder J.C. Townley, Moderator
Frances Townly, Church Clerk

DURANT HASSELL BROWN

Brother Durant Hassell Brown, born September 15, 1923, Duplin County, N.C., passed into the presence of his Heavenly Father, October 4, 1983 at the age of 60.

Uniting with Muddy Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Duplin County, September 1978, Brother Brown was ordained to the office of deacon in December of the same year. His love and concern for his church had been manifested many years earlier, and his leadership proved dynamic during his latter years.

Tennyson's words "*I am a part of all that I have met*" aptly describes the life of Brother Brown. He truly remains a part of his family, his church and his community. The impact of his life will always be a significant inspiration in their memories.

Surviving are his wife, Blanche E. Brown; brothers, Woodrow and Stedman Brown; sisters, Hazel B. Grady, Madelyn B. Fuch, Luvane B. Hart and Annia Ruth Brown.

The Muddy Creek Primitive Baptist Church is thankful to her Sovereign Lord for the high privilege of having had Brother Hassell Brown to love, and in sorrow yields to God's wisdom, as exercised in the affairs of men.

Accepted in conference the 25th day of February, 1984.

Elder W.L. Everett, Moderator
Douglas Brown, Clerk

JAMES RUFUS MUNDY

It was our heavenly Fathers will to call from this life Brother James Rufus Mundy March 24, 1983. Brother

Mundy was born February 1, 1906, son of James Talmage and Abigail Mundy. His father was a Primitive Baptist Elder for many years.

Brother Mundy united with Richmond Church June 7, 1981 and was baptized the first Sunday in July. His sense of hearing was bad and he would sit on the front row to try to grasp every word that came from his pastor's lips. Elder Simpson would visit him in his home and he would tell him of his love that he felt within his breast for God and His people.

Brother Mundy is survived by his wife, Mrs. Nellie Croah Mundy and two daughters; Mrs. Linda M. Downey and Mrs. Helen M. Greene of Richmond. Also four sisters; Mrs. Emma Stewart, Mrs. Lila James, Mrs. Frances Towe, and Mrs. Alice Ellige. Five brothers; Lucas, Allen, Ophir, Zepher, and Walter Mundy.

Brother Mundy's funeral was conducted at Woody's Hoguenot Chapel by his pastor, Elder D.L. Simpson. His mortal body was laid to rest in Dale Memorial Park with a precious hope in a glorious resurrection.

Elder D.L. Simpson, Moderator
Sister Azalie Lee, Clerk

BRADY ROSS WATSON

Brother Ross Watson departed this life January 24, 1983. He was a deacon of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church near Fordyce, Arkansas. Brother Watson was not only a faithful member of Pilgrim Rest Church, but he loved to visit other churches of the same faith. He was a very humble brother who had a great love for spiritual things. He rejoiced so often in hearing the truth preached that it caused him to shed tears.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Floriece Thompson Watson, two sons, Pete

of Memphis, Tenn. and Charles Ross of Tinsman. Three daughters, Mrs. Sarah Eubanks of St. Louis, Mo., Mrs. Elsie Ashcraft of Pine Bluff, Ark., and Mrs. Peggy Gavan of Memphis, Tenn.; A brother, Ray Watson of Tinsman, Ark. and a sister, Mrs. Bertie Johnston of El Dorado, Arkansas.

His funeral was conducted at White Water Primitive Baptist Church near Tinsman, Ark. by his pastor, Elder John C. Townley and Elder Henry Gardner.

Burial was in the family cemetery known as Watson Cemetery near Tinsman, Ark.

Done by request while in conference, Saturday February 19, 1983.

Elder John C. Townley, Moderator
Frances Townley, Church Clerk
Written by Erma Broach

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84 Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1-(901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

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Route 1, Box 65

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POETRY

NEVER ALONE

*"How many times discouraged
We sink beside the way;
About us all is darkness,
We hardly dare to pray;
Then through the mists and shadows,
The sweetest voice e'er known,
Says, Child, am I not with thee,
Never to leave thee alone?"*

*O soul, hast thou forgotten
The tender word and sweet,
Of him who left behind him
The print of bleeding feet?
I never will forsake thee,
O Child, so weary grown;
Remember I have promised
Never to leave thee alone.*

*Take courage, way-worn pilgrim,
Though mists and shadows hide
The face of him thou lovest,
He's ever at thy side;
Reach out thy hands unto him,
And lo, the clouds have flown;
He smiles on thee who promised
Never to leave thee alone."*

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 EDITORIAL

You will find recorded in the 19th verse of the 7th Chapter of Hebrews this reading: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." The 25th verse reads: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

I believe I attended the last Association which was held here in 1924. A man who had been a member of this church signed my credentials. He was the clerk of the church at Spray, North Carolina, A. T. Robertson.

The Lord willing, I would like to speak to you a short while on the subject of the laws of the Bible. Though I have been

speaking many years, I do not remember ever speaking on the Ten Commandments until last Sunday. Seems like I would have gotten around to that in all those years, doesn't it? And the various laws I would like to present to you and the purpose of God in these laws. Whatever law is under consideration that I have read, Paul said, it made nothing perfect. This is in accordance with the scripture in the Bible where it is said that if there had been a law given that could have given life, righteousness would have been by the law. Paul has reference in this scripture to the ceremonial and sacrificial law, the law that the priest and the high priest administered in the House of God. Yet, in all the hundreds of years of legal service, all the lambs that were offered on Jewish alters or ceremonial services rendered by Israelites, nothing was made perfect by them. But Paul said, "The bringing in of a better hope did."

What was the better hope? Christ was the better hope, something better than all legal services has ever been able to accomplish. And the effect of this bringing in of a better hope was that we might have an approach to God in the name of our Lord "by the which we draw nigh to God." This law was effectual in two ways. One of them was, it was renewal every time the high priest went into the most holy place that they were still sinners, the other purpose was, the promise that a saviour was coming and God compelled and required this of the Israelites to continue year after year, and the comers thereof were not made perfect.

And we take the first law that God gave man, in the Garden, when He placed him in the Garden and gave him right to every tree of the Garden except one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and Adam violated that law. The violation of that law made every person that's ever been born in the world a sinner.

People don't talk much about original sin any more. They are rather hesitant, I think we should talk about it because it removes man out of the picture.

By the disobedience of one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin for they all have sinned. Every human being who has been and ever will live sinned in the first man and fell, and man has never been able to redeem himself from that condemnation. Somebody said, did that include everybody? Some of you tell me one that was left out of it. All have sinned, not all will sin. All have sinned. YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam. And YOU FELL.

And Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans said, what the law could not do in that it was weak, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem his people. From Adam to Moses death reigned, the Bible says, over all who have not sinned after similitude of Adam's transgression. All of them from Adam to Moses were dead sinners, falling in Adam, lost and ruined, not able to extricate themselves from a lost and ruined state.

The Ten Commandments portrays two things: Mt. Sinai portrays, what does it speak to you of, it speaks of God's justice and His holiness. When God called Moses upon Mt. Sinai to deliver unto the people—God prepared the stone and He also prepared the writing on it and delivered it to Moses. It was a terrible place to stand, at Mt. Sinai, smoke covered the mountain. A man could not touch, or a beast couldn't touch the mountain unless it had to die. God's justice and His holiness were being brought to view. These laws were given and written by the finger of God. Moses returned from the mountain and he found the people he had left worshiping a gold calf. Somebody said: Was that God's people? If I had an opinion I'd tell you all of them weren't. Some of these brethren might

disagree with me but I read in the Bible where all are not Israel that are of Israel. So to tell you that all of those people were God's chosen people in the realm of grace, I can't do it. It was a mixed multitude. That's what it was.

But for the grace of God we wouldn't have a God to worship today. None of us. None of us! Moses took the first tables of stone and he threw them down, **THREW THEM DOWN**. What does it represent? The first covenant. A broken covenant. He was full of righteous indignation, I might call it. And God called him back upon Mt. Siani, a terrible place, and then told Moses to take the tables of stone and I'll do the writing on them; and then you take these two tables of stone, the law which is called in the Book of Corinthians the administration of condemnation and the administration of death, that's what it's called, the law of Moses, written on tables of stone. And God had a place for them when Moses returned, there was an ark they were to be placed in and that ark is a type of Jesus. Moses didn't break the last one, did he? And God put them in a safe place for keeping too, didn't he! The side of Jesus was opened for our sins.

Noah entered, the door of the ark was in the side, and God had Noah to prepare the ark for his own protection—from God's own wrath, that's what it was. There were seven days from the time that Noah and others were brought into the ark until it started to rain. Somebody said, that looked foolish didn't it. He had said, Noah, come thou and thy house into the ark. Our God's word, and hope I received it when he said to me "come", and if He never says "come" to us we'll never come. And if He says "come" we will come. Come thou and thy house into the ark. And the Lord **SHUT HIM IN**. Seven days! Why would the ark stand there seven days and it not raining? It shows the safety of God's people in Christ before they need it. That's what it

shows. They were just as safe when God closed the door and sat there seven days—and then it begins to rain. It didn't just rain down from heaven, the depths were broken up, water was everywhere. Talk about stopping it, we can't start it and we can't stop it. But God opened the windows of heaven and He opened the fountains of the deep. And the earth was swallowed up. And there did come a time when upon all that vast water nothing could be seen but a lone ark—floating there.

There was a time my friends in the judgment of God when He judged our sins in His own Son, when none could be seen except Him before the Father, who died in our room and stead. I'm sure that as the Israelites journeyed the most precious possession they had was their ark, the type of Jesus. I remember when Eli died—when Eli the priest died, he had two sons in battle and they brought Eli the word that your sons are dead and what happened. It grieved Eli that his sons had been killed in the battle but when they told him the ark had been taken he falls over dead. The ark was more important to him than his sons. If Jesus isn't more important to all of us today, where will we land when we leave this world? My Prophet, Priest, my Lord, my King.

I remember one night waking up singing the hymn—

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.

When I came to that verse where it said—

'Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.

I woke up weeping loud, I couldn't stop.

What is it that takes care of the law of sin and death? Has man ever taken care of it? Has he redeemed himself? Is there any law that man can perform of works that will save his soul from hell? Any? Then if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain. The law of the spirit of life in Christ. What was that spirit that did such a wonderful work? The law of the spirit of life in Christ, the Bible said, has made me free from the law of sin and death. If Christ left one sin of yours unatoned for, hell will be your home when you die. If you transgress in one point, you are guilty of the whole. He stood in the judgement of God for us. To me there will be no judgement for YOU, and YOU, and YOU, after death if Christ stood in the judgement for you. How many sins will it take to land us in an eternal woe? Only one! Only one! But, He has redeemed His people by His precious blood.

He fulfilled the law while He lived. He obeyed every precept and the one blessed thing in it all: His obedience was a delightful work of His. I like to think, a poor sinner like I am, that it is as much pleasure for Christ to save me and joy as it will be for me to be in heaven, for I've sinned. Do you believe that? That's the way it is, my brethren.

And another thing I want to tell you, I don't think I'll ever stand in this association again. If we have been taught and reared by the spirit of Almighty God, God will be glad to receive us in heaven because it is the work of His Son, who lived in our room and He died in our stead. It took both of them. And He could say, I delight to do thy will, Oh God. The law of the spirit of life—life in it

was what it was—made us free from the law of sin and death. Law is a rule or judgement and God said in His Word when he was to administer His justice, He said, Judgment will I lay to the line. What did He mean? He meant what He said. He meant that every sin must be attoned for for one will land us in hell. That's what He meant. He lays His judgment to the line in His own Son.

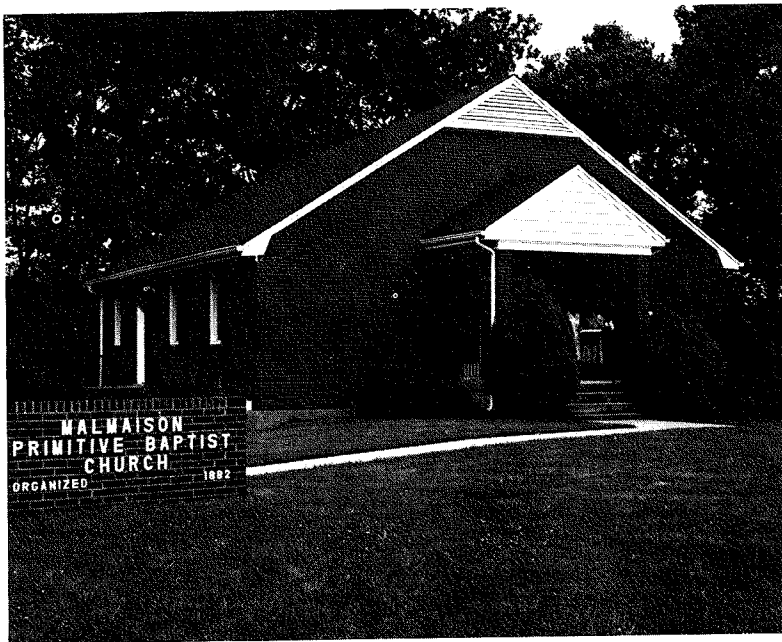
The laws of God. Paul had a law that he had learned and he didn't learn it from men. I delight in the law of God after the inward man. You couldn't delight in it unless there is an inward man.

The laws of God. The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope whereby we draw nigh unto God.

Jesus is the better hope—maybe I just as well quit. I want to leave you with this thought. I shall soon close my eyes in death. Whatever I have preached stands for itself. I have no apologies. I have preached a sovereign God as best I could, who brings the administration of the law to the life of His people to show them their just condemnation and in His own way He rolls away the burden of sin by giving us a view by faith of Christ's blood and that faith that He alone can give us.

Transcribed from tape of sermon preached by Elder David V. Spangler at Smith River Association, Sept. 3, 1983

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in 1882. It is located near Blairs, Virginia. They meet for service on the first Sunday of each month and Saturday before. Also

song service each third Sunday night at seven o'clock.

Their present pastor is Elder O. K. Tench and Elder J. R. Williams is associate pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

EXPERIENCE

12 Country Manor Apts.
Mebane, North Carolina
June 18, 1983

Dearest Brother Spangler,

I just received the news of Sister Blackwell's death today from my grandmother. She has always been a lovely sister to me and I truly believe that she lived her belief. As I think back over the years since I was blessed with a home in the church, eleven years in July, I think of the many precious brethren who have departed this life. It is a very humbling thought to realize that the Lord would allow me to be numbered with His people. I do not know that I am among that blood-bought number who will someday be with Christ and be forever satisfied, therefore, to attempt to pen what I hope is an experience of grace is a fearful thing. As I begin, my prayer is that whatever I write might be in keeping with the truth and if it is His most holy will, that it might be to His glory.

I remember, as a child, going to church with my grandparents and thinking, sometimes, that the day was very long. Whenever they would ask me to go, I usually would go even though I didn't really understand anything that was said. I did begin to do some reading at an early age which caused me to begin to have some concern about death and thereafter. For Christmas on year, I requested a bible story book which my mother bought for me. I read this before I ever started reading the Bible. One of my favorite chapters was the one about Joseph. I remember distinctly thinking as I read how Joseph treated his brothers with kindness, that I wouldn't have

done that. What a blessing that the day did come when I trust that the Lord showed me that Joseph is a type of Him and that if He has not that compassion for me, then my soul is doomed to hell and His righteous law approves it well! Shortly thereafter I did begin reading in the New Testament, mostly in the first four chapters because they seemed easier to comprehend than some of the latter chapters especially Revelations. I think during this time I started to become a very staunch Arminian, which is the natural tendency of the carnal mind. I remember asking my grandfather one day, as he drew water from the well, if he thought the Lord heard all prayers. His answer was that if it is a prayer from the heart, then the Lord hears it. I thought my grandfather's answer had solved my problem because it was at this time that I had begun to fear hell and I wanted desperately to find a way to avoid it. So I felt that surely if I read my Bible and abided by the commandments there and prayed earnestly, that all would be well with me. I went through a period of time when I thought I was doing that. I allotted a certain amount of my time every day to reading the Bible. One of my favorite passages of scripture at that time was the description of Christ's baptism particularly the words, "And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Whether my attraction to that scripture at that time was of a spiritual nature or simply a recognition of the beauty of the language in which it is written, I know not. I also found myself drawn to the first Psalm:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted

by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

What a different view of this scripture I came to have! I at this time, thought it a description of how I must be to inherit the kingdom. The day came, however, when I trust I was blessed to see the Lord there, that it is He and He alone who has fulfilled the requirements.

My readings at this time also included the *Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson* which you and Sister Spangler gave me at the age of thirteen. It, along with an old copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* which my grandmother had, made a distinct impression on my mind and later, I hope, on my heart. I remember remarking in a high school English class that I had read and enjoyed *Pilgrim's Progress* after which a visiting college graduate remarked that she didn't see how anyone could enjoy it. Well, she's right, they can't if they're not given to understand.

Many times in high school, a friend, whose parents are members at Dan River, and I would defend the beliefs of the Primitive Baptists in the face of the opposition of an entire class and the teacher. I don't know if either of us at that time fully understood what we were defending, but I do know that even then I recognized that the Bible unquestionably supported these beliefs and that the scriptures when properly interpreted are evidence that the Primitive Baptist beliefs can not be refuted.

It was while in high school that I first

had an exercise of heart. if indeed the Lord has dealt with me. My grandfather became ill and had to go to the hospital. It was the first time I ever remember his being in the hospital. To me this is an example of how the Lord knows exactly how to deal with individuals. Had I been touched bodily with an illness, it could not possibly have hurt me to the very heart as it did to see my grandfather in that hospital bed. I began to fear that I was being punished for not asking a home in the church and I tried to pray diligently that the Lord would bring my grandfather back home to us. During this time I attended a union meeting at Pleasantville Church. Elder John Lee Smith used the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This was the first time that I felt any strand of hope, any bit of assurance that the worthless worm of the dust that I saw myself to be, might be included in that number who had found grace in His sight. I visited my grandfather that day at the hospital. Before I left, you arrived, Brother Spangler, and you greeted me with such warmth. I remember feeling the desire to stay and listen to you talk and the fear of staying and telling you what I had felt that morning. So I left. My grandfather told me later that you had told him that you didn't think it would be long before I asked for a home in the church.

The Lord did bring my grandfather back home to us and it was one of those blessings in my life that I have never felt I have been able to be thankful enough for. As for going before the church, I still did not go. At this time in 1972 I graduated from high school and I remember your making a point of telling me that you and Sister Spangler would not be able to be there because one of your grandchildren would graduate the same night. It meant a great deal to me that you cared enough to tell me and at the

same time because of the wretch I knew myself to be, it was very humbling to me to think that you would even consider coming. I'm a very shy person by nature and I was very nervous that night as I arose to deliver the valedictory speech, but I distinctly remember seeing Brother Coley Strader and Sister Mildred and other Dan River members in the audience and I felt no nervousness or fear while speaking because I felt that my friends and I hope my brethren were there. In that speech I quoted the scripture, Psalms 30:5, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Little did I know that the time was drawing nigh in which I would feel the inexpressible joy of going home to my brethren.

On the fourth of July, 1972, I went to the Pine Creek meeting for the first time. It was a very beautiful day for me. Your text that day was Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." I was overwhelmed with the picture of Christ that the Lord blessed you to portray—such compassion and such love and I felt some hope that perhaps He had compassion on me, because I knew at that point that there was no other way.

That very same month I attended the Upper Country Line Association with my grandmother—my grandfather was unable to attend. The preaching touched my heart to such an extent that I desired to go before the church but felt surely I could not in such a multitude of people. We went home Saturday evening as we were riding with Brother Boyd Minter. I asked my grandmother to go back with me that night and we did. The next morning I could not control my tears as the different ministers spoke. That afternoon as the service was ending and we were singing "How firm a foundation",

you announced an open door of the church and you looked at me and then you cast your eyes downward. I could not hold back any longer. I don't remember everything I said, but I do remember calling on the words of Ruth to plead my case, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and their God my God." I felt then as I feel now that it would have been perfectly understandable had the church seen fit to deny my request for membership. I was not then what I would desire to be, and I'm not any closer to it in my carnal nature now. If there is any reason for me to believe that I might someday see the Lord as He is and be satisfied, then it is He and only He.

At the time I asked for a home in the church, I was seeing a young man whose mother was very much against my associating with Primitive Baptists. But that day I cared not what others thought. I felt that surely if he chose to turn his back on me when he learned that I had joined the church, that it mattered not, because I knew what was most important to me. As it turned out, he did make an effort to accept the fact that I believe as I do.

One of the precious memories of that third Sunday in July is of a precious Brother who was the first to address me as Sister Mary, a word that I feel very unworthy of having precede my name even now. That was Brother Tilley. I'll never as long as I live forget the smile on his face as he shook my hand. Later on when I was in college at East Carolina, I was at home on a fourth weekend and Brother Tilley was in the hospital after suffering a heart attack. I drove back to Greenville that Sunday feeling surely he was going to be all right as there had been good reports. However, my grandmother called to let me know that the Lord had taken him. I drove back home

for the funeral on the day before exams for that quarter. It was late when I returned to Greenville that day so I did little studying for the English history exam scheduled for the next day. I've always believed that a person should not waste what the Lord has blessed him with, particularly the mind. And for that reason, I felt badly because I knew my work on that exam was not up to the previous work in the course, and yet, I had no regrets for making the trip home. I had to go because of my love for Brother Tilley. I wrote a note on the exam and apologized to the instructor for not doing as well as I should have and I told her that I had gone home for a funeral. I feel the Lord softened her heart and she had compassion on me because my grade could have been much lower than it was. But, had I failed, I feel I still would have had to go the same way if I had it to do over again.

On the fourth Sunday in July, 1972, I was baptized. The young man, of whom I wrote earlier, was there and I remember seeing tears in his eyes as I went into the water. Not long after that we agreed to be married and, as you know, we asked that you perform the ceremony but that you not mention it to anyone as we didn't feel our parents would agree to it since we would both be starting college in the fall. As it turned out later on, however, we both agreed that we would not be married because he was unable to accept my beliefs. Though that was a difficult time for me, I feel the Lord blessed me in not making a serious mistake. I was made to feel that I could say with the hymn writer:

“Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at thy throne of Grace,
Let this petition rise.

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;

The blessing of thy grace impart,
And make me live in thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou are mine,

My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,

And crown my journey's end.”

For the two years after I was baptized, I attended Rockingham Community College and was able to attend meetings regularly. Those were two of the best years of my life. I feel that the Lord blessed me to grow in the knowledge of Him during that time. There were so many beautiful themes in your sermons and in the sermons of others. The portrayal of Christ as the Son of Man and the Son of God was one of those themes that has been precious to me. He must be the Son of God to redeem His people and yet He must be the Son of man to be “Touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” I think also at this time that it amazed me how plain it became that the scriptures unquestionably support the doctrine of predestination even in the very first chapter of Matthew where the lineage of Christ is given and Esau is not mentioned.

When the time came to choose a university, the overriding factor was where can I go and still be with the Lords people. I attended East Carolina University and met with the Lord's people in that area for two years. I can never be thankful enough for the many kindnesses shown me while I was there especially by Brother Mark and Sister Grace Garner. Surely, I was a stranger and they took me in. The time spent in Greenville also taught me how thankful on should be to be able to attend meetings and to be with the Lord's people.

After completing college, I worked for two years in Caswell County. During that time I met my husband. I remember the day I came to your home to ask that

you perform the ceremony and you said to me that I must follow my heart in the matter when I told you that I knew that some of the brethren were concerned about my marrying someone who did not believe as I do. As I left that day Sister Spangler said to me, "Remember, Mary, that we've always loved you, since you were just a child." Tears still come to my eyes when I think of the look on her face when she said that. It was very humbling as I have always esteemed the two of you very highly.

I'd like to mention one last experience that occurred not long after John and I were married. I was driving to Mebane from Yanceyville because the snow and ice caused the school officials to close the schools early. Just outside of Mebane I skidded on the ice and I knew right away that the car was going to flip over. I remember feeling very calm and thinking that if this were my last day, it would be all right. I also remember trying to remember if I had told John I loved him that morning. I feel very strongly that it's important to let those people, whom you care for, know how you feel, because when I breathe my last, I want to feel assured that even though I may not be able to say good-bye, the people whom I love will know that I love them. The car did turn over in the air and landed back on the tires. An approaching car from the other direction just missed being hit by my car. I was unharmed. The Lord surely was with me, but I thank Him most for that calmness which He granted because only faith in Him can cause a person to be prepared for death.

Mary Hawkins

EXPERIENCES OF
ELDER D.R. CABBAGE
Part 2 of 4 Maynardsville, Tenn.

A few years later I moved back to the same house that I heard God

speaking peace to my soul. Unable to work, I had to move back to the country, the same church I was telling you about where I was raised in. They had a revival meeting, and I attended it. I didn't go to any other churches. I didn't know anything about Primitive Baptist at that time. I was in trouble. One of them made a statement as he left the church house that God showed him a man's face. A few nights after that, I stepped out and owned my hope. The preacher said I was the man that God had showed him. I can't deny that. God works in mysterious ways. But I did own my hope that I had kept hid for so many years. A great burden lifted again. I went on and became more interested in church. Went on until another year and they had another revival. The same two preachers. One of them asked me, "Did you ever join the church?" I said, "No, I hold toward the Primitive Baptist people." He said, "The Primitive Baptist has got some good people. They just get it down to the very number." I can't see that. But he said, "My advice to you is to follow the spirit of the Lord." I went on for sometime, I can't explain all of this, I was more or less given that I was lead to a church. But at the same time, I felt like this, that God has a people in every nation under heaven, every kindred, tongue, and people. For some reason, I wanted God to lead me to the church that he wanted me in. Yes, I was weighted down again, another burden. I went out before I went to bed, I tried to pray. I said, "Oh Lord, I believe that you have a people in all these churches around here, all these denominations, that your people are a scattered people. Heavenly Father, I can go to anyone of them and tell an experience of Grace, and no doubt they would accept me as a member, Oh, Lord, if thou want me in a church, show me where to go." Have you ever been to a place that you didn't know where to go? I've been there. But

God said he would never leave us.

We get down in these places and feel we are forsaken, God still loves us and watches over us. That night, after I went back in the house and went to bed, went to sleep, I reckon, sometime during that night, I saw in a vision an old church house, I had never been in before. It had a row of lights down through the center of it. Closer to the pulpit the brighter they got, I saw myself sitting there. But, yet I didn't know just where it was.

My neighbor used to come down and stay awhile at night until bedtime and we would visit him, I like that way of life. He was a Missionary Baptist preacher. I love him, I think very much of him. We were talking one night about different churches and preachers we like to hear. Something was said about Brother Wilder and Brother Davis. (These were Primitive Baptist Ministers) I said, "I don't believe I know where Union Church is," (Primitive Baptist Church) He said, "I'll go with you, we'll go over there." A few Sundays after that, he went with me. He hasn't been back since. I found something there that fed my soul, I began to attend regular. Each time I seemed to be getting something, strength, food. I believe that was the place that God lead me. I felt like waiting upon the Lord for him to lead me. If he wanted me in a church, I mentioned a while ago, I tried to pray for God to show me and to lead me. I know that prayer don't change God. I believe that from the annuals of eternity, God has heard and answered every prayer that will ever be prayed in this time world. But here in time they are made manifest down through time. God's people have always had to call upon him and I will have to say that I believe in prayer. But I believe that it comes from God and it goes back to God. The Bible says, "Ye know not how to pray as ye ought, but the spirit itself maketh intercessions and that according to the will of God. I believe that God leads his

people in such a way that from time to time they are made to realize that they are helpless, that they cannot do these things that they desire to do. They desire His leadership. He shows them and teaches them that He is God, that He has all power in Heaven and in earth.

I'd go to church, I recall this occasion that I'd been filled with spiritual food, my cup runneth over. Walking through the yard toward mother's house, she came to the door and said, "Did you enjoy it?" I began to cry because I had made the statement, I was like one of old, searching for a city when I got there, the watchman, the keeper of the walls found me, took away myself. I believe that's the church that God sent me to or lead me to. I went on and attended for some few years. I don't recall just how many, but a number of years. The time came when I desired a home with these people. These people that God had caused me to love. I began to think about, I believe it was Abraham, God said, "Get thee out from thy land and from thy kindred, into a land, I will show thee." I believe that it was the work of God, and God's will.

I know that some people did not understand why I did not go back to the church I was raised in. The only thing I know as I've said before God had a people in all the churches and I wanted to be where God wanted me to be. I desired a home with them, I'd go and set there and yea when Elder Wilder and Elder Davis would be blessed with the Holy Spirit. I'd sit back there and shed tears, I could not go forward. But I believe that God had appointed a time, God had drawn a line from the foundation of the world. I hadn't been brought to that line yet.

At the end of Job's afflictions, you know how Job was brought down in afflictions, how all he had, had been taken from him, I won't go into that. But at the end of his afflictions there God spoke to

the servant. Job said, "Gird up thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? Who hath laid the measures if thou knoweth? Who brought fourth measurements? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Where upon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or if thou knoweth who laid the cornerstones thereof. When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

I believe God brought forth the measurements and stretched the lines and I believe his people will be brought to them, every one that's in their path.

I went on a long time, I'd go to church and one occasion, I recall, I walked up in the yard, singing had already began, I was filled with joy from them old songs of Zion, being sung inside. Here is a God that leads his people by still waters. Here is a God that maketh them to lie down in green pastures. Here is a God that restoreth their soul when they are weak, when they are faint. Here is a God that said I'll never leave you, I'll never forsake you, but I will go with you all the way even unto the end of the world. These are wonderful promises that God has made to his people, but back to my experience.

Back to the time I was wanting to join the church and couldn't. All the times I would go before him, praying for God to show me, Oh Lord, if this is what you want me to do, show me Lord, God gave me evidence. I was like old Gideon back yonder, I laid the fleece out and said, "Oh Lord, let the ground be wet around it and the fleece dry," and it was. Every time that I asked God for evidence, God gave it to me. God gave it to Gideon. God is a wonderful God. But I went on, one night, a week before I joined the church, I dreamed of being baptized. I dreamed of changing clothes, going into the church house and after I got in some of the people in this dream (or vision) was

friendly and some turned cold shoulders to me. Caused me to stop, caused me to wonder. In the dream, that I was in, I don't know, I was turned around, looked down the hill, here come a crowd of people, coming in where I was. I was blessed to ask for a home, they received me. I told what little of my experience that come to my mind, I couldn't tell them much. They took me anyway, George Davis, an elderly man, lived out the road a little way from me came up to shake hands with me. He joined the church, while he was up there. Sister Barnes from Taswell came from across the other way, she joined. What a wonderful meeting. They are both deceased and gone on now. Many more of my travels, but this seems to be getting weaker, scattered. I believe God does show his people things in visions.

On the day of Pentecost, when they were all gathered there in one accord, one mind and one strength. The Holy Ghost came and filled the house, lit upon each of them and they began to speak in other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. Some people today don't understand what we are talking about. They don't understand this language. I don't feel hard at them and I don't criticize them.

The Apostle Peter stood up with the eleven and said, "Those are not drunk men as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour. But this is that which was spoken by Joel the prophet. In the last days, God will pour out his spirit on all flesh and sons and daughters will prophecy and so on; your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions."

I don't believe the Apostle Peter was talking about any natural dreams, but he was talking about spiritual visions, spiritual dreams. God is able to carry your mind out while you sleep and show you wonderful things. I have been just as happy in the spirit of the Lord in the

dead hours of the night as I ever have been in the pulpit.

I went on, God has showed me many things concerning the work of the ministry. But I don't know where I will be able to go into any of that or not, but I had a desire to preach and again I'll say, I don't know where it came from, it just moved upon me.

To be continued
Elder D.R. Cabbage

217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La. 71203
March 1983

ISIAH 65:24

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."

This scripture has been on my mind for some time and I have a desire to write something concerning it. I trust that this desire is God given, and pray that He will guide my every thought. I do not know much, if anything, about prayer, and I surely do not know to pray as I would. It seems that most of my attempts to pray are but words that reach no higher than my head; yet there are times when I feel greatly blessed to approach unto His mercy seat and pour out the thoughts of my heart unto Him. And there was a time or two when I felt that my prayers were answered immediately and I greatly rejoiced. All true prayers are answered; not according to our wills, but His. True prayers proceed from the heart and, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Paul prayed for the thorn to be removed from his flesh and he was answered. The thorn was not removed, because it was there to serve God's purpose, which was to keep Paul from being exalted beyond measure. Then what was the answer to Paul's prayer? "My grace is sufficient

for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." What a wonderful answer from above, from whence cometh all good gifts, and all perfect gifts. They come down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We see bumper stickers, signs, etc., and sometimes hear it on the radio or TV that 'prayer changes things'. There was a time when I believed this was possible, but this cannot be true according to the above scripture. If there be no variableness nor even a shadow of turning with God, then how can puny, sinful man persuade Him to change His mind and do something for us that He has not already purposed to do? Job said, "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him."

Man is a sinful, corrupt being who would never turn to God if left to himself. Not even one. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is not one that doeth good, no, not one." Remember the Isrealites. Are we any different? God led them out of bondage, out of the land of Egypt; they crossed the Red Sea dry shod, but their enemies were drowned; they ate manna from heaven, the food of angels; they drank water from the rock; their clothes and shoes waxed not old, etc., and yet when God called Moses upon the mountain they immediately forgot God and made their own golden images to worship. And when God turns His face from us for but a moment we immediately go astray, seeking to fulfill the desires of the flesh; seeking those things which are of the world and do perish, such as wealth, power, popularity, the praises of men rather than God, and all such

things as these. In our carnal nature we would be happy and content with these things and we would have no reason to call upon God; but thanks to His holy name we do not live to ourselves in ease and contentment but in Him, if we be what we hope to be. When we forget God and do not seek Him in prayer, we are soon separated from Jerusalem and carried away unto Babylon as were the Israelites. We suffer bondage, afflictions, persecutions, darkness of soul, etc. until we see the errors of our ways and return again unto our Savior. These are a part of the 'all things' that work together for our good, for, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Even Jesus, "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things he suffered." We must suffer, if we follow in the footsteps of our Savior, before we learn obedience. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." And, being the fain creatures which we are, we must be taught again and again. We must be brought to the end of the road where there is no place to turn, and to the end of our strength, before we turn again unto Him in prayer who is our High Priest, the One who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities because He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He is a very merciful God, therefore let us come boldly before His throne that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in times of our needs.

We find in Jeremiah 29: "For I know the thoughts that I have toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find

me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." What a glorious promise this is: ye SHALL and I WILL. We shall pray and He will answer. Can anyone doubt this? Yes we can and do - many times - when He turns His glorious face from us for a moment and leaves us to ourselves in total darkness; yet our faith is restored when it pleases Him to indite a prayer into us that is according to His gracious will. There are those who pray in pretense only, as did the Pharisee, and when in the flesh we do the same, because we do not know how or for what to pray as we should, but the spirit helps our infirmities by making intercession for us according to the will of God. (Rom. 8:26-27). Again we see that all true prayer must be according to the will of God. If we approach the mercy seat it must be by faith; "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." That we must have faith is agreed to by all, but by many we are admonished to have faith as though it were something we can reach out and take hold on ourselves; but from where does this faith come? It is the gift of God: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." The grace and the faith are gifts from above and we surely cannot go up and get them: they must come down to us. These blessings were given to us before the foundation of the world, for, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." We shall not fail to receive even one of these spiritual blessings, for God hath already blessed us with them. In eternity He gave them to us, but it is only in the dispensation of time that we receive them; yet it is the will of God that we should

pray for the very blessings that He has already given. The answers to our prayers have already been accomplished also, for, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," and, "The works were finished from the foundation of the world." (Acts 15:18 & Heb. 4:3)

"It shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear." Do we not see that it is already done? Is not answering prayer a work? And if it is, did not God know it and finish it in the beginning? Does He not hear even while we are speaking? If He does not hear while we are speaking, then when? God forbid that we deny what the scriptures affirm.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to the fruit of his doing." The works, or fruits, of the flesh are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, etc. If God gave to us according to our fleshly fruits we would utterly perish. But if we be the children of Christ, then the Spirit dwells within our hearts and produces the fruits of righteousness which are joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Our own righteousness is as filthy rags before our holy God, but Christ is our righteousness, for his righteousness has been imputed unto us who believe. (At least I have a hope that I believe.) Without Christ we can do nothing, but with him we can do all things. The Father knows what we have need of before we ask, but we are instructed by Jesus to "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Volumes could be written on this text, but if what I have written is enough to stir up your pure minds to think further on these things I am well rewarded,

though I seek nothing but to praise and glorify God. I trust that you will accept this only as far as it is confirmed by the scriptures.

Brethren, may God grant that you remember this poor worm of the dust when at the throne of grace, and may He forbid that I should sin against Him in ceasing to pray for you, if indeed I pray at all.

C. C. Wilbanks

Route 1
Reidsville, N. C.

THE COUNSELLOR

Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

These are but a few of the titles that honor the name of Jesus, above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. For it pleased the Father that in him shall all fulness dwell, and He hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body.

Oftimes I feel so low and far away that I feel to walk alone, without a friend on earth or one in Heaven, and it seems there is no way. Yet, I have been blessed to receive consolation in prayer and supplication when I felt constrained to consult the heavenly Counsellor in prayer and humiliation and flet to walk in the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Many times in my 66 years in this low ground of sin and sorrow, I have suffered humiliation. Yet, it is nothing to be compared with the humiliation Jesus suffered on the cross. About the ninth

hour, he cried with a loud voice saying, "My God, my god, why hast thou forsaken me."

I have, if not deceived, called upon this Counsellor in my distress, and I believe he made a way when there was no way. For he will surely hear the cries of his people, and he makes a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, and this is where we journey this day.

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance, and I feel I shall never forget as long as I have mind to remember two precious Elders for their labor in love and fellowship. While I walked in humiliation as a begger, pleading for counseling from the all-wise Counsellor that I be blessed to walk in the truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and stand for and in the faith once delivered to the Saints, I hope I have been blessed to be not ashamed to own my Lord or to defend his cause.

Elder David V. Spangler, born January 9, 1902, and of this writing is past 82 years old, has been blessed to preach the gospel to the poor for 64 years over the 48 states wherever Primitive Baptist are found.

Elder Spangler is a brother in Christ, I hope, and a father in Israel to many precious ones. He is one who has been blessed by this precious Counsellor to endure and run the race that was set before him, which is an evidence of his calling, for his Counsellor endured all things. Also, I feel that this one called Wonderful and Counsellor blessed him with a devoted wife for 62 years who would not deny the principals for which he stands.

Elder W.C. King was my pastor for 15 years. I loved him, I hope for Christ sake. I was deeply saddened when I learned of his death on October 17, 1970. I wrote many articles about him that were published in the Signs Of The Times expressing the love and fellowship I was blessed to have for him. His

first concern was peace at home. Elder Spangler said at his funeral that he and Elder King had lived in gospel fellowship for 50 years. I knew them both from the days of my youth. I never knew them to decree unrighteous decrees. They have been precious to me. Their hearts were so filled with that love that flows from heart to heart and breast that there was no room for jealousy or envy, which is evidence they were counseled by the heavenly counsellor. If there were any differences, they were blessed to reason together in brotherly love.

I remember when Elder George Ruston from the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada visited with the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association in 1955. He came in a humble spirit, and his mission was for the sake of peace and brotherly love, and I believe he found it was mutual among the brethren.

Elder Ruston, Elder Spangler, and Elder King were blessed to live in brotherly love, peace, and fellowship for many years along with many other ministers and brethren from the two countries.

I believe that when Jesus comes to call his jewels home, there will be some faith found on earth, though Paul the Apostle foretelleth a departure from the faith. I Timothy 4-1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils."

I believe that every purpose of the Lord shall be performed, and if so be ye have tasted that God is gracious, then you have been counseled by the heavenly counsellor according to the eternal purpose which be purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Ephesians 4:14, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed too and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

St. John 5:30-31, "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true." St. John 5:44, "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"

John was counseled by the heavenly Counsellor and not by worldly counsellors.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Now, to those chosen of God and precious, have peace one with another. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For ye are counseled by the heavenly Counsellor.

Clifton Robertson

Denton, N. C.
March 9, 1984

To Elder Kenneth R. Key;

Enclosed is check for \$5.00 for the book that Elder Spangler has published. I have never seen him but one time, that was when he was young. He was visiting the Abbotts Creek Association near Star, N. C. When I received the Signs of The Times this week, I recognized the picture before I saw his name.

Don't remember much about his sermon, only do remember his text was first verse of the second chapter of Ephesians.

I have been a subscriber to The Signs for several years and enjoy it so much.

Hope you and all the others that publish The Signs will be blessed to keep on. It is a great source of comfort to so many.

Minnie G. Roberts

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE UPPER AND NETHER SPRINGS

April 1, 1937

Dear Sister Coleman:

I'll endeavor to comply with your request in regard to the upper and nether springs found in Judges 1:15. I hope the Lord has shown me some of the beautiful meaning. I have dreamed of it twice, and preached from it today.

Caleb was the one that gave these springs. You remember there were twelve spies sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. Ten of them said there are giants there, we cannot take it. As representing the law (10 commandments) that was the truth. Joshua and Caleb said we can take it. They represent Jesus and the Holy Ghost. They are the only ones that can take it. The power is vested in the God-head. At the first of this chapter it says Joshua is dead. Jesus said before He was crucified, it is needful that I go away. If I go not away the Comforter will not come. But I will send the Comforter and He will take the things of mine and show them unto you. The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit

have their office work, but no disagreement. God does the convicting, Jesus does the pardoning, and the Holy Ghost takes the things of Jesus and shows them unto us.

Caleb now takes the place of the Holy Spirit. He made a promise to the one that took Kirjath Sephor (a city of books), he would give Achsak, his daughter to wife. His youngest brother took it. Here is a beautiful picture of Christ and His church. Note the near relationship—*younger brother*. The flesh is first with us. The evening comes first, then the morning. Abraham told his servants not to go among strangers but among his kin. So they go with ten camels—representing the law and she rides upon the camel till she sees Isaac, then she alights off the camel. The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. When we view Him, we cease to trust in the law.

Achsak asked her husband to take of Caleb a field. He gave her a South land—a balmy field—a good field—the field the church occupies. See, she asked her husband to do this. How beautiful of her to trust in her husband. What a good husband we have in Jesus to give us such a good and pleasant field. Solomon speaks of the south wind.

When Eve was given to Adam, he said: This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. The church was created in Jesus before the world. So you see the relationship. Achsak married her uncle.

After this request of hers was granted, she alights off the ass. I feel like this represents human nature. She alights. Jesus rode one into Jerusalem, upon which no man had ever sat, and He did not need bridle or saddle. He is the only one that can subdue our old nature and bring it into subjection.

She says, thou hast given me a field, now give me springs; see he gave her the upper and nether springs. Nether means lower—that which is beneath.

There are the upper and nether mill

stones. It takes them both to grind our wheat into flour of food fit to eat.

The springs are gifts from the Lord. We need them both. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the author and finisher of our faith. The springs are generally found in the valley—between two hills. So it is in these valleys that we sup from the fountain of life that comes down from that pure river of water of life as clear as crystal.

It is all from above, whether it is upper or nether. When Jacob was in the wilderness he took the stones (plural) and made pillows. But in his dream he saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven and angels ascending and descending upon it. This ladder is Christ that came down from heaven to earth to do the will of His Father. Jacob says how dreadful is this place. This is none other than the gate of heaven. Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not—none other than the house of God. He saw Jesus and the church, for the house of God is the church.

In the darkness, he took the stones—representing the law, but by the light of day, he took the stone (singular) and made a pillar—not pillow. A pillar is a foundation—something to build upon. This was the beginning of his experience—the nether spring, yet it was from above. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above. It is all of Him. It is God that sheweth mercy.

When David went to meet Goliath, as he went down to the brook (going down) he took five smooth stones, which shadows forth a crucified Jesus, and he was able to kill him.

He was going right, for he was going in the mane of the Lord. Don't you think that was a wonderful spring for him to drink from? This sword of Goliath's was put away—not to be forgotten—as evidence of the battle. An epha of manna

was put away in the tabernacle of testimony of what the children of Israel ate while in the wilderness. They were drinking at that time from what they thought was the nether spring, but afterwards they can see it also was from the upper springs.

Jesus drank from both, for He says, in the garden of Gethsemane, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass". That was the flesh. The Spirit says, "Not my will, but Thine be done".

Sampson as he went down to Timnath, a young lion roared against him. He killed the lion without a weapon. When he comes back, he steps aside to see the sight, and behold a swarm of bees and honey was in the carcass. There is the sweetness when we are coming back—after there has been a killing. The law having been satisfied, we can lay hold of the sweet promises now, and drink from the wells of salvation.

Sister Coleman, I feel like you may know more about these springs than I do. I am aware that you are a blest child of God, and that He has revealed a lot of the scriptures to you. If you see different from me, I believe you will throw the mantle of charity over it, and still esteem me as a brother. It takes so much space to try to explain myself, I am afraid you will not see some of the points I have tried to make.

Now Isaiah 7:20. To be brief, I think that hired razor was Judas, when he was hired for thirty pieces of silver, to betray Jesus into the hands of sinful men. And He made a clean shave of it—subdued all His enemies. As Sampson killed more enemies in his death, just so Jesus killed or overcame all of them. He came forth a conqueror over death, hell, and the grave.

I have written this since supper and it is now 7:45. So you see I write as I preach. May you look over this and correct all mistakes. I have written hurriedly, trying to keep up with my

thoughts. We still think of that good visit you all made up. Come again soon.

Your brother, I hope,
Elder T. A. Stanfield

P.S.—When you read my letter, keep in mind that Joshua and Caleb are types of Jesus and the Holy Ghost all the way. It was after Jesus had died that the Holy Spirit come, and it was after Joshua had died that Caleb comes forth. Moses died before Joshua took command. Don't you see?

T.A.S.

McIver, N. C.

1913

ESAU AND JACOB

Dear Brother Gold:

Before Esau and Jacob were born, they struggle together. It seems to me that is a type of the soul when it travails. When we are under conviction, there is a struggling—trying to go back to the world and its pleasures, and trying to do better. For proof of this, let us see how the Israelites did, when in the wilderness. They wanted to go back to the flesh pots of Egypt. This shows they wanted to go back about as bad as they wanted to press forward. When they started on this journey the Lord told them that in the evening they should eat flesh, and in the morning eat bread. The evening answers to the first part of our life and the morning the last part. They ate and lived on manna in the wilderness. Manna means, what is it? That is a good name for conviction. We certainly do not know what it is while eating it. We eat it—complain—wander around—want flesh, still we continue eating it. The Lord caused an east wind to blow from the sea and carried quails to the Israelites, a day's journey. And they loathed them while it (the flesh) was still

between their teeth. If we try to eat flesh (go back in our old ways, it makes us sick) and we are in a worse condition than before.

All the men of war that left Egypt died in that wilderness except two That answers to the flesh.

The young men that were born in the wilderness, go into the land of Canaan, which as a figure of the gospel land—spiritual land. Young men, the spiritual men are the ones that possess this land. When they reached the land of Canaan they ceased eating manna; but on the morrow after partaking the passover, they eat the old corn of the land (Canaan). They lived on what that land produced that year. The Lord commanded that an Omer of manna be put away for testimony of what they ate while in the wilderness. We do not forget the time when we were under conviction. It is kept for a testimony. We cannot forget it. Rebekah was told two manner of people were in her womb, and the elder should serve the younger.

Esau came from the field (world) faint. Let us notice this a moment. Was faint. That means ready to fall—a dizziness—weak. (I fainted once and I know something of this.) He was hungry and at the point to die. It seems to me he is getting to the end of the law, and this is a type of us when we thirsted after our younger brother's pottage. Save Lord or I perish! Jacob fed him by buying his birthright. Do we not give up all before we can eat spiritually? We have to give up our standing, before we can eat of our younger (spiritual) brother's pottage.

The world thinks Jacob took advantage of Esau. Don't think so. He was not sick, if he was he would not have been hungry. Esau was called Edom. That means faint, and I might add weak. That is the way of the flesh. Jacob gets the blessing. A person told me Jacob lied. Let us see. When he goes to Isaac, he puts on Esau's garments, and kid skins

on his hands and neck. He tells his father this is Esau thy first born. When we go to our heavenly father for a blessing, do we not say we are sinful and are not worthy, that we are the first born? And he was told to do this by his mother, who is a figure of the church. The church will admonish those that have a hope how to do to get a blessing—offer to the church; but they had better come owning they are sinners (the very Esau) or they will not get it. "Come near me my son, and let me feel thee."

That was a trying time on Jacob. He was afraid he would appear as a deceiver. That is our experience. When we had impressions to offer to the church, we were afraid we might deceive them. And when the church tells one today to do his duty on this line, what is their answer? When Joseph's brethren went to him to buy corn, he appeared angry with them. He was trying them—to humble them. They sold him into Egypt. But he was not angry. He wanted to prove them, just as Isaac tried Jacob. Isaac did not eat of Jacob's venison until a full confession was made, and Jacob did not get the blessing till he told this. As Jacob left, in comes Esau and asked his father to arise, eat of my venison and bless me.

Jacob came in Esau's name prompted by (the spirit) his mother. "The spirit and the bride say come." Esau came in his name only, and his venison was from the field (world), while Jacob's was of the flock. Isaac told Esau he had given his blessing to his brother, and that he (Esau) would have to live by the sword and serve his brother. That is very typical of the flesh. We must live by the sword (the word of God) and serve the new man.

"The elder shall serve the younger." The blessings Isaac gave his two sons fulfilled what the Lord said. The flesh shall serve the spirit. But there is a continual warfare going on. The flesh

against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

Come near now, and kiss me. The demands have been satisfied, and mercy and justice kiss each other.

Isaac smelled Jacob's raiment and said, "See, the smell of my son is as a field the Lord has blessed". Moses was commanded to take off his shoes, for the ground he stood on was Holy. This field that was blessed is the gospel field we live in, it seems to me. If we can drive out the Canaanites and have a peaceable reign, what a blessed land. But the spirit and flesh have to live in the same house, and a fight is going on most of the time. Jacob is afraid of Esau and flees from him. Just as David tried and did keep out of the way of Saul, just as we try to keep the flesh (the old man) in subjection. But we are afraid we will some day fall by him.

As Jacob went in his elder brother's name to get the blessing from his father, we today go in our Elder Brother's name, who is Christ Jesus our Lord, to our heavenly Father for all blessings. There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. He is the only mediator. We have to go in His standing, for the birthright belongs to Him.

He bought us with his own precious blood, hence we go in his name, and wear his goodly garment.

Your humble brother in a sweet hope.

Elder T. A. Stanfield

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in May. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

The Editors

MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union will hold a two day meeting, the fifth Sunday in April 1983, and on Saturday before. Services will begin at 10:30 AM each day.

Dan River Church who are celebrating their 100th anniversary this year will be host.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder D. V. Spangler
Pastor

APPOINTMENTS FOR ELDER JOE HAMRICK OF WINNSBORO, TEXAS

Wednesday Night April 25 at Greensboro Church.

Thursday Night April 26 at Malmaison Church.

Friday Night April 27 at Laurel Ridge Church. Supper will be served at the meeting house at five o'clock—The public is invited.

Saturday April 28 at Staunton River Union Meeting.

Sunday April 29 at West Country Line Union Meeting.

Sunday Night April 29 at Reed Creek Church – Service at seven o'clock.

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JANUARY 1984

- Mrs. Elva C. Martin, VA..... 2.00
- Mrs. Carl Bryant, LA..... 2.00
- B.E. Monroe, TN..... 3.00
- Eld. J.T. Austin, PA..... 3.00
- Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC..... 2.00
- Mrs. Maggie Priddy, WV..... 3.00
- Mrs. Betty J. Sisson, GA..... 2.00
- George Hyslip, TN..... 2.00

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Marvin Brumfield, VA.....	2.00
W.T. Potter, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Nannie P. Arrington, VA....	3.00
Miss Lora Smith, NC.....	3.00

**CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR
FEBRUARY 1984**

Eld. James C. Young, NC.	\$15.00
Hilton Haney, NC.	5.00
Mrs. Mary E. Moyers, MI.	3.00
D.G. Hart, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Opal E. Hiatt, VA.	2.00
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Mrs. O.J. Swan, LA.	3.00
Mrs. Lester Haning, WA.	13.00

OBITUARIES

MARY FANNIE CARTER CUNDIFF

Mary Fannie Carter Cundiff departed this life on January 17, 1984.

She was born June 23, 1899 in "Slabtown" Pittsylvania County, Va. She was the daughter of John Thomas and Mary Sue Carter. Her husband Robert Hampton Cundiff and two children, a daughter Racheal Guilliams and a son Joseph Allen Cundiff preceded her is death.

She is survived by three daughters—Aurie C. Poindexter of Union Hall, Dorothy C. Thacker of Collinsville and Shirley C. David of Martinsville. Two sons Thomas Calvin Cundiff of Pen Hook and Robert Malcolm Cundiff of Moneta. Eighteen grandchildren, twenty-eight great-grandchildren and one great-great-granddaughter.

Chapel Church

SISTER SUE DAVIS

It is with sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Sue Davis, my sister-in-law. Sister Davis was born May 25, 1894 in Carroll County, Virginia. Most of her life was spent in the Mayfield Community of Rockingham County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Cyrus and Laura A. Ayers. Sister Davis was married to James Robert Davis on March 29, 1911. Brother Davis predeceased her January 27, 1974.

To this union was born four children, two of which survive, Asyline D. Hershman and Hazel D. Turlington. She is also survived by four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one sister and two brothers.

Sister Davis joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church April 27, 1941 and was a faithful member till death, January 1, 1984. She loved the church but was unable to attend during the last few years due to her afflictions.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder H.W. Wray. Her body was laid to rest by her

husband, in the church cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Done by request of the Church in Conference on January 24th, 1984.

Written by one who loved her.

Lucy H. Davis

SISTER KATE DODD
(1897-1983)

When my mind is carried back to the memory of our dear beloved Sister Kate Dodd, these words seem appropriate. She fought a good fight, she finished her course. she kept the faith. Sister Dodd united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in 1916 and served as church clerk for eighteen years. Her special seat was always filled until recently when her health began to fail, then she came in a wheelchair or with a walker when able. It was never too hot, or cold, or wet for her to go to meetings, because it came first in her life. Her love for the church was shown more in deed rather than words. It was her contribution to the church that was one of the deciding factors in our building this new meeting house, and later the gift of an air conditioner for our comfort.

Sister Dodd was born July 1, 1897 and was called from this world of woe April 6, 1983. She was the natural mother of 14 children and also mothered five stepsons, a son in-law, several grandchildren and a brother.

Surviving are 3 daughters, 5 sons, 2 sisters, 1 brother, 2 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, 13 step grandchildren and 21 step great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held April 8, 1983 at Malmaison Church by her pastor Elder O.K. Tench and assistant pastor Elder Julian Williams. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

By the grace of God "she kept the faith".

Written by one who loved her
I hope for Christ sake,

Peggy Wells

MAUDE B. HYLER

It was our heavenly Fathers will to remove from our midst another of our faithful members, Sister Maude Hyler. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church May 24, 1964, and died December 2, 1983.

She was a faithful member until her health failed her. She was so reconciled and would always say when visiting her, I am all right. I know it is Gods will, never complaining. Her husband Robert D. Hyler deceased, was blind for many years. She was so faithful in caring for him.

She leaves to mourn her passing, a daughter, Kathleen H. Gillie, Smithfield, N. C., a son, Paul E. Hyler of Eden, N. C. Ten grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Fracie Newby, and Mrs. Peggy Fulton of Eden, N. C.

Her funeral was held at Fair's Funeral Home, Eden, by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder H. W. Wray.

We bow in humble submission to Gods Holy will that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Church in conference.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Little Minter

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

SISTER DOROTHY JESSUP TERRY

In sadness I attempt to write in memory of our dear sister, Dorothy Jessup Terry.

She was born April 5, 1904, passed from this life February 10, 1984, age 79 years, 10 months and 5 days. She was the daughter of the late Elijah Jessup and Sally Cruise Jessup Barnard.

Surviving are three daughters: Mrs. Evelyn Slusher, Floyd, Virginia, Mrs. Frances Cock, Meadows of Dan, Virginia and Mrs. Lois Dalton, Meadows of Dan, Virginia. Six sons: Marvin E. Terry from Meadows of Dan, Virginia; Reubin Y. Terry, Raleigh, N. C.; Wesley E. Terry, Christiansburg, Virginia; Samuel E. Terry, Meadows of Dan, Virginia; Hubert J. Terry, Pulaskia, Virginia, and David L. Terry, Meadows of Dan, Virginia. Two sisters: Mrs. Delcie Conway, Stuart, Virginia and Mrs. Ralph Durham, Meadows of Dan, Virginia. Twenty-eight grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren.

She was married to the late Elder Samuel E. Terry on April 3, 1921 by Elder C. A. Vipperman.

She united with Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, May 3, 1924 and was baptized along with her husband in June 1924, by Elder C. A. Vipperman, and was a member nearly sixty years. She attended churches far and near. After suffering a stroke nearly four years ago, she was well enough to come back to church.

To my knowledge she didn't miss a week in filling her seat at Bell Spur. She was a good wife, devoted mother, good neighbor, and a kind and gracious friend to everyone.

Her funeral was conducted February 12, 1984 at Bell Spur Church by Elder Amos Hash and Elder Hale Terry. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, beside her husband who preceded her in

death in August, 1964. To await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May her beloved family land we at Bell Spur Church be blessed to feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Done by order of the Church while in Conference, February 18, 1984.

Ilene Clifton, Clerk

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"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler, Editor

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1 (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Va. 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions, gifts, re-newals, announcements, obituaries, notices of meetings and any other communications, should be addressed to:

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah—the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

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EDITORIALS

PREDESTINATION

Attempting to write on this subject, I do so in fear, knowing it is a cardinal point of doctrine about which many have set forth their views; and in doing one is left to wonder what is meant by predestination. Some say absolute, some eternal, and others limited predestination. I do not believe that a cardinal point of God's decree has to have absolute or eternal in front of it, or in other words a handle. I firmly believe that it is strong enough to stand for itself. We do not find the word "predestination" used in the Old Testament, nor the New Testament. But we do find the word "predesti-

nate." Predestination is derived from the Latin word "praedestinare" which means to predestine, to determine beforehand, to settle in advance. In modern English, Webster, a writer of dictionaries and a very learned man, says that predestination is: "the act of predestinating or the state of being predestinated: the theological doctrine that all events throughout eternity have been foreordained by divine decree or purpose: the foreordination by God of each individual's ultimate destiny particularly to eternal life."

By God's grace, let us look in the *Book of Acts 15:18*, "Known unto God are all of his works from the beginning of the world." and *Isaiah 46:10*, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasures." These two verses of scripture are sufficient to settle our minds concerning the sovereignty of God's power. That is to say that God even before the world began set the things that have been, and the things that are, and the things that will be in motion, and declared that they would be as He did foresee them. I will admit that this point of doctrine is hard to be understood, and that all of God's people are not favored by the Heavenly Master to see or to understand it. Peter said concerning Paul, *II Peter 3:16*, "As also in all of his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which that they are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Yet, if we have a belief in God, we have to admit that the things that are here are by God's purpose.

There is an order in the sovereignty of God, first His foreknowledge. Surely we will all say that God did foreknow all things, and when I say all things, this I mean—the good as

well as the evil. He knew Adam would fall, and in that fall God had a purpose as He does in all things. There was a purpose in Joseph's being hated by his brethren. He was given a dream; that dream came when he was asleep. He had no physical knowledge or mental capacity to stop it from coming, but it was sent by the Divine Providence of God. Do you know what the purpose was? Surely all will say, "Yes, I know what the purpose of that was." Joseph was a type of the Saviour. He was to be sent down into Egypt by his brethren; however, we find when Joseph's brethren who had done this thing in malice, with evil intentions in their hearts, were brought to the true understanding, Joseph embraced them and said, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

Do you not believe that God knew what would happen to his Son when He was born of a virgin and was sent into this world? Jesus himself says, for this cause came I unto this world and for this end was I born. He was to lay down His life; and, yet, it was wicked hands whom God did before ordain that should take Him and crucify Him that the will and the purposes of God might be made manifest. In that wicked act alone came the salvation of the Church.

Surely there is beauty in the doctrine of predestination. There are some points on which I feel all of God's people are agreed.

Now let us go further into the matter, if the Lord is willing, concerning God's foreknowledge and predestination. *Proverbs 16:4* "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." This verse of scripture says he hath made, not going to, but already has. We not only find that the good things in life are made by God but also the wicked. Now may we consider that the sovereignty of God is in control of one as much as the other. Look in *Acts 17:*

26 again as the Apostle speaks:

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

I find there is a spirit of truth that comes from God which is Jesus Christ, our Lord, because He is true. He says "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Also, I find there is a lying spirit. Read *II Chronicles 18:22* concerning Ahab, the king of Israel. "Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee." Only God is able to do these things; yet, some will say this is a fatalistic doctrine. This is fatalism only if you can't believe. Not only are the righteous in His hands; but the wicked as well, even as the sun and the moon are under His decree. And they move in the predestined course that God did determine they would move in. So does all of creation. The birds, the insects, the fish, the creatures, and even man move in the course that God, even before He created the heaven and the earth, saw that they would. Even our steps are numbered, even the hairs of our head; and we are told that even a sparrow cannot fall without thy Heavenly Father. If God knows and controls the minute things, how much more so the large obstacles that are in our life, that are there by the decree of God.

The condition of the world that we are in now comes as no surprise to God because He has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. The wars, the contention, the hate, and the condition of world orders are as God would have them to be. Some will say, "No, this is not God's way." Oh, man, who art thou that replies against thy maker. He maketh one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. Let it be known here and now, God

by justice owes no man anything but hell and damnation. Paul also says, "Who has known the mind of the Lord?" Truly, it would be more simple to humanity if we did know the mind of God. But we cannot find out the works of God from the beginning until the end, for we find in the *Book of Proverbs* that He has made all things beautiful in His day. He has put the world in the heart of man that no man can find out the works of God from the beginning until the end. God is supreme in all of the things that He has made and created. He governs them by a decree and a control. He did foreknow what they would do in the time and in the seasons that He has appointed here in this world. If these times and seasons were not in the sovereignty of God, then everything would be chaos. If there be a part of it of which He has no knowledge, there is a part over which He has no control. The scriptures that have been laid down for our learning have told us that God has fixed all things, that He has ordained the righteous unto everlasting joy in heaven and immortal glory, and that the others He has seen fit, by the sovereignty of His own will, to leave in their sins and damnation even by sending them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie and not be brought to the knowledge of the truth. Let us also know this one thing, that the powers that be are the powers that are ordained of God, and there are no powers in this world or in the world to come but those which are of God.

Oh, my loved ones, if we could understand the beauty of the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, of God's election, of God's predestination, that all things hang on a firm decree and that He sits on no precarious throne. As we wrote in the beginning from *Isaiah*, He declared the end from the beginning. In our manner of speaking, we mortals would start at

the beginning and go to the end. We start at birth, and we go to death not knowing what one moment of time in advance will bring, but hoping. But God in His sovereignty has declared this one event that God went to the end—the final consummation of all things—and came back to the beginning, declaring the end from the beginning, not the beginning to the end. And the things that have taken place are the things that have been, the things that will be are the things that were ordained of God. This is proved again and again in prophecy, for instance when the Lord said unto Peter, before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice. Here is a point of predestination. Peter declared that he would not do this thing, yet, the Lord knew that he would. And when it came to pass, it brought repentance unto the heart of Peter when the Lord looked at him. You know we find many things in the scriptures that foretell future events and when they come to pass, God doesn't look down and say, "I told you so." Jesus, when Peter had denied him, didn't look at him and say, "Well, I told you about it." No, He smiled at him as if to say, "Peter, I know you are of the flesh, you are weak; but remember, Peter, I have told you that I have prayed for thee."

This doctrine of foreknowledge is the effectual cause, predestination is the power of God to make His foreknowledge come to pass. He said, "As I have thought so shall it be, as I have purposed so shall it stand." Remember, what God did foreknow moreover He did predestinate. Not only the heirs of heaven and immortal glory conformed to the image of His only begotten Son, but also those who did not receive the imputed righteousness of the blood of Jesus Christ are under the decree of God. Yea, the wicked are in His hands. He has made them for the day of evil, as we quoted out of the 16th

chapter of *Proverbs*. And yet God in his infinite wisdom has placed in man a mind, a will, and an understanding which conforms man unknowingly to the decree of God.

There is a doctrine that says man is free with the ability to choose right from wrong. Do we mortals really know what is right and wrong? We do things in the most sincere manner of our heart, sometimes thinking that they are right, and later we find those things were wrong. We find that the Apostle Paul thought he was fulfilling the will of God concerning salvation. He went about in his manner shutting up those who called upon the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and Paul says for this ignorance God winked. Paul did it in ignorance, not knowing. When he was brought to the knowledge of this beautiful truth, he was a strong advocate of predestination and of the sovereignty of God controlling all events.

We are told that God in His infinite wisdom has set the times that are in this world and in the world to come; He has also placed all things in the hollow of His hand in a manner that will work to the glory of Him and to the glory and to the admiration of the Church. He holds the issues of life and death in His hands.

Solomon, who was a wise man, wrote in the third chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Solomon went on to say there is, "A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and

a time to cast away; a time to reap, and a time to sow; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace."

Does not this embrace the beauty of the sovereignty of God in that He has made all things? Some have said, "Well, the Lord has let the wicked go in such a manner that He is not watching over them as well as He does those that belong to Him by the blood of Jesus Christ." But even the wicked, as we have stated already, are in the hands of God. Their steps are ordered as much so as the steps of the righteous because the ways of a man are not hid from Him, but the Lord delights in His way. Man cannot conceive or perceive of His ways, for he knows nothing as he ought. Thanks be unto God; all of these things are in the hands of God.

Surely in this doctrine of the sovereignty of God's elect and love, He looked down from heaven and out of this chaos, He has picked a few to embrace life eternal through the suffering of His Son, Jesus, and He has brought them to the knowledge that of themselves they can do nothing. That embraces creation as well as the mortal things upon earth. All creation, of themselves, can do nothing; but by the spirit of the Son of God that strengthens them, they are able to do all things. Surely one would say, "Well, why does God do this?" We cannot always give an answer that would satisfy all of the minds of all individuals concerning why God does these things, why He had created the devil, and why He made him more subtle than any beast of the field. Why these things are we cannot truly say. Some day, I believe, we shall know when we are gathered around the blood-washed throne if we are His children. Only God, in all of this, is able to bring good out of evil. God said of the evil He sent in the life of Jacob, "I will surely do

thee good all the days of thy life.”

In every war that we have seen upon the face of the earth, if we could see the hatred and malice that has been and the destruction of humanity, we could say, if God would give us the spirit and the understanding, that in each one there has come some good. In World War II thousands and thousands were killed. I believe that this war was by the decree of God. Some have allocated this to Hitler, and to the Japanese Emperor, and to Mussolini, and to Stalin; but out of that war came the technology that we are living with in this day and age. The modern techniques of medicine and modern equipment for operations which have eased the sufferings of thousands and thousands of lives came out of that war.

Man is only able to produce something worth while when he has been tried by serious afflictions which come from God on High. Not only does this relate in the spiritual realm when we are enabled to call upon God, but also in the physical realm. There are always things that come out of it that are good. If this were not true, how could the Apostle Paul say that; “All things work together to good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Paul on one occasion had a messenger of Satan, and Paul said the Lord gave it to him. I have no reason to doubt Paul. Though Paul did not charge God foolishly by saying, “Now, Lord, you made me thus. That is the reason I am as I am.” Paul could not charge God in such a manner. Some would say, “Well, by predestination God has purposed our sins and our iniquities.” True, there is a purpose in it. But whether it is God’s purpose to send us to hell or to make us suffer hell here on earth in the knowledge of knowing godly sorrow and repentance in our hearts of the things which have been done in

our body, we do not know. That we are unable to say. We do know this one thing, there is a purpose in every event, in every action. There have been actions which have hurt many people. We believe that those things had to be simply because they have been. We could not say they should not have happened.

During World War II, two men were discussing the doctrine of predestination, and one believed it and one didn’t. One said, “Oh, that ship that sunk had many hundred boys on it. They all drowned. You know that was not God’s will.” The other one looked at him and said, “I hope it was His will, and I firmly believe that it was. For if it had not been God’s will, God would not have known anything about it; and not knowing anything about it He might not have been there to be a present help in the time of trouble and in the time of death.”

In our feelings we believe that the end has been fixed, that the beginning has been fixed, and that everything in between has been decreed. We believe that our station of life is fixed, that what we will be tomorrow, where we will be, and even when our death bed has been prepared for us. Some say, “I do not like that kind of a doctrine.” Oh’ I revel in that kind of a doctrine. I have been taught that I am not able to direct my own steps. There were times in life when I felt that I could do this; but the time came when God made me realize what a mess I had made of it. Then I was glad that someone else had directed my steps, that someone else was watching over me, and that someone else had been with me—even when I knew it not. Jacob said the Lord was in this place and I knew it not. That is to say, God’s providence, God’s purposes, or God’s decree was with him when he knew it not.

Therefore, it is God’s foreknowl-

edge that causes predestination to be. Since predestination is the power causing God's foreknowledge to come to pass, it is always looking towards the final consummation of all things. It is the active will of God concerning the events that are in this world; therefore, we would say, "I am glad that God knows this." It is comforting to know that God has already prepared our death bed. We, some day, will be brought to the death bed by the motivating cause of life itself, the spirit that God has placed in man. That spirit belongs to God. It moves and motivates the body to the will of God concerning the providence wherein God has decreed. That will applies to one individual, or to one nation, or to the whole world. Some would say that it seems strange that war could be to the good of God's people. Do you not realize, dear children of God, that God has given nations for the benefit of the children of Israel. Some would say that it was not good that the whole host of Egypt and Pharaoh were destroyed by God for persecuting His children. Oh, dear children of God, this was God's way of delivering His children. It was God who hardened Pharaoh's heart. It has been said that God left Pharaoh alone and that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. I am told by the scriptures that He said unto Moses, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart." This is the sovereignty of God concerning the events in this life and in the world to come. This is the doctrine that our forefathers have advocated. This is the doctrine that nothing has transpired or ever will transpire without the will of God in direct control of the events.

David said, "Is there not a cause?" May God enable us by His grace to look around and say, "Is there not a cause?" Surely there is a cause. What is the cause? We are not always able to see or understand.

Therefore, the scripture says, "The revealed things belong to us but the hidden things belong to God." May God enable us all to see the beauty of the sovereignty of predestination in all things and in all events that are in this world that are under the direct control of the Almighty God. Isn't it wonderful to think about, that our Heavenly Master did foreknow, did foresee, and did declare all of the things that are here and has made us to rejoice in them concerning the doctrine of predestination. No wonder that the Apostle Paul could speak concerning this doctrine as a doctrine that is surely a doctrine that is able to stand without the inventions of man but a doctrine that God had decreed within himself that He is able to deliver us from the power of darkness and translate us unto the kingdom of His dear Son. And Paul goes on to say that by Jesus Christ, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell."

Think about this beautiful doctrine of God's everlasting predestination that governs and controls the mind, not only of the animals and the fish of the sea and the fowls of the air but also the minds and the actions of every human, preordained of God and declared to be. This same power controls the stars and heavenly constellations and governs even the grain of sand upon the sea shore. I am assured in my closing remarks

that it would be easier for heaven and earth to fall away than for one decree of God to ever fail. All of them shall take place accordingly as He has purposed and declared that they shall be.

Elder D.B. Stokes

CORRESPONDENCE

JUSTICE

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Gal. 2:16)

We know that the word justice has more than one meaning, but it is our intent to use it only as it applies to the law. Without justice under the law, the law would be dead: no one would benefit from it nor be punished by it: but God’s law is holy, just and good, and justice must be rendered under it. The only plea is “guilty” and the only sentence “death”. That all men are sinners and deserving of death and everlasting damnation we feel no need to prove here.

To be justified means that one has been freed from the law, and God’s law does not free anyone until the penalty of transgression has been paid in full. There are many people today, as there has always been, who do not yet know that a man is not justified by the works of the law and are constantly striving to effect their own salvation. I have been listed among these people, and still have

many friends there. But we know (I hope that I am included) that our justification is only in Jesus Christ in whom we believe. Jesus suffered shame, agony and death on the cross of Calvary that sinners such as you and I might live. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now ask the question, how is it possible for Jesus to satisfy the law and justice by dying in our room and stead? Is there a law anywhere that would allow an innocent person to be slain for the guilty one? If such a law exists, can it be just? If a man be executed for a friend who is worthy of death, would his friend be any less guilty or less worthy of death? Would justice be served by slaying the innocent? Would not the executioners be guilty of murder? I believe justice would be perverted in such a case, yet we see Christ dying for us, the Just for the unjust.

God created man in his own image. Male and female created he them. And he called the man Adam. Adam was a figure of Him or an image of him that was to come, or Christ. An image or figure is an exact likeness. It may be made of wood, iron, clay, dust or some other material, and it may be smaller or larger, but it must portray the true body exactly. Therefore Adam was an exact likeness of Christ, and should be viewed in that perspective. Eve was created in Adam and is a type of the church, showing that the church was in Christ before the foundation of the world. God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman, this representing the church being given to Christ for his bride. And Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.” The church is the mystical body of Christ, “For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of

his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:30).

Exactly as Eve was to Adam so is the church to Christ, for the image must be perfect. Eve, the church, was deceived by the crooked serpent, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell under the curse of the law. Adam, the figure of Christ, was not deceived, for that was not possible, but because of his great love for her, he partook of the forbidden fruit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam had no power to redeem his bride nor himself from the curse, therefore they must die, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Jesus Christ also loved his bride and would die with her, but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he became incarnate. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14). In his flesh, Christ could and did suffer and die to pay the penalty for his bride and redeem her from the curse of the law. Christ was righteous, he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth and he kept the law to a jot and to a tittle, therefore the law had no claim against him, and in his righteousness he was the perfect sacrifice for his fallen bride. In a mystical sense she died with him and was buried with him by baptism into death. Jesus Christ, who is holy, harmless,

undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, the only begotten Son of the Father, took all our sins upon himself and suffered the penalty of death in our stead. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Read the whole 53rd chapter of Isaiah: it is so beautiful. Can any man comprehend the beauty of such a love as Christ bestowed upon his chosen people? Surely not! We may view it through a glass darkly, but we will never understand it fully in this sinfilled life, because sin so dulls our vision.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith." If we could attain unto righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ died in vain; the old covenant would still be in force, and there would be no new covenant of grace; but God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel, saying, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." If we live, we must live by faith, and the law is not of faith. "Christ has redeemed us from the

curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." If we are what we hope to be, we can witness to this with faithful Paul. We are told by many that all we need do is have faith. This is true, but faith is not something we can take hold on at our leisure, as they would have us believe; for faith is a gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." As our sins and iniquities were charged unto our Savior, so is his righteousness imputed unto us who believe in him. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and if we walk in that same faith, righteousness shall also be imputed unto us, for we are his seed. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Why must it be by faith and not by the law? Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. We are no longer under the law, for Christ is the end of the law to all who believeth. Therefore righteousness is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Is this not beautiful? Can a poor sinner find a better promise than this?

Abraham was strong in faith, and was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform, therefore his faith was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake

alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

Brethren, if we believe in Jesus Christ, then we are in him and he is in us, and we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

I realize that I have only touched this vast subject, and it seems that my thoughts have been very scattered, but I trust they are of the Lord, and that he might use them to glorify his gracious and holy name, and comfort and edify some of his blessed little children. Charge all errors to my account, and when at the throne of grace, may it be God's holy will that you remember this poor sinner.

Clifford Wilbanks

Louisiana

GENESIS 4:2-5, 8.

“**A**bel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground and offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. .. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.”

Much time and effort has been set forth dealing with the offerings of both Cain and Abel and the recep-

it occurred to me that I was an awful sinner. My weight of trouble was more than I can express. On being called to breakfast I refused, saying I did not wish to eat. Mother asked if I were sick. I replied in the negative, but stated that I felt very badly. I tried to keep out of sight as much as I could, for, being but a child, I did not wish any one to know what a condition I was in. My playmates, who had heretofore afforded much pleasure, were now no company for me. The United Baptists were holding a meeting near father's residence. With a troubled mind I went to the meeting, and the preacher, after finishing his discourse, invited all those who desired an interest in their prayers to come forward. I felt to be one, though I did not make it manifest, and after meeting went home with a heavy load of sin. Mother by this time saw I was in trouble, and asked what was the matter, and with much embarrassment I told her. She advised me to pray the Lord for forgiveness of all my sins. That was what I had been trying to do, but had received no relief. She further said, that if I desired the prayers of those people, to make it manifest and they would assist me all they could. I seemed that I grew worse and worse in spite of all I could do, and that my prayers were an empty sound that could not be heard or noticed. I decided to go forward to be prayed for, hoping the prayers of the people might be heard in my case and that the Lord would undertake for me. Finally I tried to shake off my troubles, but the more I strove to get rid of them the worse they got and the more guilt-stricken and sin-sick I became. My very breathings were, Lord, be merciful to me, a poor helpless sinner. I had by this time lost all hope of God hearing or answering prayer in my behalf. All you who have realized this moment of despair can better imagine my feelings than I can express them. In this sad condition and distress of mind I was sitting on the mourners' bench, as it

was called, my prayers were hushed, my tears were dried. Just here for a short space of time I have no recollection of what took place. The first thing I remember after this state of my mind was praise to God. My burden was gone, and I though the sun shone with more brilliancy than ever before. I loved every one and wanted to tell them of my feelings, but being only a child, only eleven years of age, thought it would not do for me to utter a word in public, so I sat there thinking I would never see any more trouble, and thinking how good the Lord had been to remember me. But I must tell you that before I left the church-house I began to fear that I was deceived. I tried to get my burden back, but never have as yet. I tried to pray God that if I were deceived he would make it known to me in some way. The members asked me if I had a hope. I was afraid to say yes, but could not say no, for I felt that God had been merciful to me. I was then informed that it was my duty to be baptized. This to me was a solemn thing, but I felt that if I knew it was my Master's will I would be willing to perform my duty as best I could, notwithstanding my unworthiness. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preacher, as there were none in our immediate vicinity, but I had heard the old people say the "Hardshells" were a selfish people and that they preached infants into hell, which was enough to turn the mind of a young person such as I was against them, so I thought the United Baptists was the church of Christ. Of course I was too young to know and understand the doctrine, and united with them, and remained with them about eighteen years. I was married at the age of nineteen, and shortly afterward my husband bought a small farm in the northern part of Pope County, Illinois, to which farm we moved, and near it was an Old Baptist Church, Grand Pier, where I heard Elder Richard Fulkerson preach every

month. His preaching truly attracted my attention, and I soon began to see the difference in the preaching. Some said there was but little difference, but that was not the way it appeared to me. Elder Fulkerson preached that Jesus Christ came into this world to save his people from their sins (not to try and fail), and that he accomplished the work he came to do; that he bore the sins of his own people in his own body when he was nailed to the tree; that he redeemed them, being made a cure for them; that redemption is eternal, and that he now makes it manifest by revelation by his Spirit to the poor lost sinner that he washed all their sins away. Yes, Elder Fulkerson told us that God Almighty loved his people with an everlasting love, and notwithstanding they were led captive by the devil at his will, had fallen under the condemning sentence of His law he yet loved them; that Jesus paid all the demands of the law, took the sins of his people upon himself and bore them on the tree, and that by the blood of the everlasting covenant the prisoner shall come forth out of the pit wherein is no water. He also told us that it was not yet manifest to all his people that their sins had been taken away, but that it would be, and that not one of them would be left behind, and that all his children should know him, from the least even unto the greatest. Elder Fulkerson further told us that he professed to be a hunter hunting for the lost sheep on every high hill and mountain and the holes in the rocks, and O, brethren and sisters, I believe he found poor unworthy me, pent up on a high hill, and that while he was distributing his Master's goods to his flock I was feasting upon the scattering blades that chanced to fall near me. When preaching upon experimental religion, or the change from nature to grace, how a person was made acquainted with his heirship to that rich inheritance for those

who were given to Christ, he told my travel so much better than I could that, as before stated, it truly attracted my attention, and although that kind of preaching was new to me, yet it fed my hungry soul. I have already mentioned that I was willing to do my Master's will if I knew it, but am bound to acknowledge that after seeing plainly, to my understanding, the Old Baptists to be the church of God there was something that hindered me from discharging what I at that time felt to be my duty. I thought there was an indication that the United Baptists would return and take their position in the Old Baptist ranks again, and as I felt to be the least and most ignorant among them thought I would wait. But I knew no peace day or night, oppression weighed me down; I thought I was getting sick and commenced taking medicine, but it did me no good. My friends asked what was the matter with me, but I could not tell them. I felt my strength giving way. I was at meeting one night and a United Baptist preacher was present and was requested to open services. He did so, and talked about the "old path" which is the "good old way." I shall not undertake to describe my feelings at that time. Elder Fulkerson spoke a few words, then proclaimed the doors of the church open, and called upon the doubting ones who felt little and poor and unworthy, those who were troubled and distressed, who had a little hope, but were afraid they were mistaken, to come and go with them. I felt to say, Hinder me not; I will go with this happy band. I seemed that I could see the footprints of my Master in the good old way so plainly that I was compelled to obey the call. I calmly arose and started, but my strength gave way, inasmuch that had it not been for the aid of a bench I believe I would have sunk to the floor. I tried in my weak and stammering manner to tell the church some of my travels, and while doing so my mind

became so transplanted that I have no recollection as to whether the church received me or not, but was told on the road home that I had been received with gladness. I have no doubt the Old Baptist is the church of Christ, but feel too unworthy to belong to it, to be identified with that peculiar people, yet I do desire to be with them. Tongue cannot express the liberty and freedom I have realized since I attached myself to them. I believe I have been made to realize that passage of Scripture which reads: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." I hope the Lord will be with me and guide my footsteps aright, and that he will enable me to discharge my duty while traveling through this world of sorrow and distress.

If you will not consider me tedious, I will relate a dream I had a short time after I professed a hope in Christ. I dreamed I was standing by a smooth wall, which was on my left hand, and on my right was a dark, yawning, bottomless pit. There was only room between the wall and pit for one foot to stand on. I thought I was bound to go home, but felt afraid I would fall into that awful abyss. Before I attempted to read that narrow path I thought of my Savior, and called upon him to assist me. He appeared in the form of an angel, braced me up and kept me from falling. He promised me a safe journey, and took his leave. I started on, but soon began to tremble and fear, which caused me again to cry unto him for help. He again appeared to me and caused me to stand, upheld by his righteous, omnipotent hand. Oh I felt to praise his matchless name! When I arrived at the end of that narrow path there were so many roads I did not know which one to take; I thought I knew the direction. Finally I took the left hand road, and had not gone far when I came to an old house. I called on the lady of the house to direct me home, but she gave me little satisfaction, so I started

on and soon arrived at a very deep water-course through which I was necessitated to pass. I started in with much fear; the water became deeper and deeper, until I was almost gone. I cried to the Lord to save me or I would perish, and at that moment he appeared to me and raised me out of the water. Again thanking him for his mercies I started on, and walked smoothly upon the surface until I reached dry land, when I was in sight of my father's house. I stopped to thank God for remembering me through all my dangerous travel, and felt to trust him. Just at that moment I awoke. I have often wished that my dream had continued until I reached father's house. But without stopping to venture an interpretation, I say I have always found God a present help, a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, to brace me up while on my journey through this low ground of sorrow and distress, and my prayer is that he may continue to be with me and not suffer me to be tempted more than I am able, but with every temptation make a way for my escape.

I will now close my already too lengthy letter. I could say a great deal more, but it might crowd out matter that would be of more interest.

Farewell,

KATE CARR

TO OUR READERS

Our goal is to double our list of subscribers. Please resolve that you will obtain at least one new subscription. Many have already sent theirs in. If you haven't done so yet, please try to do so in June. We will advise you when we have reached our goal.

Editors

Dear Editors:

As my subscription is due for the dear old *Signs*, and I am sending my remittance, my mind and heart go out to the little ones scattered throughout this broad land of, shall I say, ours? No, not ours, for this is not our home; we are pilgrims and strangers, yes, wayfarers, seeking a country, longing for home, but only finding the earnest, or foretaste, of it along this rugged path; sometimes running, sometimes groping in the dark and stumbling, sometimes deep in the slough of despond, thinking that our God, in whom we trust, is clean gone forever, but still praying for deliverance from this sticky, miry clay which holds us so firmly in its grasp, and from which it is impossible for us in and of ourselves to extricate ourselves; and here it is, my dear, precious brethren and sisters, when we look around about us and view our filthy garments, spotted with the sins of self-righteousness, that we take root downward and bear fruit upward, for here we are able by grace divine to see our King in his beauty and holiness, and ourselves, as Solomon describes us, as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. It is then we ascribe praise, honor and glory unto our God; and there is no God like our God, for he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? And from everlasting to everlasting he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. What a strong tower we have. He is a sure covert from all the storms of life, and he tempers the winds to the shorn lambs. Yes, shorn of all boasted power and self-righteousness, and made to know there is no power but his. Then when we are sent forth as sheep among wolves he still guards us with his eye and there can no temptation befall us, only such as is common to man, and with the temptation he makes a way of escape,

which is the love and fear of God in our hearts, which is our present help in every time of need, and without his Spirit working in us we are as sounding brass or a tinkling sycambal, for in us (that is, in our flesh,) dwells no good thing. It is sweet to trust Him; to feel that restful assurance that he is at all times and in every trial and danger very near us; it is his everlasting arms that are underneath us bearing us up, and his almighty power and his great love, wherewith he loves us even while we were dead in sin, that saves us, both in time and in eternity. How void of spiritual life we are when left to ourselves and the evil one, for he is always present with us, tempting us in the lusts of the flesh, and lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, which things are first and foremost in the estimation of the world to-day, which things we should fight against in our own sinful hearts, and crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, for if we live after the flesh we shall die, but if we through the Spirit do mortify (or keep under) the deeds of the body we shall live. Romans 6:16, reads, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Paul says, Ye were once the servants of sin, but being made free from sin ye become the servants of righteousness; but when ye were the servant of sin ye were free from righteousness; dead to the knowledge of God or his love or mercy. What fruit, or, in other words, what did it profit you, then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. We look back at them and wish we could blot them from our memory, but cannot. What grieves me most is my present evil nature, which is ever present with me, and overwhelms me, making me loathe myself, causing me much deep searching of the heart, and causing me to cry out in my agony, "O wretched man

that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Or, in other words, this body, which has no life other than natural in and of itself, which is at war with the Spirit; this body we so much long to lay down, because we are so tired carrying it around, because there is no good thing in it, unless the Spirit of God dwells in it richly in all wisdom, causing us to hope that we have been made free from sin, and been made servants of God, having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, for this is the full consummation of our hope, that this body, sinful as it is, which will be sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption; will be sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body; sown in weakness, but raised in power; for since we have been quickened to life by the same power that raised up Christ from the dead, and are kept by that same power, we are made to believe in Christ as our Savior, both in time and in eternity, without any condition or qualification on our part; and, believing Him, we have hope in His promises, because we know Him to be full of love and mercy, and one with God, so there is no doubt in our minds but what he will fulfill all his promises. Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthian brethren, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep (or die), but we shall all be changed." Yes, indeed this is a mystery, but no greater than the mystery of taking a dead body and putting life in it and causing it to sing praises of God, all contrary to nature, with an eye of faith and a heart and mind enlightened by the new covenant of God's love and mercy written and imprinted upon it, it is made very plain. With men this change would be impossible, but God spoke this world into existence and formed every living creature, giving each one its intelligence and form and habits according to its place of abode, and causing all necessary food and maintenance to exist within its

reach, whether fish or beast, whether man or fowl, all are provided alike by the great God of the universe, not only when they were created and made, but he continuously provides for them, as well as us. God formed them all for his glory, and this change, which is the final of the manifestation of his magnificent works of glory, is not beyond the limits of our faith, for with the eye of faith we all with open faces behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and we rest in this feeling of security, and do with patience wait for the fulfillment of this promise, and while it doth not yet appear what we shall be, we are willing to leave it to our God, who doeth all things well, and he has told us that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and be satisfied. Now what more should we want to know? The one and all-important question with this poor old sinner is, Am I embraced in that blessed number that shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord?

Please find enclosed a money order for the dear old *Signs* another year, for it, and my Bible and hymn book, are about all the company I have, as I am not able to go away from home much, but have sweet communion with my dear Savior, which encourages me to press on with my face set toward Jerusalem, where I hope to meet you all.

DAVIS BURCH

Route 4, Box 86
Rocky Mount, Va.

March 30, 1984

Dear Editors and Beloved Brethren of the *Signs of The Times*:

As I have had some thought for some time to try to write some of my experience on the doctrine of that which I feel

the Lord has predestinated.

A dear Sister heard me speak on the subject and said to me, why not send it to the Signs. I realize there has been much written on this subject. I write this with no thought of improving on what has already been written by some of our dear Elders. If anyone believes the doctrine of God our Saviour, I love to hear a spirited reason why.

In Ephesians first Chapter 17th verse it reads, The God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of Glory may give unto you the spirit of WISDOM and REVELATION in the knowledge of Him.

I could find many more scriptures to support this, but this is enough for them that know the truth. The word predestinate is in the Bible twice, Romans 8: 29 and 30. In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, this is found in Ephesians, first chapter and 11th verse and in the 5th verse, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

Now, if the Lord is working all things, what could be any stronger doctrine? If he did not predestinate all things, then he would be working something that he didn't know what he was going to work. Then since all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose, then in some wonderful way, all things apply to his people. Now if the word ordained means the same as the word predestinated and I believe it does. For there were certain men crept in unawares who were before of old; ordained to this condemnation. Ungodly men turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 4th verse Act. chapter 13 verse 48, and when the Gentiles heard this they

were glad and glorified the word of the Lord as many that were ordained to eternal life believe. I believe that the wicked were as much predestinated unto eternal woe and misery as the children of God was predestinated unto eternal life because God is equal in all his ways. Now the Lord willing I will try to tell why and if the Lord wills, give a reason I believe this glorious doctrine. In a dream or vision of the night it was showed to me, I beheld a great object that was going from the east to the west and when it got as far as I could see it opened up as a great vail and as it came back it covered everything under it, then a voice spoke in my breast predestinated, so I felt that it was all things.

The second night from that time I was awoken out of my sleep by a voice which spoke in my breast predestinated and sovereignty of all things. This voice spoke three times as clear as any voice I had ever heard. The voice said all things, so I will say all things, the thing that makes the difference among the Old School Baptist is some are not able to know the difference between things and or the act of a creature for the transgression of the law is sin yet I would not want to preach God works all things after the council of his own will then deny the predestination of the same. To me that would be the most contradicted doctrine that could be preached. I do not believe a man has to use the word predestinate to preach the doctrine of predestination. The Bible says things in an indirect way if we are just given to see it. That great vail that covered all things and the voice that spoke in me. There is no way that I could cause any one to feel what I felt, now with all due respect I would be afraid to deny that, for that goes with me as I go through this troublesome world.

That is all I have, no man gave me this and I do not believe any man can take it away. I feel I can say as Paul did; I

learned it not of man, neither was I taught it of man, but by the revelation of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Elder William M. Holland

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

SALVATION IS BY GRACE
(EPHESIANS II: 5-8.)

Before God made man he prepared a way to save him. When man sinned, God knew before that he was going to sin, so he had prepared to save him. Christ was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Isaac represented Christ. Before Abraham went upon the mountain to offer his son for a sacrifice, or to slay him as such, God had prepared a sacrifice in the bushes of the mountain, of which Abraham did not know, to take Isaac's place. With God there is no past or future. He knew the end from the beginning. He knew all that had happened and all that would happen. From the fact that he knew all of this, it had to happen just as it did. Nothing happens by accident. It may be accidental to man, but to God it is not. Christ told Judas that he was going to betray him. He told Peter that he was going to deny him thrice. What if Judas had been such a free agent that he had changed his mind and failed to betray Christ as he said he would? What condition would the world be in to-day? What if Peter had not denied Christ as he said he would, what would that have made Christ? What if he only denied him once, that would have been bad enough; and what if he had been such a free moral agent that he decided not to deny him at all? This would have been awful for Christ. These free moral agents do not know what an awful fix the world would have been in if man had as much power

of choice as they say he has. It is not in man to order his steps. His bounds are set and he cannot pass them. He cometh forth as a flower and as the grass he is cut down. The young die as well as the old. His days are numbered. He cannot make one hair white or black. Man is the clay. God is the great potter. He maketh one vessel to honor and one to dishonor. Man is frail, God is all-powerful. God can do with man whatsoever he desires. God is either stronger than man or weaker than man. The way the free moral agents have man is that God can only do with man what man lets him do with him. This looks as though man is just as strong as God, and stronger.

What is grace? Most all believers, learned and unlearned, say it is the unmerited favor of God bestowed on some one an object. If it is bestowed on man it is unmerited. If we say it is unmerited, why do we say man has to do something to get God to bestow it upon him? They say if you do not believe, God will not save you. How inconsistent this is with the true teaching of the Bible, which says that by grace ye are saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. While we were yet sinners, or even dead in sins, God quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved). Christ's shed blood saved all that are saved and all that ever will be. Visibly this was done nineteen hundred or more years ago, but in the mind of God it was done before the world was made. They say you have to believe to be saved. Christ died before any of the people who are here now could believe. They could not believe in him because they were not here. Furthermore, if the baby had been here he could not believe, because he would not have known enough to do so. Christ did not come to save the

righteous people, but sinners. For who would die for a righteous person? It was said, In sin did my mother conceive me, and I was shapen in iniquity. They go forth as soon as they are born speaking lies. When we have done our best as servants of God, our righteousness is as filthy rags. Because we are sons, he has sent forth his Spirit in us crying, "Abba, Father." Because we are sons of his choice he has given us his Spirit. Not because we were so good, but because we were his sons. God is all-wise and independent and happy. He was this before he made man, and if he change not, he is still the same, and ever will be while the years of eternity roll. It is said that in order that the purpose of election might stand, the children had neither done good nor evil. Esau have I hated, Jacob have I loved. Whom he will he hardeneth and on whom he will have mercy. Man cannot make God do anything and he cannot keep him from doing anything that he wills to do. God made choice of Abel over Cain, because this was his way and according to his plan. By faith Abel was made to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. How did he get this faith? Faith is the fruit of the Spirit. It is one of God's gifts. The Spirit itself is a gift. Man cannot pay for the Spirit by repentance. The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. Man cannot repent with godly sorrow without the Spirit. Anything man may do that will be accepted by God as righteousness must be worked in him by the Spirit of Christ. Before the ascent of Christ to heaven and under the law, God had some mysterious way of making his will known to man. His Spirit will guide us into the ways of all truth that he would have us to know. He knows what we want and what we need before we ask him. Man cannot say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Spirit. Man does not know what to ask for only by the Spirit, or as the Spirit given him utterance.

God made choice of Noah because he wanted to. Not because he was so good, but because he was on the program of his choice. There must have been many more people there in that country besides Noah and his family, but these eight are the only ones that went into the ark. God chose Abraham from among his own people and said he would show him a land that he did not know and he would give it to him, not because he was such a good fellow, but because this was God's way and in his plan of redemption. God made choice of Joseph and let his brothers sell him down into Egypt, that life might be preserved. This looks very bad for Mr. Moral Agent. But Joseph told them they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. These boys had to do just what they did not seem to have any desire to do. God's people and the devil's people are always willing to do just what they are to do to serve their masters—God or the devil. God's ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts. His thoughts are as high above our thoughts as the heavens are about the earth, and his ways above our ways as the east from the west. His ways are past finding out, but his secrets are with them that love him and keep his commandments. It was said that Abraham was God's friend. He said, how can I hide this from Abraham? God reveals many things to his faithful servants that he never lets others know. God has two kinds of calls: a general and a special. All men are in the general call. Only a few answer the special call. Many are called, but few are chosen. The gospel is to be preached to all, but only those are going to hear it and answer its call whom the Spirit pricks in the heart and causes to repent. They cannot repent in the spiritual sense of the word until the Spirit quickens them into life. God quickens whom he will and whom he will he hardeneth. God is not like man. Some rich men build large houses with

rooms that likely no one ever uses, but God has better judgment than that. He made heaven and hell. He has a use for both. When the last saint gets into heaven, wherever it is, then heaven will have its portion of man's generation of the redeemed whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world, and who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. The same will be true with the devil and his followers who have done evil. When the last one is in this lake of fire, then will the door of hell be closed for evermore, and Christ, who has the keys of death and hell, will need no more to let any into hell or death. The free moral agents say you can go to heaven if you want to, or you can go to hell. How foolish this sounds to one who has read the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully.

If you were working in a bank and no one carried the keys to the vault but the president of the bank, would it be wise to say to the employees that they could get into that vault any time they wanted to, knowing at the same time that the president was the only one who had a key or who could work the combination? The doors of heaven and hell are not to be compared with even the best of vaults in strength and durability, not even a United States Government vault. Christ said he had the keys of death and hell. He further said that he was the door to heaven. In the last case, he not only has the key, but he is the door and the key. In other words, he is the whole thing. Now let us use a little common sense. If what I have said above is true, you cannot get into hell unless Christ lets you in, and you cannot get into death unless he permits you to do so. Ye shall seek death and it will flee from you. Many have wanted to die at times and could not, or did not. Many children are coming into the world without their consent, and many are going out in the same way. Life is no chance work. Life is real and sure.

God did not ask Adam to let him make him. Adam had nothing to do with God making him, neither did he have any choice as to staying in the garden when God was ready to drive him out. God does not take a man by the hair of his head and pull him into heaven, nor take a club and drive him into heaven, but when he determines that a sinner is to come into the fold the things that he does are just as strong and forcible as the two things just mentioned, and more so. When a big engine is standing on the track with steam up to the moving or running point, it may have a long string of cars attached to it and when the steam is turned on, the driving wheels may turn around several times in one place, the engineer puts a little sand on the track, and although it looks as though it did not want to go, soon it is thundering down the track at high speed. The prodigal son may not have wanted to come home, but when hunger began to pinch him very soon he was found on his homeward march, and he did not stop until he was in his father's arms. The king may not have wanted to serve Daniel's God, but when the Son of God turned the light on him he came down off his royal throne. Abraham might not have wanted to leave his folks, but when God called him he was soon found stepping out upon the plains. Lazarus had been dead four days, and even stinketh, but when Christ called him he came out with his gravecloths on. The people who were in their graves when Christ was hanging on the cross may have been resting easy in their graves, and may have wanted to remain there, but when the Son of God was raised from the dead they came walking forth into the city. God does not have to take a man by the hair or drive him with a club, but only call him, create a condition or turn on the search-light. Anything that God does to bring a sinner to him is just as forcible as this club and hair of the head proposition. His arm is

not short. He spoke the worlds into existence. He said, Let there be light, and there was light. He has counted the sands of the seashore and had weighed the earth in his scales. He can dip the sea dry with a spoon. Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. From eternal years the same. What is man that thou art mindful of him? Man is never willing to come into the fold of God until the Spirit makes him willing. For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God may save a man without his will, but he does not reveal himself to man against his will, for he says, My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. My sheep hear my voice and a stranger they will not follow. My word is gone forth out of my mouth and it will not return unto me void, but will accomplish the thing whereunto I have sent it. When Paul was holding the clothes of the men that stoned Stephen to death, he was just as much saved, as far as his eternal salvation was concerned, as he was when he stood before King Agrippa. The difference was he had not been converted and the knowledge that Christ had died for him had not been made known to him. He said that God had chosen him from his mother's womb to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. As it was with Paul's conversion, so it is with every sinner that is or ever will be converted. He was saved by Christ's shed blood. All men were benefited by Christ's death, but the Bible says he shed his blood for many. It may have been just as easy for the apostle to have said "all" as it was to say "many," but being guided by the Spirit, he said just what the Spirit wanted him to say. He did not talk as Mr. Free Moral Agent. He said what he meant and meant what he said. He shed his blood for many because many have been saved by his shed blood. All for whom

his blood was shed will be saved, for while he was yet dead in sins he quickened us together with Christ, (for by grace are ye saved). Many will go to heaven if only here and there a traveler. Thousands are finding their way to hell and many go in thereat. Heaven is made for all who have gone there and for all who will ever go there. On the other hand, hell is made for all who have gone there and for all who ever will go there. All who were in the house of the Israelites the night the angel passed over were benefited by the blood on the door post, and the death of the lamb, but all of them did not enter the promised land. Christ told Nicodemus he must be born again. He did not understand what Christ meant. Many leaders and lay members of the church do not know any more about the new birth now than they did in the time of Nicodemus. All who are born of the Spirit, or ever will be, are saved. What had John the Baptist's mother done that was so good to cause God to honor her with the birth of John? What had Christ's mother done that was so good to cause God to honor her with the birth of our Savior? This is God's way, and it is according to his plan. These two women were not even asked to be willing to such an arrangement. They were told what was going to happen and both of them seemed to be willing to the plan. My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power. Every sinner that is truly born of God is born somewhat similar to Christ. The Spirit overshadows him and quickens him into spiritual life and he comes forth a new creature. We had nothing to do with our natural birth, and it is more reasonable to believe we will have less to do with our spiritual birth. We know so little about our natural birth that we did not even know when or how we were born. We could not even choose the family we were born in. When we found ourselves ten or fifteen years after our birth, we

had to even be told the name of the family we were born in. How little man knows, even about himself. How can he know the mind of God? Even God's humblest servants are not permitted to know the mind of God. Whom he will he quickens, and whom he will he hardens. He told Moses to go and tell Pharaoh to let his people go, but he said he was going to harden Pharaoh's heart so he would let his people go. He said he would send strong delusions on some that they might believe a lie; that they might be damned who believed not the truth. Man is God's creature. He made him and can do with him whatsoever he desires to. He can take him to heaven or send him to hell. God has just as much power over Satan as he has over man. Christ has chained Satan for a thousand years, and it is reasonable to believe that he could have chained him for a thousand years longer had he so desired. Man never was, and never will be while on earth, his own free moral agent. The devil himself is not his own free agent to do just as he pleases respecting right or wrong. No agent is free to do as he pleases with the company's business. The word "agent" itself suggests a person ruled by a higher power than himself. It is supposed that an agent will do whatever his employer or master tells him to do. Jonah did not seem to be his own free agent; the Lord told him to go to Ninevah. He did not go at once, but he went. Paul was on his way to Damascus to arrest God's people, but when the Lord struck him down, and turned him around, he was glad to do what the Lord wanted him to do. God does not have to reveal himself to his people against their will, for they are all willing in the day of his power. They may seem to draw back as did our Saviour, but he said, Not my will but Thine be done. Every true child of God has this same will in him. If man cannot be saved unless he believes, he is in a bad fix, for Christ has died once for all. He has

made one offering, and all who were not included in that offering are forever lost. Many were in that sacrifice who have not known it, yet. They will all come in, in the dispensation of time, each one in his own time as God sees fit to reveal himself to them. The free moral agent says that if Christ has saved the sinner there is no use preaching to him. Christ did not tell Peter to make any sheep, but he said, feed my sheep. A shepherd is not to make sheep, but to feed them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. He did not tell the preacher, or any one else, to scare the laborers into the field, but, pray ye to the Lord of the harvest that he may send forth laborers in the field. We get in a hurry for people to come into the church, and they come in without being sent in by the Lord of the harvest, and they do not stay. The preacher is to preach to all, but the Spirit is to do the bringing into the church. We have many in the churches that man has brought in, and they are two-fold worse than the child of hell himself. They are in man's church, not God's church. To get into God's church one has to be born in it, and this birth must be brought about by the Holy Ghost. Not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of the will of God. These births cannot be hurried. The preacher has much to do if he preach the gospel as it should be preached. He should feed God's lambs and his sheep. If he does this as it should be done, he will not have time to make any sheep.

Christ is a great magnet. He said if he be lifted up he would draw all men unto him. This certainly did not mean he would take or draw all men into heaven, or that all would be saved. If a man come to Christ at all he must be drawn. So all who come to Christ at all are drawn to him by himself, through the Holy Spirit. God has elected all who have been saved and all who will be. He is an everlasting Father, so he must always have some

children, and these children are everlasting children. Their lives were hid with Christ in God before the world was made. Those he foreknew he also called, and those he called he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. God has always had a people by choice. They have been stepping on the stage of action as we know since the days of Abel. Abel was God's first martyr.

A. E. CLARK

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MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER MEETING

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, for its one hundred, forty-third session, with the Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 6, 7, and 8, 1984.

Directions to the church are: Travel to the town of Gretna, Virginia located in Pittsylvania County on business U.S. Highway 29. Go into the town of Gretna and turn on to State Rd. 763, go until it intersects with State Rd. 760. The church is located at this intersection.

We invite all of our faith and order to join with us in this three day worship service.

Burnell B. Williams, Assoc. Clerk

**DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
CHURCH**

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church in Durham, N. C., feeling they were blessed an honored with the gift of an Elder among them, called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, April 15, 1984, for the purpose of examination of this gift, Brother Cleo Robertson, and to be ordained, if found qualified, to the full work of the Gospel Ministry.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. Elder D. V. Spangler was elected to serve as moderator and Elder Kenneth R. Key to serve as clerk. Brothers Whaley and Brinkley, deacons of Durham Church, acting as spokesmen for the church, delivered the candidate to the presbytery.

The qualifications for an Elder was read from the third Chapter of First Timothy by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth. Examination followed by Elders Hollandsworth, Agee and Prescott. Brother Robertson after being asked, expressed some of his feelings concerning his call to the ministry. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of the candidate, proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Julian Williams. The charge was delivered by Elder Spangler. After the right hand of fellowship was extended by the presbytery, brother Robertson was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister.

The presbytery was composed of the following Elders: Elder Agee, Davis, Daniels, Hollandsworth, Kenneth Key, Leonard Key, Lamb, Prescott, Spangler and Williams.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

OBITUARIES

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR MARCH
1984

Rober Miles, LA.	\$ 3.00
Mrs. Virgie Withers, TX	2.00
R.L. Stegall, VA.	2.00
Mrs. May Hudson, VA.	12.00
B.B. Williams, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Sallie L. Gauldin, NC.	6.00
Mrs. W.H. Spires, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Julia R. Garner, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Janie Fanning, AL.	2.00
Dan Anders, AL.	7.00
Dolphus Hall, FL.	3.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL.	1.00
Mrs. Eva Daffin, GA.	3.00
Joshua E. Potter, NC.	2.00
Mrs. L.A. Stratton, MS.	3.00
Roy S. Oxley, WV.	2.00
William T. Giles, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Lloyd Delp, VA.	3.00
Harvey Blalock, NC.	3.00
B.L. Cockran, NC.	3.00
Mrs. James D. Marze, LA. ...	1.00
Mrs. John L. Marze, LA.	9.00
O.P. Murphy, TX.	100.00
C.M. Coates, VA.	7.00
Mrs. J.H. O'Bryant, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Flora B. Berry, NC.	2.00
M. Bernard Schuster, France ..	10.00
Mrs. Mary N. Phillips, TN. ...	2.00
Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA. ...	2.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR.	3.00
Mrs. Edgar L. Bolejack, Va.	
In memory of husband	25.00
James T. Howard, AL.	2.00
Kineth Hollandsworth, VA. ...	2.00
M.H. Houston, NC.	1.00
Mrs. Erby Dalton, VA.	2.00

SISTER ODELL COMPTON

I'm writing this about our dear Sister who passed away some time ago, Sister Odell Compton. Her membership was at Norfolk Church. She was the Clerk there. Our hearts are still sadden to see the vacant seat, where she always sat.

She loved the doctrine of Jesus Christ and she wasn't only a sister, she was a good friend.

The good Lord had a better home for her so he called her away, and I feel she is in the arms of Jesus where she will never have any more pain or sorrow. She would come to Leatherwood Church with her sisters to hear some more good preaching. Our pastor is Elder Julian Williams, she loved his preaching, and she loved our good singing when we would have our good brother Herbert Dodson to help us. She and I were real close and I miss her.

Her pastor at Norfolk was Elder Payne.

Your little sister in hope, at Leatherwood Church.

Lizzie H. Brown

LULA BELINDA F. LANCASTER

In memory of Lula Belinda F. Lancaster who passed from this earth December 8, 1983. She was born October 14, 1899, daughter of the late John D. and Lannie W. Flood, making her stay on earth some 84 years. She was married to Sam Thomas Lancaster on December 5, 1917. He died October 16, 1951. There were ten children born to this union, nine of whom survive: Thelma L. Harris of Rockville, Va.; Ida Mae L. Johnson and Tilda L. Jones of Rock Mount, N. C.; Lizzie L. Abrams and Gary A. Lancaster of Pinetops,

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

N. C.; Doris L. Letchworth, L. Ray Lancaster and Wilda L. Harrell of Tarboro, N. C.; and Shirley L. Renfrow of Zebulon.

They were a close and loving family. Even though widowed, she maintained a home for herself and for her family to visit when they could, keeping them close as long as she lived. They will miss her, as will all of us who knew and loved her.

She united with the church at Pleasant Hill on August 22, 1931. She was a faithful member, attending church when it was possible for her to do so. She was strong in her faith and belief. When I think of her the scripture of the virtuous woman in the Bible comes to my mind.

Her funeral was preached by Elder C. B. Davis of Roxboro, N. C. In his remarks he said that he could not preach her funeral, that she had already done that by the life she had lived. He could not add to it or take from it.

Her body was laid to rest in the Williams Family Cemetery in Edgecombe County, North Carolina beneath a beautiful display of flowers with her family and friends gathered around.

Written by order of conference, Pleasant Hill Church, February 25, 1984, by:

Lessie L. Lancaster

JOHN HESSIE OWENS

Brother Owens was born November 30, 1889 to Tom and Sallie Owens in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. Spending most of his life in and around Danville, Virginia. In December, 1922, Brother Owens married Annie Powell who preceded him in death. He was called from this life November 5, 1983, leaving to mourn two sons: Melvin Owens, Dallas, Texas and Stafford Owens of Northbend, Oregon; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Brother Owens was received into Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 23, 1975. He filled his seat whenever able

and was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by Grace. He would not want praise nor would he desire to be lifted above his brethren, but believed that there is no better evidence on earth of being a child of God in spirit and in truth, than for one to love and hold in high esteem the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor and he was laid to rest to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Written by Sister Bea French at the request of Dan River Church while in conference.

Moderator, Elder D.V. Spangler
Clerk, Boyd Minter

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84 Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1-(901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

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POETRY

Am I or Am I Not

I often wonder, what's my lot
Am I God's or am I not
Sometimes I think I am a-kin
When peace and love doth enter in
Tis then I know my redeemer lives
For such precious love only God can
give

No words can ever, ever tell
The things to me he doth reveal

And then I wonder if I fall
Back to the wars of Satan's call
Tis then I feel so black with sin
I'm so ashamed of what I am
It seems to hell I'll surely go
I've reached the bottom, am so low
No matter how loud I cry
I feel that I will surely die

But if it be, the will of God
No matter what the road I trod
If I be seed of Abraham
Twas God that made me what I am
My Lord walks softly before me
To clear the way, so I might see
And even though thorns prick my
flesh

I still have hope I'm his elect

Kate Matthews

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 EDITORIAL

John 15:5

I am the vine, ye are the branches. It is alot for me to ask, but I desire to ask it of Editors and readers that I may come before you and speak of the precious and adorable things that are suggested in these few words. I feel that volumes are expressed by the Saviour, by He who is the Vine. To get to the extended depths of this beauty and the adorable matter before us, let us also note that in the beginning of this lovely lesson we will find that Father is the husbandman. To begin with we have placed before us the garden of the Lord, who are in it, who their husbandmen and caretaker is that is interested in their welfare and in what they are doing.

Some people despise a garden, at times

despising what lives and grows there, and resents being told how to have a good garden and how to enjoy working in it, and reaping the benefits from the Caretaker. A garden is a place where beneficial plants are grown. Our experience and our observation teaches very clearly that an enemy always sows undesirable plants in this lovely planting of the Gardener.

Naturally speaking, a lot of people shun garden making. I feel sorry for people that insist in running to the corner grocery for everything that they eat. In the outset, I feel sure that Paul's rule about eating and working was a good one. However, we are writing to the children of the kingdom of heaven. The text is the best kind in teaching the glorious union of Christ and His kingdom. It draws out attention to the strongest union between Christ and His subjects of anything in the Bible. Let us quote it again. I am the vine, ye are the branches. There is not a way in all of the world for a branch to become a part of the vine that is not already a part of it. Think of it, dear readers. The branch comes from the vine. There is not such a thing in all of the intricacies of agriculture that a branch is a vine in its own right. There is not a way regardless of what men of agriculture might say about it, for the branch to exist before it is a part of the Vine. Neither is there any way, any way at all, for the dead sinner to act in order to be a live plant in the garden of the Lord.

Think about it, the Vine is first. That is the law of nature, and it is the law of the kingdom of heaven. The beginning of that was necessary for the Vine. Did it begin in its entirety from the action of the Creator? its entirety from the action of the Creator? In our efforts to find out the beauty and the sweetness of the garden of the Lord, the kingdom of heaven, the Vine of renown, where are we to start? Only God could make the seed, plant it, cause it to germinate and make a vine. It is early to our dealing with the origion of the first vine, and the following development of

that planted vine, thus causing the asertion by our Saviour about His being the vine. Since it is not of any value to talk about Him being the true Vine unless we have proof to that end. We are to prove all things; we are to hold fast to that which is true. He made all things, He said that He did. All things are here, and there is not any gospel save that which He declared. Therefore no heed will be given to any doctrine that ascribes the Vine as being of divine origion save the God of the Bible.

I am taking the position that of all people that has ever been, or that is now living on the earth, had anything to do with He being the Vine. He said that He was, He went further and said that His Father was the husbandman. That is the way that it is; that it has ever been that way, and that there will not ever be any living Vine save this.

This plant or Vine of renown came down from heaven. I desire to note this fact time and again. The true Vine came from heaven, from the abode of God and godliness. I also desire to assert in as strict a way as can be ascertained from the scriptures, that every branch or elect child of God has come from Him the one and only Vine.

He came from God and He was God in the flesh, and out from Him proceeded every branch, and that except for those that he denominated as branches, they are not children of God. These branches were people, men and women of Adam's fallen race. Their origion was long before Adam and his offspring had a day in time. They were chosen in Christ in eternity, and they were manifested in time. Come, dear readers; take a written New Testament view of them being made manifest, being these and acclaimed as branches of the one and only divine Vine. In our text our blessed Master, who here is setting Himself up as the one Vine, and that out of Him as the only Vine that they have branched forth out of Him.

How precious it is that He came to His own in the flesh and his own knew Him not, but as many as did know Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God. Seeing that they could never have known Him how could they have ever become the branches? Let us as fellow travellers, and as we hope, living branches from the Vine, come to Mt. Zion the city of our Gardener. The dwelling place of He who is the creator the upholder and the final disposer of all things.

This entails salvation by the grace of God. Let us always remember that where there is salvation that there is purpose and sovereign grace. God has declared that He is the Saviour, and that beside Him there is not any Saviour. (Isa. 43:II, oz. 13:4). It is beyond me as to how that I am to deal with that astounding fact, to wit, that God is the only Saviour and that beside Him there is not any Saviour. The precious Saviour tells us in our subject matter that He is the Vine, and that sinners born again by the Spirit of God makes them branches. These branches came from the Vine. Or do they? If they do not come from the Vine; if they are not the result of His life giving work how is it that they are branches? The Vine is first, then the branches proceed from the first Vine. Is that right now? If it is not right, may God grant us sovereign grace to tarry around the text until we do find how it is that he (Christ) is the first Vine and how that the elect vessels of mercy are the branches.

According to the pattern given us, these branches were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. Here is a beautiful picture of election. I would not think that any one would claim that we were actually branches then, as we are now branches having come out of Him as branches come out of a tree, and yet I must say that we had a standing in Him then, and that from that which we had in Him then that we now are branches from the one Vine. According to God's

purpose, yea, even in Him, we were as sure of being branches in the development of those purposes, as it was sure that we were purposed in Him. If the language of the apostle is read carefully, it will teach us that at the time of god's choice of us in Christ that He had predestinated us unto the adoption of children (branches) by Jesus Christ by himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

These branches bear fruit. Yes, I am aware that He said, Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. I believe that He deals with these branches as He says, He does. These supposedly fruit bearing branches do not ever begin in a genuine realistic way to bear fruit. These are seen and mixed in the real followers or branches of the Lord. They are mere professors, never having been born of the Spirit, never having been brought to a state of bearing fruit. They are normally in fellowship with fruitful branches, but are called among those that seem to bear fruit (Luke 8:18). Those that have seemed to be branches have been removed and destroyed as far as being among the harvest hands, but all of those chosen in Christ before the world had a beginning, and have been called and have answered the heavenly calling, are called to the harvest field for their life time. It is to be understood that we are dwelling on the sure call of the elect branches. This is a heavenly calling and does not give out with old age or bad health.

All branches, both those that are only nominally, seemingly called are dealt with in purging. This is the separation that shows forth the true branches, the true disciples, the true laborers in the gospel field. This is the testing ground for both they that have and they that seem to have. To those that only seem to

have, they will soon be separated from the laborers in the kingdom. To both the grace called and to those that have run without having been sent, it is impossible to bring forth fruit without the grace of God, without a divine call and leadership of the Vine.

Not for long will there be an abiding in Him unless he abides in us. He came to do that abiding thing for His people. He came to abide with them, and His abiding with the branches is a sure soul cherishing doctrine that will abide with them. How glad, and I hope thankful that He abides with each and every branch, every season of experience He abides with them, abetting them in every approved growth and activity, rebuking, instructing in every mistaken growth and activity forbidden.

What beauties are involved in such a sublime relationship. Not only is this a beautiful doctrine but how secure that it is for the welfare of the branches. Every doctrine that I have ever heard about is upheld and supported by the support of the branches, but how different is this my soul. The branches, the little ones, the weak, the poor, all, all are dependent on the wisdom of the Vine. It is not the branches that is upholding the Vine, but it is the Vine that gives life and strength, fruit-bearing qualities to the branches. Life is in the Vine, and through the Spirit every life giving, fruit-bearing quality stems from the Vine.

This supreme blessing is the theme of the Scriptures from one beginning in Genesis to a majestic glorified ending in the Revelation. God was in supreme command at the beginning; His outstretched arm rules then, and it will be in supreme command when he declares that time will be no more.

This plant of renown (Ezek. 34:29) will send forth every branch and will attend their every growth to the good of the whole heavenly planting. Every

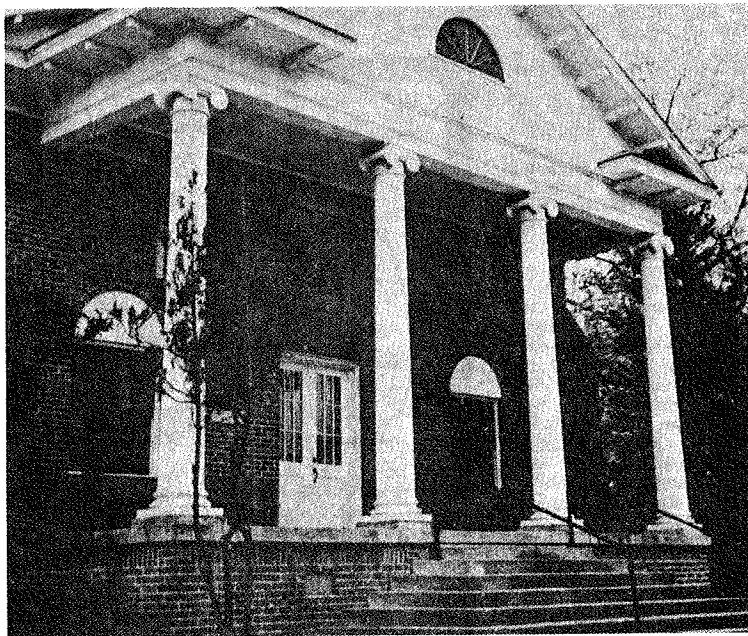
visitation of the God of all grace, the Caretaker of the Garden, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ in every dispensation of time, during what is called bad times as well as good. This kingdom, this well protected city, this abiding place of the lovely Lord Jesus Christ will give rest to the weary traveller and food and water to every branch of the whole workmanship of God.

It is a sad day to every citizen of the city of God. The love of many waxes cold. I once was young but now I am old. I live much of my time in looking back. The day of my going before the church is vivid and clear. Not a one of those there on this day soon to be fifty seven years ago are in the land of the living now. But I look back with fond recollection that they were rooted and grounded in the lovely doctrine so firmly that they have all finished their travel here, having been rooted and grounded as a lovely

and active branch in the Garden of the Lord always having been blessed to take root downward and to bring forth fruit upwards to His honor and glory. I am thankful for each for them, and now as the far advances of evening have come to me, I am not left to an entire looking backward but rather to a joyous looking forward. If not mistaken, we have enjoyed the years together, as grace and love and godly zeal was administered to us as branches and now, standing on the threshold of eternity, I would bear testimony in my feeble way that I have never seen the righteous forsaken nor His seed begging bread. The Vine has flourished a living and a perpetual Vine of living satisfying nutrition to every branch that is attached by being rooted and grounded in the merits of the true living Vine.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



The Tar Primitive Baptist Church was founded in 1757. It is located in Rocky Mount, N.C. Their meeting time

is every second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before. Elder D. B. Stokes is their pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Maynardsville, TN.

EXPERIENCE OF
ELDER D. R. CABBAGE

Conclusion

Many more things concerning God shows his servants things that they don't understand. I remember again in another vision I don't understand all these things, nevertheless, they are in my experience. Most of the time, in many of these visions, Brother Wilder, would be in them. In another vision, me, Elder Wilder, and Elder Garrett Wilson were out on a sea of water in a boat. Away over there on an island was a people. These people were in some sort of trouble. They needed help. Elder Wilder and Elder Wilson told me to go to them. I said, "I can't help them." Elder Wilder said in this vision, "You can sweeten the water until they can drink it."

I believe that God showed me that Elder Wilder, one I had depended on so much and fell back on him so many times, I'd get up and say a few words, sit down and turn the service over to him. I believe God Almighty showed me right there that Elder Wilder and Elder Garrett Wilson couldn't do what God had ordained for me to do.

God shows his servants these things, they may not understand them, but anyway, I began to try to talk a little at White Pine Church. Used to ride over there with Elder Wilder. That was my first attempt I ever made to talk in public. I couldn't say much, a few words, nevertheless, I feel that this desire that God puts in the church or this gift. God places the gifts in the church. I do believe those gifts will shine out. I believe that when one is called, he has fear there. But at the same time this desire is so strong he is anx-

ious to try out that gift he feels that he has. I have thought about the old servant Elijah and Elisha. How that Elisha seemed to be coming up under Elijah. Time was growing nigh that old Elijah was going to have to leave this world. How that he knew he was? I believe that he loved this young servant Elisha. Just before his time came to go up into Heaven he asked Elisha, "What can I do for thee?" In other words, what is the last thing I can do for you? Elisha said grant me a double portion of thy spirit (II Kings 2:9). Old Elijah said, "Thou has ask a hard thing. Nevertheless, if thou see me when I go up, it shall be." While in the whirlwind, chariots and horses of fire parted them asunder. Elijah went up and dropped his mantel - yes, Elisha picked it up. The people did not understand, they wanted to go look for the old servant Elijah. They said maybe he had landed on the mountain over there somewhere. Elisha knew better for he told them to go ahead and look They looked and never found him. I believe that old Elijah went straight into heaven. I believe he went through that change somewhere that the Bible talks about. We'll be changed in a moment, in the twinkle of an eye.

Elisha picked up this mantel. He walked along and came to this river of water and stretched the rod across it. The water rolled back for him. Yes, God places the gifts in the church and they do shine out from time to time.

Every since I've been ordained, I've been trying to go. There have been times when I've been low, times when I'd think I wouldn't go anymore. But Jeremiah made the statement that it was shut up in his bones as a burning fire he could not forebear.

I believe they will preach every sermon that God Almighty ordained before the world began, I believe God leads them to the place where he had ordained for them to go. Sometimes, he might lead them into a country they are not ac-

quainted with or places perhaps they had never dreamed about being. One time it got on my mind to go to North Carolina to Upper County Line Association, I'd read about it in the Signs of the Times. I wasn't acquainted with them. But it bore on my mind so heavy to go to that association several years back. They had the association near Burlington, North Carolina. I borrowed my wife's car and I started. Got there somewhere around 12 o'clock.

I can't explain why I went other than I had a desire to go. It wouldn't leave me and I believe God lead me to that place. As I said, I didn't know the people, wasn't acquainted with them and they didn't know me.

I believe they have a light. They can't see themselves but it shines out in such a way that other people can see it, not only the servants of God but his sheep. I was walking around over there in the large crowd, the largest I've ever seen at an association. A man walked up to me and said, "You are about the most humble looking man I have ever seen." I didn't know him, but I made the statement I didn't know how I looked but I felt awful bad. I drove a long ways, I was tired, it was just before I had my gall bladder taken out, and I wasn't feeling good. But anyway, they had service that evening and that night. I took my seat down toward the stand they had built at the foot of this hill. Those scattered oak trees over that hill were a beautiful sight, a beautiful place. I sat there that night and listened at the preaching and singing.

I didn't go over there saying I am a preacher or that I had come to talk. I didn't know why I was there. That night at the close of the service when they began to sing "How Firm a Foundation", I couldn't set there. I went into the stand; shaking hands with them. The next day, on Sunday, I took my seat at the same place. I saw two or three men gathered

together outside the stand...standing there talking. One turned and motioned for me to come down there. I went down and he said, "I want to apologize for not putting you in the stand yesterday," I said, "That's alright, you didn't know me." He said, "Get up there and sit down."

There were thirty-two Elders there at that association. Heard many wonderful things preached.

On Sunday night, I believe it was, they put me up to talk. I feel that God gave me a little bit of his Holy Spirit. After service that night as I went to my car, there was a man walked up to me. He said something about some of my experiences, he gave me \$2.00, we talked a few minutes. This man was under the impression of joining the church. He had a desire to join the church. I often wondered since then about him. I don't know his name but I wondered if he ever joined the church. I believe he carried the ice around in the mornings for the coolers. I'm not sure, but I'd like to hear from him. The crowd was seated there on that hill was most beautiful. People scattered out on that hill there listening at the service. From the pulpit seemed like their faces were shining like gold. I believe they were being fed from Heaven reminded me, I thought about when Christ was walking this earth. A great multitude of people following him. Time came for them to eat. One said, "Is there anything that these people might eat?" One said 20 pennies worth of bread is not sufficient that everyone may eat. One said, "There is a lad here that has two small fish and five barley loaves." I believe it was, Jesus took those loaves and fishes, blessed them. As they were setting there, grouped out. I believe 50 to a group sat down on the grass there to eat the food that the Lord had blessed. Blessed them to eat, gathered up more than they had after they all ate than they had to begin with. I'm sure that Jesus

knew all about that lad, all about the fishes and the bread.

I believe that God still has those lads standing around with the loaves and the fishes. But they can't feed you until God takes it and blesses it. Blesses them to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. Then God's people can eat. I have wondered about these experiences. Whether I ought to make an attempt to try to put them on tape. I know that this all did come to my mind and I know that this is scattering.

I fought this but felt that I should do it for some reason or other. While I was thinking about whether I should try to put my experience on tape or not. A man came to the building where I worked the other night, called me in the office, said, "I want to talk to you." He said, "How can a back slider return to God?" He was in trouble. He wasn't satisfied in that condition. He said, "I'll be back at 9 o'clock when we get our break." He did come back and we went up stairs in the office and talked. Then I got to thinking about these experiences. What else could you tell anybody but your own experiences.

I realize I am scattering around. I remember one time, while going through all this trouble, all this about preaching, I dreamed or had a vision that I had been somewhere down the otherside of Nashville. Had been down in a wilderness working all day, and as I came back out, there was a gate there. Elder R.L. Biggs was on one side and his wife on the other. I had to walk between them. She turned to Elder Biggs and said, "Cabbage has been down there working all day." I didn't know what that was, I didn't know what it meant. I named it to Elder Wilder, this is what he told me. "When the streams in the desert are opened up, you will probably be there." Well I didn't think much about it. Several years after that, after I had been ordained, I got ahead of myself

there but, nevertheless, after my son got drowned I said I would never go anymore.

Yes, I was like Jeremiah. I said, "I will never speak again in the name of the Lord." But since I have mentioned that let's go on with it a little. How good God has been to me.

At the time that happened, I can't explain this, but I had a feeling that something was going to happen to him. Stayed on my mind all day. I went to town and got some hog feed, came back home, stopped down at the foot of the driveway, saw strange cars up here, my sister-in-law came out on the porch, said, "Come up here." Well, I just said it out loud, "Lord whatever it is, it has already happened." When I got in the yard my granddaughter met me. She said Gary had been drowned. Well I thought I had been low before, but that was the lowest I have ever been. I lay across the bed that night while they dragged the river. I said how many times I have stood in the pulpit and said god will walk with you, God will talk with you. I said where is my God, I feel no presence of him. I felt like God had completely withdrew himself from me. I lay there, suffered, wondered about many things, "I'll never go to church anymore," I said. All that, but the next morning I got out of bed, stepped out in the hall, there was something spoke to me, I can't explain that voice. If you have ever heard the voice of the Lord, you know what I am talking about. The voice said, "This is the day the Lord has made."

For three days when I would get out of bed, step out in the hall, that voice would say, "This is the day that the Lord has made." That may sound strange to somebody that is the God that has held me up that's the God that come down once more on those great wings of love and picked me up and carried me through all that. But anyway, back to my

subject.

After that happened, it got on my mind to go to Illinois to an association. It kept bearing on my mind and I went to the Soldier Creek Association, which was held in Benton, Illinois. God blessed us to have a wonderful meeting, a good association, felt his presence and his love.

On my way back home, traveling by myself from Benton toward Lexington, Kentucky on this new highway. Returning back from the association, all that vision that I was talking about came back to my mind. I believe I can say with Ezekiel that, "This is that, that I saw down by the river upon my bed at night." God has showed me that, in other words, he must have had a purpose in me being in that area and I believe that wilderness that I was working in was in the church. God found Jacob in a waste howling. Lead him about and instructed him. Kept him as the apple of his eye but never did take him out of that wilderness. At the time Ezekiel saw things down by the river, four living creatures. I believe four faces, four wings and so on. Can't hardly quote that word for word what he saw there. But anyway, they had four wings, two wings pointed upward and two outward. As they moved they moved straight forward with their wings joined together. I don't think that God has showed me, I haven't understood fully. But I have saw many of them come to pass. Yes, there was a spirit that lead those living creatures as they moved forward, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. And I want to say to you, the spirit was in the wheel that lead those living creatures. When the spirit moved, they moved.

What did Ezekial see there? I know that is deep waters, much too deep for me. But I believe that those wings represented God's love, as they moved forward represented Gods people when

they are joined together in the love of God and lead by the spirit followed. Whenever God blesses them to meet with one mind with all things in common. They can join together, join their hearts together, praise God and worship him in one accord and one mind. But the spirit lead them and later on in Ezekial's work he said this is that, that I saw down by the river. I believe that I can say with Old Ezekial that on many occasions, this is that, that I saw down by the river, or upon my bed at night. I do believe that God is able to show his people these things and cause them to trust in him and to lead them in to water up to the ankles, in the water up to the knees and so on.

I know this has been scattering. This is the first attempt I have ever made to do anything like this. Yet I have felt for a long time that if I could write, I would like to send some of them sometime or other to the "Signs". That God's people scattered abroad might mean something to somebody. I don't know. I know I used to enjoy reading peoples experiences in the Signs of The Times, back there when I was in all that trouble. God works in mysterious ways.

So we are going to quit taping. It has quit coming to my mind, that's all I can do. We have to depend on God for this just like anything else. God said, "I compared thee to a company of horses in Pharos Chariots." The horses have to be hooked up to the chariot. He has to be unhooked, put up and fed, hooked back to the chariot. The king holds the lines in his hands, when he says, go, you go. When he says stop, you stop.

Brother Ralph, Sister Agnes, you mean so much to me. I love you. I love all you people down in Alabama. I desire to visit you. Maybe in the future God will bless me to where I can travel more. So for now, I want to say good night. May God Bless You.

Elder D. R. Cabbage

Dear Mother:

I received your most kind and welcome letter the other day, and surely was glad to hear from you, and to date those clippings from The Signs of The Times. They are plain words, and in them is a world of wisdom that everybody does not know. I read them over and over; they are food to me. I want to take the *Signs*, so tell me where I can write to subscribe. It will be of much comfort to me to read the unsearchable riches of God, which he has shed upon his dear children. I do like to read such truth as it contains, for I believe in the very things the writers say; they leave the world out and give the God of heaven the credit, to whom the credit is due, even to Jesus Christ. The holy Comforter, sent by God, testifies of the loving grace of Christ Jesus. My dear mother, this is the kind of a God I want to worship. Before I received the letter I was bothered some about the many sins of my fleshly mind, and how often I was turned off, but, as the dear brother says, God has his strong arms over and all around, and makes me sit in heavenly places in true communion that is in Christ Jesus. He told the truth about the saving of the Lord. He does his will and his own good pleasure, without the puny help of man. Man has nothing to do with it. The God of heaven is all-wise and righteous, and sheds the unsearchable riches of his grace over his people, for whom Christ shed his precious blood. By experience I feel out of my place when I go to some of the so-called churches. I can have more blessings in the corner reading the truth of the word of God than I can by hearing them preach. But I do get a revelation in hearing the preachers that cast the net on the right side of the ship, and they are the ones who through God's plan preach the gospel to his dear people. I am going to keep these clippings and reread them. Sometimes in reading them the love of

truth makes me shed tears. I want to protect the banner of God's love. I know he is righteous and does no sin. But my sinful life, the flesh, works against the Spirit and makes me feel I am doing something out of the way. I cannot help temptations, but I believe the Lord will look after me, a poor miserable creature, as I feel myself to be. He knows my faults and searches my heart. All to him I owe. Sin was a crimson stain, he washed it white as snow. If the people knew how he only helps the poor needy sinner who is in the mire they would leave off the fake religions of man. You say the word "christian" means a true follower of Christ. If we follow him, we will lose all pride, and will not think about living in society and joining the fine churches of this earth, and will have the precious Savior to keep us from these things, for he will supply us with the riches of his grace. The Scripture says, Grace and truth come by Jesus Christ, but the law came by Moses. This grace does not have to be renewed year by year, for it stands forever. The man was right when he said, Good thoughts and desires never grow in nature's garden. Mother, I read, and think I understand, precious letters the Primitive Baptists have written. Please write and tell me where to get the Signs of The Times.

Pray for me, that I might have strength to stand on the firm foundation of the truth, and for help to bear me up in my weakness.

Your son,
JEWELL CROCKER

EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

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Rt. 1, Box 65

Keeling, Virginia 24566

Dear Elder Kenneth R. Key,

It has been requested by some of the Dear one's, that I write again to The Signs Of The Times. It is with fear and trembling, that I attempt to write. I feel to be weak, and poor in Spirit, knowing that in my flesh dwells no good thing, feeling to be a vile sinful wretch, much of my time, crying unto the Lord, to have mercy on me a sinner. My thoughts are often gone astray. I can't even think a good thought, unless the Lord is the giver. I am hoping the Lord will bless me with a Spiritual mind. Apostle Paul said a carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be, for to be carnal minded is death, but to be Spiritual minded is life and peace. It is so precious to me, when the Lord pours out his spirit up on all flesh. The ministers of the living god, wherever they are sent to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, like the prophets of old, they spake as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. The speakers and hearers alike, are made to sit together in heavenly place in Christ, worshipping the only true and living God, giving him all the honor, praise and glory. He is our law giver, they are all taught of God. He puts his laws in their hearts, and writes them in their minds, some times in the Lord are unspeakable and full of glory. At times our cup runneth over with joy. Then there are times, when we are full of doubts and fears, of being one of the Lords little children. Am I his, or am I not, is he clean gone forever, how sweet to our souls when the Lord blesses us with the spirit of comfort, saying to us yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore with loving kindness, I have drawn thee. Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. He makes those that are his, to know the mystery of the Kingdom. Christ in you, the hope of glory, Daniel 2:44 and in the days of these kings shall

the God of heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these Kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. That is so precious to believe, the Kingdom that God set up, in the hearts of his children, Christ in you, The hope of glory shall stand forever. I believe when Christ comes the second time, He will destroy all the earthly kingdoms and consume them by the brightness of his coming. It is so wonderful to me, when the blessed of the Lord, to hear the true doctrine preached by our home ministers, and also by the visiting ministers. They all preach the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, having different gifts, but the same spirit. The Lord saw fit by the foolishness of preaching, to save those that believe. After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. David said in Ps. 27:4 one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. 1 Peter 2:5 ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Heb. 3:4-6 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things, which were to be spoken after, but Christ as a Son over his own house. Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing firm unto the end. Dear ones I believe all the ones, that the Lord blesses to hear the truth as it is in him declared, does dwell in the spiritual house of the Lord, like David that is my desire, that the Lord will bless me to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. Like Moses said, I would rather suffer

the afflictions with the righteous, than to enjoy sin for a season. One place in the scriptures it says, to keep yourselves unspotted from the world. I love not the worldly doctrines and commandments of men, nor the pleasures of this world. I love the Lord and his people in the Spiritual world, that he prayed for. I hope that I am one of that blessed number whose god is the Lord. Praise the Lord, from whom all our blessings flow. In bonds of love,

Lula Fox

URGENT!

Look on your address label.
If the expiration date is

7/84

it will expire with this issue. Please
send renewal in the mail today.

Dear Grandpa, (Elder Spangler)

I read your book AMAZINE GRACE last Sat. night. It grabbed me by the heart and squeezed me hard. The motions stirred in me were so powerful and deep, they hurt. I couldn't let go. I slept with it under my pillow.

I was deeply moved. Thank you for sharing yourself. A part of you was revealed to me that I never knew. I'm glad that I have your book. I'll treasure it always. I regret that it wasn't longer. You must have experienced so many wonderful things. I envy you in some ways. You have searched and found so many answers. Answers to questions I still ask.

I felt compelled to write and tell you how much your book meant to me.

I hope that you are getting along well.
Give my love to Grandma.

Love,
Beverlee

April 2, 1984

Dear Grandpa & Grandma,

This is an account of my spiritual awakening. I knew at the time I should write it down yet I didn't feel worthy and actually did not have an idea of the total impact it would have on me. Time sequences may be a little off, but as God is my witness, the rest is accurate to my ability.

Life has always tormented me for I have never understood the warp of mankind. Everywhere I look there is pain and deception brought on by man. It is not enough that our bodies are imperfect and we suffer ill health—but our minds are so imperfect too and we afflict needless pain on others through our actions and our words. This has always been a source of great sorrow for me and has caused me great mental anguish. During the days I believed, so foolheartedly, of control of my own destiny, I struck out at unkind people by withdrawing from them. Finally I developed hostility and callousness for these people. This reaction has only caused me—not them—a great deal more suffering, and I do believe this has been the largest part of my spiritual trials.

As I look back to those days from where I am now—I understand that you can not put trust in man—but should only have compassion for I am no worse and no better than anyone else. This aspect of God's powers has brought me some of the greatest comfort I have ever experienced.

I will not try to tell you of the years preceeding my spiritual change because there is too much pain in remembering and I can not describe it well to people. I have always had much to be grateful for and have always known this. Yet it seems as though my sadness and suffering brought on by misunderstanding of the ways of man have brought me more pain and suffering than I could bear—I believe now this was a vital part of God's way to

make me see His warp. All I can say is I can not be too grateful to God for His mercy. I beg that He will keep me and not forsake me.

One day I felt totally at the end of my mental resources, control and power. I don't recall ever feeling that frustrated. I was filled inside with anger and hostility. I thought I was going to burst open. Life was totally unbearable at that moment. I ran into my room and threw myself on my bed screaming and pounding my fists—"I need help"—in my mind I meant psychiatric help.

All of a sudden a peace came over my entire being—I felt nothing but peace and joy—my anger was gone—my worries were gone.

I knew at that instant it was God. I cried, I laid on the floor afraid to look to heaven, afraid God might see me as I saw myself now. Yet I wanted to thank God as much as I could. I begged Him to please let me be with Him and come to know His ways.

Many thoughts raced through my mind in a matter of minutes. I saw for the first time what a wretch I was. I had been living for the flesh not the spirit. I had believed in the power of man. Now I knew why I had been suffering so much, and I was ready to give my physical life up—to keep this peace that only God could give. I knew living without God in your life is punishment and hell on earth.

I was afraid to tell anyone of my experience—afraid they would think I was trying to be something I wasn't. I see now my trials are with God not mankind and I care not what they think of my experience.

I was also, because of my human wretchedness, afraid of what this peace and belief might mean—afraid God would surely come to punish me for my life.

So I went about my business acting like nothing had happened yet feeling so

different. I want to point out too that Grandpa and Grandma had only extended an invitation to me to come to church, they have never tried to make me believe their ways. They have only offered me love and kindness and company.

I had been going to the Durham Church two or three months before my experience took place.

Then one Sunday following my experience of God's peace I went to Church. My Grandfather preached one of his beautiful sermons that was so similar to my experience. My ears began to buzz and my head felt dizzy—and my heart felt full of praise and joy. I was hearing the words of God and they were the sweetest words I had ever heard. These words suddenly had meaning as my Grandfather spoke them so clearly (I believe he has been given one of life's greatest gifts—the ability to preach God's words from his heart.) Grandpa was preaching about people reaching the end of their wits and how God brings people to Him when they reach this point. I was overpowered with compassion and love. I felt like singing out and crying out for God's blessed mercy.

After this experience I was scared. Why should a person such as myself be blessed with this peace? I was still scared to be amongst these church people as well.

Then one night I was out with a friend and we were in a car wreck. I thought for an instant we were to be killed, but we were spared. I saw even more clearly my wretched life. This accident caused me great distress and I asked God for help in coming to terms with it and He gave me the ability to forget the emotional impact of it. I knew then I was powerless and needed a spiritual friend—God.

The next third Sunday went to Durham again and Grandpa was blessed again to preach a moving and glorious sermon. He spoke about how there comes a time

to take the cross upon your back when you hear the words of God. He said that no one ever feels worthy to be baptized. I knew what my heart was telling me to do but my mind was very troubled. The church people had made me feel so welcome yet I didn't feel worthy of them. I was troubled for weeks with this idea.

During these weeks I saw my life changing and the preaching was becoming clearer and clearer to me. I knew in my heart I wanted to thank God for his mercy. I was finally moved to reveal my burdens to my Grandparents. What about my sins I asked. Grandpa replied that all sin is the same. Oh what mercy.

For the first time in my life I felt like I shared a belief with people - the Primitive Baptist people. I hoped and prayed they would forgive me for who I was and let me thank God with them. They did accept me into their church. It was a month now until I would be buried in the watery grave and I prayed that Grandpa would baptize me and that God would bring me to the grave in good health.

The Sat. night before my baptism we were all riding home from church. I was trying to find out the name of the Hymn that was surely the most beautiful Hymn I had heard - but we couldn't come up with the name because I could not sing the tune.

The next morning I was baptized. I couldn't control my crying for I was overcome by God's compassion and mercy for allowing me to be baptized. After the baptism we went inside and the first hymn Grandpa called for was Hymn 386 page 156—"Come Thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace." I burst into tears for this was the Hymn I spoke of Sat. night. My brothers and sisters sang that hymn as beautiful as anything I have ever heard. I knew it was all right for me to be there, finally I had been offered a safe place to be - a home.

It has been a long road - and I have a

long road still to go in my understanding of God yet I pray that God will "Bind my wandering Heart to Thee."

One of my truest blessings has been knowing my beloved Grandparents. They have lived their lives for and by God and have thus given quality to all life around them. I feel God acted through my Grandfather to reach me and it is a blessing that will carry me through my life. I can only pray that by some miracle I should be with my Grandparents in the after-life. I love them with all my heart through the abounding Grace of God.

That is the way my spiritual change unfolded - it feels better to reveal it.

After beloved Brother Minter's funeral, I was thinking that I had never thanked all you people for providing lost souls with a home. You two, and the Minter's and sister Davis and others whose names I am not familiar, have given us a place to worship God. The lives you have lived have blessed everyone around you with goodness. And you have created a home for the spirit and the worship of God. Bless you all for eternity.

Love, Your Granddaughter
Linda

301 Rives Rd.
Martinsville, Va. 24112

Dear Grand-daughter:

Your sweet letter deserves a reply, and lest we procrastinate, we will get at it. The pictures were lifelike and full of animation. Years from now they will bring back fond recollections of bygone days when you had your children around your feet.

Your grandmother has about recovered from a bout with "inner ear trouble". The symptoms were confusing with a possible brain tumor. Therefore we had numerous tests made including a brain scan. All the tests came out negative so she takes medication for high blood and

cholesterol only.

In your letter we were interested in your exposition of "christian loving." Why were the deciples first called Christians at Antioch?

Because Paul was preaching Christ Jesus and Him crucified. On one occasion he declared that he was "... determined to know nothing else ..."

Was he paid to carry the message? No. Rather the Lord said to Annais, a deciple, 'I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. Paul bore the message before the Gentiles (that's us) and Kings and the children of Israel, thru much suffering the rest of his life. He wrote 13 books of the New Testament for our learning in christian behavior as well as the doctrine of Sovereign Grace. Read the 8th chapter of Romans. It is a classic. Paul verifies what Jesus had to say about the certainty of the salvation of "his people." Who are His people? Those that the Father gave Him in covenant before the world began. The angel told Joseph in a dream, "... He shall save His people from their sins." Jesus said, "All that the Father gave me shall come to me." Why must they come to Jesus? Because He is the way "No man cometh to the Father but by me" "I will raise them up at the last day."

There are only two peoples of Adam's race and two places fixed for their eternal destiny, heaven and hell. All human beings are headed that way now; to one or the other. God's people, after their hearts are changed have no fear of hell or the devil. Rather they fear Him who has power over Satan.

When does this change of heart take place? When it pleases God to give of His Spirit in a new birth. This new birth produces a spiritual man, often referred to as the inner man.

This inner man doesn't like the first man Adam. There is continual warfare going on between them. Paul was

disturbed about this. He said when I would do good, evil is present with me. This condition caused him to cry out, saying "O whetted man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "Then by the spirit he answers, "I thank God thru Jesus the Lord." "There is Salvation in no other. Praise His holy name. We are saved by grace thru faith, not of works lest any man should boast, it is the gift of God. What about good works? They are produced by the inner man. The tree having been made good produces good fruit. Praise the Lord!

Dear Child, I had not intended to write so much but it kept coming, leading me to believe that it is falling on good ground and is sheep food. A goat would probably turn up his nose at it.

In conclusion let me warn you as you seek for truth, to beware of "... dogs beware of evil workers." Phil. 3-5. "... because your adversary, the Devil is as a roaring lion, walking about seeking whom he may devour." 1st Pet. 5-8. Satan is also described as being transformed into an angel of light ... So beware of counterfitters. An artificial flower may even look better than a natural blossom but it cannot reproduce or give off a sweet perfume.

With love to you and yours,
Grand Dad and Grand-mother
(Elder & Sister P.E. Ingram)

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS:

Due to rising cost in publishing the Signs, we must increase the subscription price beginning July 1, 1984 to \$10.00 per year and \$18.00 for two years. We will honor all renewals at the old price until that date. We regret this increase but our cost now is a little over \$1.00 per copy.

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"THE SCARLETT LINE."

"She bound the scarlet line in the window," Joshua ii, 21.

That exceeding riches of grace are exhibited in the narrative centering around this scarlet line. Most precious is this discovered when we see pictured forth the marvelous kindness of God to poor, perishing sinners. The twelve tribes of Israel with Joshua at their head are now entering into the possession of the land of promise. "And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there."

Look not so disdainfully upon this scene, ye self-rightous, for this is of the Lord. A vessel of mercy whose name is in the Lamb's book of life, an object of Jehovah's everlasting love, is being sought out. (Isaiah Ixii.12.) One who to the end of time is set forth an object of God's distinguishing grace, Rahab the harlot. When the Son of God was in the world in the likeness of sinful flesh, those who highly esteemed themselves murmured that Jesus was gone to be the guest of one that was a sinner, and they contemptuously designated him the friend of publicans and sinners. It is one of the surpassing glories of the gospel that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. (1 Tim. i.15.)

Before the coming of these men Rahab had been much disturbed in her soul. She contemplated the entering in of God's host into Canaan as the massengers of his righteous vengeance. She believed that her people and her city were doomed to destruction. Then might Rahab say within herself, How shall one

so wicked as I escape? The day declines, and the mantle of night begins to shade the doomed city, and there in the twilight enter two strangers, men of the children of Israel. It is not so dark but that they are seen of many, and tidings of their presence in the city are taken to the king of Jericho. They are seen of Rahab the harlot, she knows them, too. Who can portray her emotions of soul as she beheld them? O, not with the eyes and emotions of an harlot does she look upon them. Others look upon these messengers with enmity, and would take hold of them with violent hands and slay them. But this woman is moved by a gracious and divine power, and is in exercise before the Lord. She believes that he is, and unholy, a sinner, she trembles before him, but trembling and contrite she is drawn to him; her heart craves his indulgent mercy, and those two men are his, his sacred ones, for Jehovah is the God of Israel. She is moved toward these men because of their God with all graciousness of spirit. "She received the spies with peace."—Heb. xi. 31. No doubt she felt unworthy to lodge the representatives of the favored nation of the Almighty, but an inward satisfaction glowed within in the honor conferred upon her that they should seek shelter under her roof. "He that receiveth you receiveth me." In some little measure no doubt she tasted this blessedness. "She received the spies with peace." But her comfort of mind in her graciousness of heart toward these Israelites is soon disturbed; it has been told the king of this doomed city, "Behold, there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel, to search out the country. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country." Will Rahab surrender them a prey to their ravening foes? No, she will

show by her works her faith in god, who is the King of kings. "she brought them up to the roof of her house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof." "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" This woman's faith was a living faith, and her faith moved her to shield, to save these spies from the vengeance of the king of Jericho. Her works of faith were thus evidencing her justification. "Was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?" — James ii. 25. The woman took the two men and hid them; she comes down from the roof to face the officers of the king of Jericho, and said thus: "There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: and it came to pass, about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly: for ye shall overtake them." What is this? Is this the fruit of faith? Never. Faith in the Lord is a good tree that is planted and grows by the operation of God, and cannot bring forth evil fruit. No lie is of the truth. Let us ponder upon this scene of light and darkness, there is profitable instruction in it to those who fear the Lord. Say not, I would never do so. Child of God, you know not how weak you are, unless kept by the power of God the next moment you will sink in the depravity of your sinful heart into all wickedness. Rahab to shield these hidden spies resorts to her deceiving tongue, and pours forth lies to the men of Jericho. They believe her lies and hasten, as they imagine, in pursuit of the fugitive spies without the gates of Jericho. The spies were beneficial by Rahab's lies. Was this lying excusable? jesuitism might answer affirmatively, saying, the end justifies the means. But an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ has declared the just damnation of all such who slanderously reported and

affirmed that he said, "Let us do evil that good may come."—Romans iii. 8 How valiantly, with what holy majesty this holy apostle utterly repudiates such a doctrine. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?"—Romans vi. 1,2. If Rahab was one that was born of the Spirit, in whose heart was that faith in God which is the fruit of the Spirit, is it not a very paradox that she should upon the roof of her house be moved by faith in the Lord to acts of goodness toward these spies, and then descending to the threshold face the officers with cunning falsehoods? Is this something to be winked at and passed over as a trifle? To the child of God no sin is a trifle, but is grievous, damnable. If you are one to who the Lord has given a new heart, all iniquity will be hateful, and sin not only in words and deeds, but in thy thoughts, will make thee heavy and sad, and thy heart will sigh and mourn over it unto thy God. Those who are born of god have a nature imparted to them akin to the nature of God and as exercised by this nature, (2 Peter i. 4,) the new man, which is created after the image of him that created him in righteousness and true holiness, (Eph. iv. 24,) they hunger and thirst after righteousness. They cannot feast their eyes upon sin. This being so the question still presents itself, How is it that a child of God can this moment be exercised in love and faith worshipping the Lord, and in a small moment be exercised in matters the most sinful? Can such a state of affairs exist and one in very truth be born of the Spirit, a child of God? And if it be so how do such opposites have subsistence in them? These are momentous inquiries. This is that which is so mysterious, that often causes so much misgiving of heart to those who fear the Lord: that one moment exercised graciously toward God with humble contriteness of heart, or in

grateful praises, and then all is suspended and to our bitter dismay find there is in us a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. O, the grief of mind that is ours, how discouraged, how we have to blush when once more our thoughts, our faces are turned toward our holy and gracious God. The mystery of these conflicting emotions and sometimes contradictory behavior felt and exhibited in the people of God is that they are the subjects of two natures described in the scriptures as the flesh and the Spirit, (Gal. v. 16,) the old and the new man, (Ephesians iv. 22-24,) and perhaps no clearer statement of these diverse principles can be found than that given in Romans vii. 14-25. All our emotions of contrition of heart, of faith and love and praise in which we worship the Lord, are put forth in us by the operations of God's gracious power. The arising and intrusion of iniquity is from our corrupt Adamic nature, which ever is the heartsaddening, burdensome load of the children of God while they are in this world. The bitter consciousness of indwelling sin forbids us to glory in ourselves before God. O, the mercifulness of the Lord; he pities us in our low estate, and by his gracious teachings we are melted before him in repentance, and we are drawn to cleave alone to the sacrifice and righteousness of Jesus Christ as our only hope of acceptance before the throne of God. It is a most humiliating thing in the lives of the saints that their most blessed and sacred moments may suddenly be defiled by sinful thoughts, and unless kept by the power of God in the sanctuary of his gracious felt presence, so powerful and ensnaring is the depravity of our fleshly heart we shall as suddenly fall into outward iniquities. How much it becomes us then to cry continually for mercy to be kept from the paths of sin. "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe."

The men of Jericho are gone from the

door of Rahab's house in hot pursuit of the spies elsewhere, and Rahab instantly ascends to the roof of her house. "Before the spies were laid down, she came unto them upon the roof." Did she then, or in after days, chuckle over the deception she practiced upon her fellow citizens? Ah, memories of sinfulness are not cherished by the pure in heart. What gratification can the remembrance of transgressions afford a believer in Jesus? They are ashamed of all iniquity. (Rom. vi. 21.) The grace of God in them forbids that they should glory in their shame.

"Rahab said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon, Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you; for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

What changes take place in this woman all within a little space of time. Moved with faith in God she received the spies with peace, and sought to hide them from their foes; then with lies she barricades the entrance of her house and turns away the men of Jericho; now upon the roof this Gentile woman is discoursing most learnedly (as one surely taught of the Lord) concerning God, her faith in him, and breathes forth her longings that Israel, the people of God, would deal friendly with her and her father's house. It was Peter, and Peter's same natural tongue that said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." —John vi. 68,69, and who with oaths and cursing denied Jesus

saying, "I know not the man."—Matt. xxvi. 74, and afterward said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."—John xxi.17. "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."—James iii.10. Ponder these things in thy heart.

Tidings of the onward march of the tribes of Israel, and of God's interposition in their behalf preceded their entrance into Canaan. If the waters of the Red Sea could not impede their way, if Jehovah dried up the sea for them, and they marched through the deep dry shod, if Israel is triumphant over both the kings of the Amorites, who then can withstand this invincible host? Terror fell upon the inhabitants of the land; their courage fled away and all hearts did melt. No one felt these things more deeply than Rahab, and only she of all the city of Jericho was exercised graciously toward the Lord amidst these distressing forebodings. This monument of God's grace is so affected by his gracious power that she attributes the invincible progress of the chosen nation to the Lord, and she believes that their God who has hitherto wrought so effectually in their behalf will yet go on to display his grace unto his beloved people in fulfilling the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. "I know that the Lord hath given you the land." Israel got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither, did their own arm save them, but the Lord's right hand, the light of his countenance and his kingly favor put them in possession of their inheritance. All this is believed in the heart of Rahab, and in her recital of God's grace and power in behalf of Israel she crowns it all with the acknowledgement that "the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath." In Rahab's view, all the Canaanitish gods are famished out of the land; she has

cast their images to the moles and to the bats, and the Lord alone is exalted. How divine is that work in a sinner that brings him to that reverend and affectionate recognition of the living and true God. Then, though a sinner, worthy only of his wrath, he is moved to fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Rahab says, "Our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man." This spiritually is realized by the vessels of mercy who are called unto the knowledge of themselves before the Almighty. All our courage sinks within us when we are apprehended by the Lord to face the curse of the law. Our sins and just condemnation are brought home to us, and we tremble in apprehension of the execution of his coming judgement. "Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." The risen and ascended Savior is that man who is ordained to judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom. (Acts xvii, 31; 2 Tim. iv. 1.)

Now, when the harlot Rahab had confessed to the spies her belief in God, her terror, the loss of her courage, her meltings of heart in apprehension of coming judgements, her belief in the power and graciousness of the Lord unto Israel, and crowned the whole with declaring that he only was God, then she pours forth her entreaties that kindness might be shewn unto her and to her father's house: "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." Thus she craved their friendship and deliverance from death. So quickened sinners make

supplication unto the Lord for salvation, that they may not perish in their sins, and the Holy Ghost moves them to crave the friendship of the everlasting God. This is a miracle of God's grace, that a sinner, a creature who in his nature is unholy, enmity against God, should be found thirsting for God, the living God. His compassionate mercy is so sought after. O, to be freed from sin, to be holy, that I might live forever with the Lord. God becomes so lovely and so loved that our heart exclaims, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

"Give me a true token." How descriptive is this language of that life of entreaty in which those who are born again live before God. Give me a true token of the forgiveness of my sins, cries the mourning soul. Give me a true token that thou art my Savior, of my acceptance in thy sight, O God. Give me a true token of thy covenant, everlasting love. Give me a true token that I am one of thy chosen, that I am a child of God. Thus with fervency the child of God pours forth his supplications, and sometimes like Gideon, (Judges vi.) we feel we must have token upon token to satisfy us. O, to find a quiet resting-place in the sure mercies of our God. Give a true token, one that will not fail me, that will be honored and accepted in that day before the throne of God. Give me the earnest of Spirit in my heart of that inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. Let the beloved Savior kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine; let him speak to my heart of his dying love. O, that on me might be put the best robe of the righteousness of the Son of God; that on my hand might be put the ring of the Father's everlasting love; the ring that should be the true

token that I am still and forever his child; the ring of espousal, of eternal wedlock to the fairest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.

Rahab's entreaty was heard, the spies made a covenant of life and kindness with her, saying, "Our life for yours." Your life shall be more precious than our own; we will give our lives a sacrifice "instead of you to die." "Our life for your if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee." It is a gracious mystery that a sinner should be so wrought upon that he is moved, with a weeping heart over his sins, to sue for tokens of the Lord's tender mercy, and it is very wonderful indeed, and surpassingly gracious that the Almighty inclines his ear and hears our cry. O, he hears the sighing of the needy, he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. He forgetteth not the cry of the humble. What encouragement is this for needy souls to wait upon the Lord. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." So innumerable are our weaknesses, temptations and necessities, and for myself I confess that as the days and the years pass by they become no less, and I should be utterly discouraged and faint indeed were it not that in prayer to the Lord I am enabled to cast all my care upon him who careth for me. But to do this I need the gracious operations of the Comforter to bring my heart to the persuasion that the Lord forgetteth not the cry of the humble, and thus I am divinely constrained to come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Rahab believes the spies; their covenant promises are inspiring and satisfying, and she manifests her grateful acquiescence by facilitating their escape from Jericho. "Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the

town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned; and afterward may ye go your way. And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by; and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window."

Fred W. Keene

(Continued next month)

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before (Aug. 3,4,5). Roanoke Church is the host for this setting of the Association. The meeting place will be on the grounds and the meeting house at Pigg River Church.

To get to the Pigg River Meeting House those coming from the North on U.S. 220 turn right on to State Route 919 (which is three-quarters of a mile south of Boones Mill, Va.) Follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn right on 641 to Calloway, Va. Turn left in Calloway on State Route 602, and follow signs to Meeting House.

Those coming from the South, go Route 220 to Rocky Mount, take route 40 West to Ferrum, Va. At Ferrum turn right on Route 602 (Ferrum College will be on left immediately on 602) Go 6 1/2 miles on 602, turn left on 752 (you will be going straight as 602 courses here.) Go 1/2 mile on 752. Turn right on 750-go 1 1/2 miles to church.

Brother Jamie Cooper
Association Clerk

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine creek church on the 4th of July, 1984. The church is located off highway #221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd turn left onto road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right onto road #682. All lovers of the Truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Roy Agee

The tenth annual fifth Sunday meeting consisting of four churches will meet, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, July 27th, 28th and 29th. We invite all lovers of the Truth to meet with us. Hopewell Church is located about five miles west of Winnsboro, Texas. For further information call 214-629-3561.

Elder Joe L. Hamrick, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS

**CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR
APRIL 1984**

S.H. Wood, VA.	\$6.00
Mrs. Cascyle Bagwell, TX.	7.00
Mrs. Martha L. Newnan, NC.	2.00
Mrs. M.E. Womble, NC.	2.00
Mrs. H.D. Underwood, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Amie Benson, NC.	2.00
Eld. John Wingfield, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Emodell Murphy, AR.	7.00
Mrs. Erma Broach, AR.	2.00
Mrs. Rita A. Paschal, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Sara Cody, AR.	18.00
Mrs. Nilie Brown, NC.	2.00
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*"Whatsoever ye would that men should do
to you, do ye even so to them."*

Mat. 7:12

OBITUARIES

LENA ALTIZER AKERS

Sister Lena Akers was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for 70 years. She loved her church dearly. Due to poor health in her last years she was unable to attend as often as she would have liked. Throughout her life she walked with God and loved her family and friends very much.

Born in Montgomery County on April 9, 1896 to Merritt Caroline Altizer. she married Chymer Akers on June 19, 1917. her husband died December 19, 1966 after long suffering with arthritis. Sister Lena died March 13, 1984. They had four children. She is survived by one son, J.T. Akers, two daughters, Mrs. Marvin (Lucille) Duncan and Mrs. Posey (Frances) Weeks. There are also twelve grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren and her sister, Glenna Yeatts.

Her funeral service was held at Pleasant Valley Church at Alum Ridge, Virginia, by Mr. Everett Reed and Elder Roy Agee. She was laid to rest at the Akers Cemetery.

Written by her daughter,

Frances Weeks

By request of the clerk of
Valley View Primitive Baptist Church

ERIC CALK THURSTON

1896-1984

I hope that I believe the things I'm about to write.

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home one of His dear children, Eric Calk Thurston, Mar. 12, 1984 in her home in

Downsville, La. making her stay on earth 87 yrs. 2 months and 25 days.

I was truly blessed to be with her on many visits in her home and never saw anyone with more faith and trust in her God. She was a very faithful and devoted member of Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church near Farmerville, La. never missing a service unless sickness hindered her from going. She was an inspiration for anyone who knew her since she wanted the peace and sweet fellowship of Christ the Savior that dwell within our hearts.

To sit and talk with Sister Erie was a feeling of being in the presence of one of the God's little children. She was a true devout believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and was truly blessed to have a lovely family that respected her belief and love for the church very highly.

Sister Erie leaves three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Mae Pardue, Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Cascyle Bagwell, Weatherford, Tex.; Mrs. Martin G. Reade, Sedona, Arizona. Three sons, H.W. Thurston, Farmerville, La.; Egbert Thurston, Jackson, Miss.; Ferrel Thurston, Farmerville, La.; one brother J.D. Calk, Hamilton, Tex.; thirteen grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held Mar. 13, 1984 at Mt. Nebo Church in Downsville, La. by Elder David E. Turner. Her body was laid to rest by her husband's body in Mt. Nebo cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Great Resurrection.

Written by the request of
her children and family,
Elder David E. Turner

BUELAH ALTIZER WELLS

In loving memory and humbliness these words are written of our beloved

Sister Buelah Wells. Sister Wells was born December 4, 1907. She was the twin daughter of Merritt and Caroline Altizer. She marriedj Asa Wells on June 3, 1933.

Sister Wells united with Valley View Church in July, 1931 with three of her sisters. She died December 17, 1983. Her love of the church was shown through th years by her attendance, devotion and thoughts of others never of herself. She was so comforting to others. She was blessed to receive a wonderful gift of wisdom and understanding of the words of Christ. She fought a good fight, she finished her course, she kept the faith.

She was a faithful member until her sudden death. Her husband, Asa Wells, preceded her. She was so faithful in caring for him. She was a good wife, devoted mother, kind friend and neighbor and loving sister.

Surviving her are one daughter, one sister, Glenna Yeatts, and two grandchildren, Angela and Caroline.

Her funeral was held on December 20, 1983 at Valley View Church by her pastor Elder Raymond Goad and assistant pastor Elder Roy Agee. Interment was in Roselawn Memory Gardens.

Written by request of the clerk of
Valley View Church. In loving memory,
Her daughter,

Naomi W. Agee

ANNIE K. WOOD

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dearly beloved Sister Annie Wood.

She was born April 9, 1900 to the late Spencer and Minnie Scott King of Edgecombe County, North Carolina. Her first marriage was to Luther Flood in 1918. To this union was born two boys, John and Edward.

Sister Annie united with the Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist church on Saturday, May 21, 1921 and was baptized on Sunday. She told the church of her travels that day. She said she walked one mile carrying her nine month old baby in her arms, but related to them that some power greater than any man had carried her that day. Sister Annie remained a dear and faithful sister as long as she lived and attended meetings as long as she was able.

Mr. Flood Died in 1927 and she was married to Cicero E. Williams in 1929. After the death of brother Williams in 1956, she was married to Harvey Wood in 1963 who also preceded her in death. She lived with her oldest son and his wife several years before her death and they so lovingly cared for her and helped her as often as she was able to meet with the brethren of her faith.

Sister Annie was called home on February 25, 1982 at the age of 81. Her pastor was ill at the time and Elder J. T. Prescott conducted her funeral at Gay Yost Funeral Home in Rocky Mount, N. C., after which she was buried in the Williams Family Cemetery, Edgecombe County, North Carolina beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

She is survived by two sons, John and Edward Flood, twelve grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, and a host of brethren and friends who will long miss her.

Written by one who sincerely loved her:

Fannie Mae Harper

Done by order of the church while in conference, February 25, 1984.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

BOOK NOTICES

BEEBE EDITORIALS

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These three volumes of the editorial writings of Elder Gilbert Beebe are all available from us for immediate delivery. If the Lord wills we expect to have Volume two out in the next few months. This will give us a matching set of the first four volumes of his writings from the years 1832 to 1862.

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84 Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1-(901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

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P O E T R Y

MY HEAVENLY HOME

To the sweet heavenly home above
My longing spirit soars;
I long to see the God I love,
The Savior I adore.

I long to see His smiling face,
And in His presence dwell,
Forever in His kind embrace,
And of His glory tell.

I'm weary of this sin and strife;
I long for perfect peace,
When I shall leave this mortal life,
Then sin and strife will cease.

I long for rest, sweet rest in Thee,
In that dear heavenly home;
Thy glorious beauties there to see,
Where my Redeemer's gone.

But must be paid sin's wages here,
Before release can come;
Must travel on in doubts and fear,
Until our race is run.

The race Thou hath ordained for me,
With patience let me run;
And give me grace to follow Thee,
And say, Thy will be done.

Mrs. M.N. Griffin

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 EDITORIAL

COMMUNION SERVICES

“**F**or I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be

guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.” (I Cor. 11: 23-29.)

“I received of the Lord.” The Apostle Paul received it because the Lord appointed it. It was from the Lord, the King, the Head of the Church. He is our lawgiver and ruler who has appointed this service and has required it of His church. We should remember that the ordinance of the Lord's supper is a commemoration, a declaration, a proclamation of the death of Christ and is to be observed by His Church till He comes. There seems to be no set time for this duty in the Scriptures that we can determine; neither as to the day, week, or month; neither as to the beginning or ending of it. However, we do find in Acts 20:7 which says: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” I truly feel that this blessed ordinance should be observed more often than most of our churches observe it, including the ones I attempt to serve. Once a year can hardly be considered sufficiently frequent for a memorial of one who should be so dear and precious to the hearts of us all. But the duty itself is commanded; the time of its observance seems to be left to the liberty of the individual churches.

Jesus Christ saw where all his chosen people would end up, due to the fall of Adam and Eve. But the Son of God offered himself and said, “Lo, I come.” this was a voluntary substitution of Jesus Christ in his person, on behalf of his people. Did Christ know all that would be involved? Yes, from all eternity. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of

us all." The curse being upon his people, the wrath of God being upon them, they were all doomed. God's holiness, faithfulness, righteousness and truth were all engaged. Yet, saith Christ, "Lo, I come." "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Christ was engaged in a glorious cause, a great undertaking, to deliver all the elect of God from death, hell, Satan and sin; to answer to the law, to justice, to undergo the curse, and bring his people into glory. "Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Our Lord came to suffer and to die. He suffered that which answered to the law of God; he suffered that which answered to the justice of God.

I am God and besides me there is no Saviour." Divinity cannot die, the God-head cannot die, but the Lord had two natures. The eternal Son of God assumed in union with Himself a perfect manhood, He represented all His people, who are the objects of God's love. They are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The sins of his people were all laid upon Him. "Who His own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree." "The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all." Moreover, when God the Father laid all the sins of His people upon our blessed Mediator; He so washed his people in His own precious blood, that they are presented spotless and faultless before the throne of God, free of any condemnation. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

"The Lord Jesus, before ascending up to heaven, left two ordinances to be observed by his people until he comes again: Believers' Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The ordinance of believers' baptism: "Go ye therefore, and teach all

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This ordinance consists of the immersion of the believer in water, which is a token of his death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. "Buried with him by baptism, into death, even so we should walk in newness of life." Going into the water and being baptized does not save us, but is only a symbol of the new birth, which does save us. "Ye must be born again."

The Lord's Supper is the second ordinance: "As often as ye eat the bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He comes." This ordinance should require our most earnest attention.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." May we be given to investigate, involving our past experiences in what we trust the Holy Spirit has performed in us, and examine the way in which we trust the Lord has led us. Our ways may have many different aspects to them, but we must all come to a similiar experience in our lives, regardless of how we were led there. This experience involves an inward death. The Lord's people know nothing of this inward death while in their natural unconverted state." "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We must first be quickened by the Holy Spirit before being able to feel, know, or experience anything about this inward death in our conscience and feelings. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The Apostle Paul says, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment

came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." We must be given spiritual life and light before we can ever sincerely feel and see our dead, lost condition. Our sins must become "exceedingly sinful."

What mortal man has ever kept the Holy Law of God? Not one, no not one. "For all have sinned." Has the sentence of death ever come in you with power and with its condemning curse? "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." When the above killing sentence came into your heart and conscience, did it not slay you as to salvation by the works of the law? Did it not cause all your works, efforts, and self-righteousness to become as filthy rags? Yea, was not all your old natural religion (if you had any) turned into garbage? Did it not condemn you and kill you outright as to any assurance that may have sprung from your own righteousness? You could now say with the Apostle Paul, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." So in a sense you die an inward experiential death in your experience, under the wrath of God. You are made to see and feel what a holy, powerful, yet terrible God you have to deal with; and due to all your many, many sins, you feel to be justly doomed to die and enter into eternal damnation. As you feel, and fear the terrors of God, you die to all legal hope, feeling there is nothing in you to save you from the lowest hell. So when the law is applied to your conscience by the power of God, it kills, it slays, it condemns. For it is a sentence of death and causes you to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Does this experience not bring you to the foot of

the cross of Christ, naked and empty-handed? The song writer said, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling." Have you been fully convinced that unless the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ is shed and given to you, you have no hope at all for heaven and immortal glory? If so, come to the Lord's table, eat and drink worthily, not in your own self, but in Christ.

There must have been a time in your experience when your agonizing soul, finding no escape and thinking deliverance to be impossible, was given by the eyes of faith to look away from self, and the harsh demands of the law, to Jesus Christ as the only source of your deliverance. If so, come, eat and drink worthily. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." If you go to the table with any feeling that you must by your own works and merits have even a little part in your salvation, you come eating and drinking unworthily and shall be guilty of the body and blood of Christ.

Taking part in the Lord's supper should be a very serious and solemn occasion. The Lord's supper is nothing to us unless we partake of it as spiritual persons in a spiritual way. We must understand what we are doing in coming to the communion table, for the mere mechanical celebration will be vanity.

O, pray that the Spirit of God come and put life into our communion; that we may be given to feel real fellowship with Christ in breaking and eating the bread, and drinking of the wine. We must first remember that the Lord's supper is first of all a memorial, an exhibition, a setting forth, a proclamation of his death. "The just for the unjust that he might bring us to God" for "Without the shedding of blood is no remission for sins." The end of Christ's death was that dying for us, by the shedding of his blood, there is the remission of sins, for which we are to give thanks. There would be no need of giving thanks for the death of Christ

unless it was an atoning death, and a propitiation for sin. We are commanded to set forth in a symbolic manner the death of Christ, "Till he come."

"Do this in remembrance of me." The bread must be broken; and what better emblem of suffering can you have than that? The bread is a symbol of that dear body, broken with stripes and crimson with his own precious blood. Look at the wine in the cup, does not that also indicate pain and suffering? It cost our Lord untold agony to redeem us from the lowest hell. So can you ever imagine that any man is fit person to participate in the emblems which set forth that suffering and agony if he has never felt, in his own soul, any agony on account of his many sins? If your eyes have wept no tears of repentance, how can you properly remember him whose broken flesh and poured out blood was for you sins?

You may say, O, I find myself so forgetful of Jesus, something seems to steal away my heart, and I'm so unmindful of him upon whom my affections ought to be set. Do you feel to be too negligent in the holy exercise of prayer? Do you feel in your heart that your love towards him has grown cold? Earthly business seems to engross my mind too much: idols, foolishness and many other things seem to take my soul and mind away from Christ. I forget Christ because there are so many other things around me to attract my attention. "So that we cannot do the things that we would." Yes, but why is this? Is it not because we carry about with us the old Adam of sin and death? We have an old man too vile to have a parallel "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." If we were purely and entirely regenerated beings, we would be enabled to sit down and mediate on all our Saviour died and suffered. You may have many different feelings within you to cause you to be fearful to partake of the Lord's supper. Sometimes you may even have a fear of

being lost, "Christ came to seek and to save them that are lost." Sometimes you may feel to be such a terrible hypocrite and sinner until you feel unworthy to partake of the Lord's supper. "Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Doubts about yourself is no bar; feeling to be unworthy is more of a qualification than a bar. Feeling to be sick of your sins and your sincere need of Christ is good. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Do we mourn over our felt condition? "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced and mourn." There is a habitual mourning frame of spirit required in us, may we all be given to mourn our felt sinfulness. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When you come to the communion table and do not find him as you would, if in eating of the bread, he is not manifested to you; and if drinking of the wine, you get no taste of his love as you would like, do you not still trust in him for your only hope of salvation? Do not depend so much on outward signs and visible evidence, but say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." O, that I may be given to feast upon but one small crumb from his precious table.

The right spirit of communion services has about it something so pathetic, so tender, so touching, so full of fellowship, that it seems to bring us so near to Christ and Christ so near to us. We so much feel our love for him and his dear people until we can say surely this is holy ground because of his felt presence. Surely we can feel this is a little taste of of heaven here on earth. May we always have a silent prayer in our hearts that this may be our feelings and experience during communion service.

In Bonds of love, Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church was constituted June 11, 1884. It is located on 704 near Madison,

N.C. Their meeting time is the first Sunday of each month. Their present Pastor is Elder H.W. Wray.

CORRESPONDENCE

803 West Brooks
Norman, Oklahoma 73069
May 18, 1984

Dear Elder Key:

I am enclosing an account of my experience or at least what I believe to be my experience. If you consider it to be suitable for printing in *The Signs* you have my permission to do so.

I want to express my gratitude to the editors, contributing editors and the associate editors for the time, effort and love put forth each month in sending out *The Signs*. I look forward to its arrival in the mail each month and always enjoy reading the editorials, experiences and articles.

It is amazing to me that this periodical

established in 1832 is still going strong and continues to declare the truth. Surely God's guiding and directing Hand is in the matter.

In love,
Bob Champeau

EXPERIENCE

I was raised on a small farm near Norman, Oklahoma during the 1930's and early 40's. My mother and father were deaf, which made the task of raising a family during those hard times even more difficult. There were the never ending chores to be done each day, crops and livestock to be tended, and school to attend. There was also time for fun such as fishing, hunting, swimming, pitching horseshoes, etc.

Those years were filled with growing, working, playing and schooling but very little thought concerning God or my eternal destiny. There were no churches

nearby and even if there had been my parents could not have enjoyed the preaching and singing because of their handicap.

Occasionally my grandfather, Elder W. N. Green, would come to our home from his home in western Oklahoma at Altus for a short visit. I knew he was a preacher and a man that was very much respected, but the subject of the church or religion was seldom discussed. I do remember one time when I went to Oklahoma City with my mother to visit her sister and an appointment was made for my grandfather to preach before a small number of people in a small rented room in the downtown Municipal Auditorium building. That is my earliest recollection of hearing a man preach. Later, I recall going with my mother and my aunt to Altus to visit my grandfather and we attended a little church. I remember thinking the singing and preaching lasted too long because I wanted to go outside to play.

My pursuit of the world and worldly pleasures continued through my elementary and high school days and during my service in the Army after graduation from High School. After my discharge from the Army I began to attend a Missionary Baptist Church, more from a moral standpoint than because of any religious conviction. I later accepted the invitation of the pastor to come forward, to "accept Christ" and be baptized.

Soon afterward I was married and my young bride and I moved to California to seek our fortune. We transferred our church membership by letter to a church in California but attended only a few times. We were more interested in worldly pleasures than in going to church.

After four and a half years in California and the birth of our first two children we moved back to Oklahoma in order for me to pursue a college education. During this time we attended a series of classes conducted by the rector (pastor) of a

local Episcopal Church. We later became members of this church. My wife took an active interest in women's activities and our children were members of the children's choir. I began to teach a Sunday School class and was later elected to the Vestry (the lay council of the church). I also served as an usher at Sunday morning services. I began to think of what a great work I was doing for the Lord.

As time passed I began to become dissatisfied with my activities and the church services. In the Episcopal church much of the worship service is read or sung from the Book of Common Prayer. In the beginning these ritualistic services were meaningful and beautiful to me and I felt to be worshiping and praising God. However, as time passed and my dissatisfaction grew the services became more of a cold formality rather than an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. I began to be aware of a growing need and desire to hear the Gospel preached in power and in the spirit. The preaching I heard seemed to have little substance to satisfy my hungry soul and there was too much talking of social and political issues. I was hungry but I was not being fed.

At last I found the courage to go to the pastor and inform him of my feelings. He did not seem to understand my misery or what I was going through and offered no words of comfort or consolation.

I finally came to the conclusion that my work and former zeal in that church was not praise, honor and glorify God but to satisfy the flesh. I wanted the applause of men. I wanted to satisfy my own ego and I wanted that feeling of importance.

I resigned my elected position of Vestryman and I resigned as a Sunday School teacher and I did not attend that church anymore. The pastor could not understand these actions. I did not fully understand my feelings at the time either but I knew I could not continue walking

that path.

For a long period of time I did not attend or visit any church. Eventually, on a weekend visit to western Oklahoma with my family to visit my aunt we attended Sunday services with her at Little Flock Primitive Baptist church in Altus, Oklahoma. My Grandfather Green, now deceased, had been the pastor of that church for well over 30 years.

As we sat down near the rear of the little frame church and the few members present started singing "Amazing Grace" my heart was stirred and my eyes filled with tears. I had not heard those old hymns that were sung that day in so long and they sounded so beautiful to my ears.

Not long afterward Aunt Willie (Willie Foster Smith, daughter of Elder W.N. Green) and her husband, D.A. Smith, came to visit in our home. Late one night, after the rest of my family had gone to bed, we began to discuss religious matters. As a result of this discussion a disagreement developed over the free will of man and the free and sovereign grace of God and which is instrumental in the eternal salvation of the sinner. The subject of predestination was also discussed at some length. My position was that man's free will enabled him to determine his eternal destiny. I believe so strongly that I was right that I became quite angry when the opposing view was expressed.

The following morning we all expressed our misgivings at what had transpired the night before and regardless of our differing viewpoints on the points of doctrine in question there was no question concerning the mutual love and respect we had for one another. We did not discuss it further during their visit.

During the following weeks my mind was constantly on the subject and I began to search the scriptures. I also had a desire to attend services at Little Flock Church again.

In May, 1970 I drove to Altus to attend the annual three days meeting at the church. I greatly enjoyed the singing, preaching and fellowship and witnessed the love the people had for each other. On Sunday morning a man that I had not heard before was invited to take the stand to preach. This man, Elder W. W. Taylor, from Arkansas, began to preach and my ears became finely tuned to his every word. I do not remember his text or even the words he spoke that day but I know they were delivered with power from on high and it seemed every word was delivered directly to me. I suddenly saw myself for what I really was; a guilty sinner in the sight of a Holy and Righteous God. All of my self-righteousness, my ego, my self-esteem was stripped away and my guilty, sinful, vile nature revealed.

By the time Elder Taylor had finished his sermon I was reduced to a flood of tears and on my knees. When the invitation was extended for church membership I could not hold back. After relating my experience to the church and asking for a home I was accepted as a candidate for baptism and was baptised the following month at our regular fourth Sunday meeting by our pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood.

At the time of this writing I have driven the 135 miles to Altus for our monthly meetings for the past 14 years and I hope I have the privilege of attending for many more years to come.

I cannot say that I KNOW I am a child of God and that my eternal destiny is secure. Only God knows whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. God has given me hope and some evidence that I might be one of His and I wouldn't trade my hope and my little bit of faith for all gold and silver and kingdoms of this world.

It seems so much of my time is spent in a lukewarm condition or in the valley. The cares of this world seem to take

precedence over spiritual matters. I am made to wonder so much of the time, "Am I His or am I not?"

Occasionally I feel to be lifted to the mountain top and made to sit in heavenly places and to rejoice in a loving Saviour. If I know my heart I am most thankful for these seasons of unmerited favor and can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

In Love,
Bob Champeau

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Radford, Va.
May 2, 1984

Dear Elder Williams:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my many brethren throughout this part of the country for their many acts of kindness bestowed upon me during my stay in the hospital and since I came home. According to the medical staff at V.A. Hospital at Salem, VA. I was walking in the shadow of death when I went in. It says in the 23 Psalm of David "Yea, though I walk in the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou are with me; thy rod and thy staff, they do comfort me.

Elder Williams, I have been blessed of the Lord to see everything in a light that I have not been able to see for 25 years.

I am happy and I know the Lord does wonderful & gracious things for His people. Wishing you & Sister Williams the best in your work & efforts.

In Bonds of Love
Eld. Jock W. Cox

P.O. Box 65
Mt. Meigs, AL 36057

Dear Elder Williams:

Enclosed is a check for \$13.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs of The Times for 2 years. It is with great pleasure and much enjoyment for me to be able to receive and read such words as are printed in it. Even that we never see or hear some of the writers, I feel very close when reading and trying to understand the message they have so ably put in print for me and so many others to enjoy. May the Good Lord's richest blessings be with each one of you that has any part in the printing or work on the Signs of The Times. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Roma H. Smith

Sunday April 29, 1984

Dear Bro. Key,

I enjoyed the Union meeting this weekend very much. I feel we had a wonderful meeting. The preaching was so uplifting for me. I feel the sermons were surely as the voice of one man. I can't be thankful enough, unworthy as I am, to be allowed to be numbered with such dear people. I love them all. The words spoken were the things I love to hear (and needed to hear this weekend). I'm glad I was able to tape a portion of it so I can enjoy it again.

Bro. Key, I had mean't to write you all week but didn't get it done. When looking through some of my things, I ran across the attached poem which my dear Mom wrote some years ago. If you find it worthy of publication, I would like to share it with her many friends and family who read the "Signs of The Times." It is a treasure to me, but then she was very dear to me. For some time

before God called her home, at the meetings she would ask for the Hymn 517 on page 206 of the Hymn and Tune Book—"Why should we start and fear to die, what tim'rous worms we mortals are! . . .

On the 18th of June, 1983 the summons came from on high. She told me "I'm not going to make it . . . Goodbye." She then closed her eyes to this world and I feel she surely "rested her head upon His breast and breathed her life out sweetly there." She left us very quietly and peaceably. Though I miss her so very much, I know my loss is her eternal gain. Some time before she departed this life to be with her Lord, the words it is "joy unspeakable to be with the Lord," were given her one night. When she would ask a table grace, she would almost always ask the Lord to prepare us for what the day might bring or for what he had in store for us. She asked him before breakfast that last morning and I feel he surely prepared her.

I'm sorry to take up so much of your time but I felt I wanted to share this with you all. May God continue His blessings on you.

Your unworthy sister in Christ, I hope,
Jean Moran

Dear precious brethren in Christ
I want to talk to you
To try to tell in my simple way
Of the trials I've been through.

I cannot name a definite place
Nor a specific date,
When Christ began His work in me
As some of you relate.

When I was a little girl
Under six years old,
I began to worry deeply
About the welfare of my soul.

I felt to be so sinful,
The worst child my mother had;
While the others enjoyed childhood,
I was cast down and sad.

I thought that I was going to die,
And hell would be my doom.
I wondered why I was ever born,
Since I had to die so young.

I know I worried my dear Mother,
With questions that I asked.
But little did she know the trouble
That was raging in my breast.

She was oh so very patient
And consoled me as best she could.
But as my thoughts go back to the time
and place,
I think, and feel she understood.

I could not know that Jesus cared,
The devil and hell was all my dread.
But after awhile this seemed to pass,
And I had other interests instead.

I then passed through a period,
Seemingly unconcerned,
Til gradually in the future
Those tormenting fears returned.

I would go to the movies
And wish I hadn't gone.
Because I didn't want to be found there
Should Jesus call me home.

When I was twenty-eight years old
I lost my only son.
Our family circle on earth was broken
But I hope in Heaven had begun

One day when I was so very lonely,
Feeling in the sight of God condemned,
I, in search for consolation,
Tried to find a certain hymn.

I was searching for assurance
That the promise was to me.
That He would never leave nor forsake

me
But forever with me be.

But on opening my hymn book,
My eyes fell upon the following verse,
Then instead of finding comfort,
I felt my condemnation just.

“Oh, Lord, it has seemed good to Thee
To take my infant dear.
I hope it will work good for me
And cause me Thee to fear.”

“To show me that I should not prize
Nothing on earth so high,
As Thee the Sovereign Lord of all
Who rules the earth and sky.”

One night I dreamed I saw my mother
Just as happy as she could be.
She and all the saints were singing,
“Rock of Ages cleft for me.”

Then one night I saw my Saviour
As he hung upon the tree;
This was witnessed by my pastor,
Several others, and by me.

I no longer fear the devil,
Tis my precious Lord I fear.
I feel he has my sins forgiven
And tenderly keep me in His care.

Now when my Savior calls me home,
This is my sincere prayer.
To rest my head upon His breast
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

Lelia Blackwell

Perfection

The Lord took them by the hand,
To lead them to a better land
But they began to dance and laugh
And even worshipped a golden Calf
Perfection wasn't in this sect
Their love was cold and they had no respect
So God made a new covenant with His clan
And they're kept by the Power of His loving hand
He sent His Son, as a Babe
It was His will for him to stay
On this earth a little while
He suffered much, had many trials
But He came here to save His Bride
From the sins that surrounded her on every side
He submitted Himself, to be nailed to the cross
Thus paying the price that His elect wasn't lost
Twas the will of God, twas His preperation
For God willed that His Son, was the way to perfection
And its took the blood shed of Jesus Christ
To redeem His elect and give them life
Thus had to be a testatoe for this tribe
So He made testimony through the wound in His side
And paid our debts with the blood He shed
So no more price for sin is in our debt
God wasn't satisfied with the ones before
So He made a new covenant, that opened the door
The old law wasn't perfect, so He made instead
One that brought in a better hope as He said
He put His laws into their hearts
He wrote them in the minds of His elect
And all of His Children shall give him respect
For they are to Him a people of love

URGENT!

Look on your address label.
If the expiration date is
8/84

it will expire with this issue. Please
send renewal in the mail today.

He protects for He is their God
 Nothing can pluck them, out of His
 hand
 They are His and His shall forever stand
 It is the spirit within them, that God
 has given
 To those God elected to go to Heaven
 And that is where the perfection lies
 through the blood of the Lamb, twas
 God's will He died
 But he didn't leave His Bride, without
 a hope
 He sent her the Comforter the Holy
 Ghost
 Which eases her miseries from suffer-
 ing and shame
 They've made to know that sin in the
 flesh is to blame
 But if sin is condemned in the flesh we
 know
 That the spirit is perfect, the Lord told
 us so
 And all who are God's Children are a-
 kin
 They've forgiven all their iniquities even
 though thy sin
 But they still have a fearful look for
 the day
 Of that eternal judgement, let Come
 what may

Kate Mathews

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, Elder David V. Spangler
 served Durham Primitive Baptist Church
 faithfully as Pastor for 32 years, preach-
 ing the Gospel, baptizing belivers in
 Christ, conducting numerous funerals,
 and visiting the sick and shut-in; there-
 fore; Resolved that the members of
 Durham Primitive Baptist Church ex-
 press their love, respect, and appreciation
 to Elder Spangler and his helpmate,
 Sister Nannie Spangler.

Read and approved by the members
 of Durham Primitive Church assembled
 in conference May 18, 1984.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
 Catherine Humbarger, Clerk

JOHN 14:6

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the
 way, the truth and the life: no
 man cometh unto the Father, but by
 me.”

This was the answer given by Jesus
 unto Thomas when he asked, How can
 we know the way? Jesus had just promised
 that he would go to prepare a place for
 his disciples, and that he would come
 again and receive them unto himself. He
 was not speaking to a crowd of unbe-
 lievers, but to his disciples with whom
 he had just eaten the last supper and
 after Judas had gone out.

“I am the way.” Jesus spake these
 graceful words, yet there are many grace-
 less professors who claim to know the
 way and are always trying to show others,
 but they know not our Lord and Savior,
 because, “no man knoweth who the Son
 is, but the Father; and who the Father is,
 but the Son, and he to whom the Son will
 reveal Him.” When Peter said, “Thou
 art the Christ, the Son of the living
 God,” Jesus said, “Blessed art thou,
 Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath
 not revealed it unto thee, but my Father
 which is in heaven.” No man can reveal
 the way unto another, and even if he
 knew him he would not be trying to
 teach others to know him, because God
 hath said, “And they shall not teach
 every man his neighbor, and every man
 his brother, saying, know the Lord: for
 all shall know me from the least to the
 greatest.” They be the blind leading the
 blind and both shall fall in the ditch.
 They would deceive the very elect if it
 were possible, saying, behold, he is in
 the secret chamber, or here, or some
 place else. This is impossible however

for the elect shall all be taught of God Himself. (John 24:24 & John 6:45). Every man that has heard and learned of the Father comes to Christ, and no man can come to him except the Father draw him.

Christ is the way, not a way, but the only way any poor, helpless sinner will ever enter heaven and immortal glory. He was the way before the foundation of the world, for he stood as a lamb slain even then in the mind and purpose of God and this was brought to pass in time. Why was it necessary that he should be slain? Because his children would sin and fall under the curse of the law and he was the only one who could redeem them. God's law is just and holy and its penalty is death, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Christ, who knew no sin, must take our sins upon himself and shed his precious and holy blood, for the blood of heifers, bulls and goats, etc., under the old Levitical law could in no way atone for sin. Neither could the blood of any man, save Jesus, atone for the sins of another because of his own sins. All men are the progeny of Adam in the flesh. They were in his loins when he ate the forbidden fruit, therefore his sin became theirs. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned." Adam was a figure of Christ and Eve was a figure or type of the church. She was in Adam when he was formed of the dust of the earth and this was to indicate that the elect were in Christ in eternity. They were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. As Adam is the head of all the earthly family, so is Christ the head of his church. Christ is the head and the church is his body. We are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Being a type of Christ, Adam was not deceived as was Eve, but because of his love for her he followed her into death, though he had no power to re-

deem her. Christ also loves his bride and would die to redeem her. It was possible for him to do this because he had no sin of his own, but in his Godhead it was impossible for him to die, therefore he must become incarnate. "Forasmuch then as the children (the children which God had given him) are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." (Heb. 2:13-14). In his flesh Christ could and did shed his blood and die on the cross of Calvary for his children; not all the children of the world as some proclaim, but the ones God had given him. If he had shed his precious blood for everyone then everyone is saved and there is no need of hell and everlasting damnation, for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." This is often misquoted when "away" is added. He was not to go away to prepare a place in heaven for us, because that was prepared in eternity. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." No, Jesus did not go away to prepare a place for us, but he was the way when he went to Calvary and shed his blood for us. (I only hope that I am included). This is the way, the only way, poor, helpless sinners are cleansed and redeemed from the curse of the law. When Christ died his children died with him, for the body must die when the head dies. The body cannot live without the head, and Christ is our head. Christ has risen from the dead however, and because he lives we shall also live. This is our blessed hope, and how sweet it does seem at times.

Jesus is the way and the truth, He is the Word of God and is God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." That which is not truth is a lie, and God

cannot lie. That is the only thing which he cannot do. Every man is a liar, but God is true. We come forth from the womb speaking lies, but he is just and holy and no guile was found in his mouth. In his prayer to the Father as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John, Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." The words which God spake are truth, and Jesus being the Word is the Truth."

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." There are those who deny this, for they say some scriptures are contradictory and that God would be the author of sin if the scriptures mean what they say. In denying this they make God a liar (in their own hearts), because they have not believed the record that God gave of his Son. But we that believe on the Son of God have the witness within ourselves, for he has promised to send the Holy Spirit who will guide us into all truth. Peter tells us, and I know from experience, that many scriptures are hard to be understood. The unlearned and unstable wrest these scriptures (change them to suit their own carnal mind) to their own destruction. Peter warns us to beware lest we be led astray with the errors of the wicked. If we do not understand a particular scripture we should leave it be, for no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. If we need an interpretation, God will give it to us in his own appointed time through the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.

Not only is Jesus the way and the truth, but he is also the life. "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye also shall appear with him in glory." O what a joyous blessing it is to receive a sweet hope that we shall some day appear in glory with our blessed Redeemer. How sweet it is to be

given a glimpse of him thru the eye of faith and believe we shall some day live in glory with him. It truly makes our spirits soar into the heavens. Jesus said unto Martha, the sister of Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." How can a man who is dead in trespasses and sin believe? We know a dead man can do nothing of himself, therefore we conclude that it is impossible for him to believe and impossible for him to save himself; but with God all things are possible. Jesus said, "Though a man die, yet shall he live." Also, "Ye must be born again." You must be born of the water and the Spirit. This is the new birth. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Therefore though we be dead, yet do we live through Christ, the power of God. Our flesh shall die and return to the dust from whence it came, but this life shall never die, for it is Christ which liveth in us. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Anything eternal has no beginning nor end. This life has ever been in Christ, but is only made manifest to us mortal creatures at the appointed time of God.

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." If a man has nothing more than his natural life it is foolishness to believe that he can have faith in God who he cannot possibly know, regardless of what the graceless professors preach: but if he has received this spiritual life then is he in Christ and Christ in him. If we live in him, and believe in him, it is because we have ever been in him, and there is nothing that one can do to get into him. The graceless professors tell us that we must

do something; that we must believe and accept him as our Savior: but Jesus said, "Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." It is not in the power of man to cause himself to be born nor born again. It is all a gift of God.

Brethren, I have only offered a few remarks here for your consideration. Read your bible, meditate on it, and pray. As James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." My prayer, if I truly pray, is that he will give us grace to grow in the knowledge and wisdom of him who is the way, the truth and the life.

Clifford Wilbanks

NOTE

The article or letter written by Linda in the July issue should have read - - Linda Spangler - 108 A Todd St., Carboro, N.C. 27510. (Linda is the granddaughter of Elder D.V. Spangler.)

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

Dear Editors:

I have a great desire to give my views on what the work of the deacons are. I am fully agreed with Elder Spangler on what he wrote on this subject. We have some that think that a deacon has the right to administer the ordinance of baptism, some say that Phillip a deacon

did when he baptised the eunuch, but at this time Philip was holding a different office. And the next day we that were of Pauls company departed, and came unto Cae-sa-re-a and entered into the house of Philip the evangelist; which was one of the seven; and abode with him. Acts 21:8 v.

The churches some of the times think that they see the qualification of a deacon and later it proves to be for the ministry, so was Philip and Stephen; read the Acts 7th chapter. I think that I can see more of the work of Philip the evangelist than I can in the work of the apostle Philip. Let us notice that the deacon Philip was an evangelist at the time that he was baptizing members into the fellowship of the church, and we have no record where deacons holds such an office. A Deacon can assist his pastor by helping to lower them in the water and raising them up; this is part of serving the tables of the ministry, their work is to serve tables of the poor, tables of the church. I also appreciate seeing the deacons visiting the sick and if they are called on to offer prayer, I think that would be proper. I think the work of a minister or a deacon is a seven day a week job and should be twenty-four hours every day. I realize much of the time is a battle between the flesh and the spirit. I have so much tossing to and fro, and in deep meditations, and much of the time in prayer for the Lord to keep me, and not me only but Zion the world over. I want to thank God for the kind fellowship that the brethren and sisters has shown my wife and me, this means you in many of the states that we have traveled. I remember that we spent a night in Sister Josie Mitchell's home in the state of Washington. I can almost in my mind see her sitting in front of me, looking me in the eyes, telling what the Lord had done for her: That was in the year of 1974. In the spring of 76 about April, something seemed to tell me that

she had bid us fare well. I later learned that it was about that time that she had gone on to her resting place, what a precious memory.

Elder J.R. Hollandsworth

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS:

Due to rising cost in publishing the Signs, we increased the subscription price beginning July 1, 1984 to \$10.00 per year and \$18.00 for two years. We regret this increase, but our cost now is a little over \$1.00 per copy.

Editors

Rt. 1 Box 10
Parsonsborg, MD 21849
June 10, 1984

Dear Editors,

Since I read the January issue of the Signs of The Times I have wanted to write and tell you how very much I enjoyed it. I was so glad Elder Key explains article number nine of the prospectus. I agree with what he wrote.

Elder Campbell's editorial was a great comfort to me. Before I was taken in the Forest Grove Church and for a number of years I kept my hymn book in front of me as I did my work and sang to myself. Lately I seem to have no desire to sing as I work and it has worried me.

I have enjoyed each issue this year more than I had for a long time. I pray the good Lord will continue to bless you to write the good editorials and the Brethren to send in their experiences.

I want to express our gratitude to the ministers who have come to preach for us these several years since we have not

had a Pastor at Forest Grove Church. They have come preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We feel the Lord has blessed us and we would praise His holy name if we could find the right words.

Many thanks for the comfort you bring us each month when the "Signs" arrives.

Yours in hope,
Ethel Halloway

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

THE SCARLETT LINE Part II

Rahab received and sent away the spies in peace. They are her friends, her sworn friends, for they have sworn unto her by the Lord, calling upon him to witness and to establish the covenant between them. When in dire needs, when in the deeps, when as outcasts, as the vilest, the chief of sinners, distracted with hellish temptations, what shall satisfy us, lift us up, inspire us once more to hope for salvation? If for help we must look to our creature resources, then we must despair, for we have learned and are still learning in our soul's humiliations that we are without strength. Must then the chief of sinners perish? Our hope is in the new covenant, in Jesus' precious blood. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant." O, a sight of this by faith will be as streams in the desert; here we shall find our strong consolations. Harken to one of the ambassadors of God, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it

was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”—Heb. vi. 17-20. O, ye tried ones, here we have the sworn, the sure mercies of the Lord. This is admitting us into the secret of his presence, this is opening to us the bosom thoughts of the everlasting God. Here the Lord is revealed contemplating all the woes and weaknesses of his people, and he is overflowing in his love and pity towards them. O, ponder each word: “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it with an oath.”

The two spies are a lively representation of the ministers of Christ. “Behold, when we come into the land thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window.” This O, Rahab, shall be the true token unto thee that thou shalt not perish, and that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Rahab has faith in the God of Israel, she has faith in these two spies, and she has faith in the token they have given her, and obedient to their faith “she bound the scarlet line in the window.” No doubt she often looked upon this scarlet line with tears of gratitude to the Lord. This true token quieted her fears, and was her support until the day of her salvation, and thus within her heart she might speak, Who am I that I should be singled out to be remembered with the favor that the Lord bears unto his people, that I should be saved, that I shall rejoice with the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance? O Jericho! fair and beautiful in thy situation, thou city of palm trees. No longer I love thee, city of my nativity, city of my harlotry. Thou art an

offense unto me; O let mine eyes be turned from thee, let mine eyes feast upon this scarlet line, true token of the covenant of life and friendship with the Lord, and with his chosen. My heart is toward thee, O Israel, beloved of the Lord. O, mine eyes and my yearning heart are unto thee, O Lord God of Israel.

“Witness, all ye host of heaven,
My Redeemer’s tenderness;
Love I much?—I’ve much forgiven
I’m a miracle of grace.”

The line of scarlet thread was the true token of the covenant between Rahab and the Israelites. Let us now consider its signification unto us in the gospel. The scarlet line is a figure of the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God. This scarlet line of Jesus’ blood runs all through the book of Revelation, from Genesis to Revelation, and has been, and will be to the end of time ever gloriously manifested in the faith God’s elect. By faith in the revelation of God, Abel offered unto God of the firstlings of his flock. (Gen. iv. 4) The Lord thus early gave the scarlet line of blood unto his people, who through the grace given unto them, worship him in Spirit and in truth. Noah displayed the scarlet line when on coming out of the ark he builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. (Gen. viii. 20,21) This was all acceptable unto God, and was fragrant as sweet flowers. The sacrifice of Christ is of a sweet smelling savor unto God, and to sinners called by grace. (Ephesians v. 2) Job presented continually before the Lord the scarlet line, in behalf of himself and his family. (Job i. 5.) Abraham often shed the red blood in his sacrifices to the Lord, (Gen. xii. 8,) and he gave utterance to a glorious prophesy concerning the true scarlet line, saying, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.”—Gen. xxii.8. Issac and Jacob displayed in their worship the scarlet line of blood (Gen. xxvi.25; xxxi. 54.) Then

Israel and his household went down into Egypt and sojourned there, but during the long night of the bondage of the twelve tribes the scarlet line was only dimly seen, the Israelites were generally sunken in idolatry, and when they would have worshiped the Lord with the scarlet line, it was not meet to do so in Egypt, for the Egyptians would slay them. (Exodus viii. 26.) But on the last night of their bondage in the land, a night to be much remembered, behold on all the houses of Israel the token of the scarlet line of the Passover blood! "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will passover you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."—Exodus xii. 13. Thenceforth in that favored nation how magnificently the scarlet line is exhibited. Every day, in the morning and in the evening, a lamb was slain. (Exodus xxix. 38,39.) In the yearly commemoration of the Passover, on the great day of atonement, (Lev. xvi.) in all the multitude of personal offerings, in all this typical worship of the Almighty so signally prominent is the scarlet line of the blood of beasts. Now we come to God by the blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins, by this precious blood we are made nigh to God. (Ephesians ii. 13.) We are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

But that scarlet line bound in the window of Rahab, the harlot, was unintelligible to the inhabitants of Jericho, it had no voice to them. All the tribes of Israel that encompassed the city could read its meaning, and thus they interpreted that line of scarlet thread, "There upon the wall is the house of the blessed, while all the rest of Jericho are accursed. This is the household to whom we are related in covenant bonds, and in the day of Jericho's doom this house shall stand. Thou, O Rahab, and all thine, shall be

saved, and we will deal kindly and truly with thee. So to multitudes to-day the scarlet line of Christ's blood has no signification, they turn aside from it as from a thing of naught, but to believers Jesus' blood is exceeding precious. Have our hearts heard the voice of Jesus? His blood speaks so blessedly to the children of God; it declares their at-one-ment with God. This then is the signification of the scarlet line of blood that runs all through the Scriptures. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."—Lev. xvii. 11. In our earthly standing we are far off from God, depraved and vile, outcasts, for we are alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works. (Col. i. 21.) Is this an overdrawn picture? Ah no, as you are taught of God your eyes will be opened to see, and your heart will most painfully feel that the description is so dreadfully true, and then with what heartfelt appreciation you will cleave to blood of atonement. Christ Jesus in his great love hath reconciled us to God in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and un-reprovable in his sight. (Col. i. 22.) Could anything be better? No wonder that we cleave to the scarlet line and bind it fast in the window. Our gracious God laid all our iniquities upon his dear Son, and he gave himself a sacrifice for our sin, and poured out his soul unto death; thus he put away all our sins, shedding for us his reconciling blood. (2 Chron. xxix. 24; Heb. ii. 17.) O, it is so comforting to look upon the scarlet line, and its voice is most sweet to a poor sinner's heart. Do you believe in the scarlet line of Jesus' blood? It speaks to the believer of his redemption, and that all his sins are forgiven. (Ephesians i. 7.) The blood of God's dear Son cleanses from all sin, and in this fountain opened for sin and uncleanness we are washed and made whiter than snow. (Psalms li. 7.) We are justified by his blood, and we shall be saved from wrath through him. The

saved from wrath through him. The scarlet line gives us the victory over all the powers of darkness, it stops the mouth of our accuser. (Rev. xii, 11.) The scarlet line of Jesus' blood is faith's song in the believer's heart, and it will be our theme in glory. This line of scarlet thread lines all the way from sin to holiness and God, from bondage to eternal liberty. O, Emmanuel's precious blood has consecrated all the way from earth to heaven, (Heb. x. 19,) and thus we draw nigh to God, ever looking with all affection to this scarlet line. If the scarlet line is so significant, what shall the child of God do with it? Look once more at the picture portrayed upon the wall of Jericho. There stands the house of the one who received and sent away in peace the two spies; at the window she stands, Rahab the harlot, with hope welling up in her heart, with eager hands of faith and love she binds the scarlet line in the window.

Daniel kneeled down upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem. (Dan. vi. 10.) There was a window in the ark, (Gen. vi. 16,) and the ransomed of the Lord fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows. (Isaiah lx. 8.) Shall we look upon this window in Rahab's house as expressive of the worship of God? Whenever Rahab looked forth, there to her heart's comfort and delight she beheld the scarlet line bound in the window. So in the window of the believers praises and prayers unto God the scarlet line is seen. In seasons when guilt is so conscious to our spirit, when accusations roll in upon us like a flood, when sin-stained, with a wounded heart and with a blushing face, how shall we look forth at the window unto God? Ah, when in my soul's conflicts, when so buffeted by sin and Satan, imploringly I would look to the Lord, let the holy Spirit ever instruct me

to bind the scarlet line in the window. Let others aspire after the fleeting things of earth, if thou wilt reach forth thine hands after wealth and fame, but give, O give to me, a perishing sinner, a true token of thy everlasting love; give me, O lord, the scarlet line, the priceless token, the blood of the new testament shed for the remission of sin.

"She bound the scarlet line in the window." God commanded Israel to bind his words for a sign upon their hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. (Deut. vi. 9.) Solomon says, "My son, keep they father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee."—Prov. vi. 20-22. So the called of god are effectually taught to bind in their window the scarlet line of the Saviour's blood. Examine yourself whether you have the scarlet line bound in the window, for the religion which lacks that personal, experimental knowledge of the blood of Christ, is valueless before God. The elect are chosen unto the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter i. 2.) Without this scarlet line we cannot know our election of God. What have you bound in your window? Is it your self-righteousness? What! filthy rags? (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) Some bind in the window of their religious profession their supposed work for the Lord, the many wonderful works, which they declare they have done for Christ. Such religionists very fitly sing to themselves,

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky."

But Christ will say in that day, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."—Luke xiii. 27.

Others display in their windows the doctrines of men, and the doctrines of devils, some in the bare theory may mention Christ's blood, but their non-experimental, heartless religion will avail them nothing in the day of God's wrath. But you, poor souls, who feel so unworthy, sinful, polluted, who long for freedom from all sin, whose hearts crave reconciliation with God in the free remission of all your sins, to you how sacred is the scarlet line. With all desire you contemplate Emmanuel's blood, and muse with affection upon its efficacious fruits, (yielding to believers so richly redemption and forgiveness of sins, and everlasting peace with God) so with believing hands you bind the scarlet line in the window. "Wash me Savior, or I die."

That language in Leviticus i.3, is very descriptive of the spirit in which God's people worship him in the shedding of blood. "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord." It is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalm ex.3. So we are brought with all willingness of heart to bind the scarlet line in the window.

Day by day in our journey we are being wounded and bruised by temptations and sins; it is therefore needful for such poor ones as we are to constantly have in our sight the cleansing blood of the Lamb, the precious scarlet line. And as we look again and again upon the Savior's blood, all is well, we have a comfortable trust and taste the sweetness of the atonement, Jesus' reconciling blood heals all our disorders, and sheds upon us its consoling fragrance, our hope is renewed, and our hearts are inspired with sweet gratitude to him who remembered us in our low estate, and gave us the true token of the everlasting covenant, the scarlet line. The scarlet line also very beautifully presents to our

faith all the blessed revelations of Christ's gospel, all so gloriously, divinely interwoven, and made so infinitely strong by the immutable decrees, the promises and oath of God, and all scarlet colored with the precious blood of the Lamb.

Let us return to Jericho, and glance again at what is transacting there. "Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in."—Joshua vi.1. Once a day for six days the men of war compassed the city, following the seven priests with trumpets of rams horns, and the ark of the Lord; on the seventh day they compassed the city seven times. During these days there streams from the window of Rahab's house, upon the wall, the significant scarlet line. All Israel took affectionate notice of it, and of the house upon which was this mark. (Ezek. ix. 4-6.) While all the inhabitants of Jericho are in restless suspense, and their spirits faint within them in apprehension of their coming doom, in Rahab's house there is supporting hope, her house upon the wall is sanctified by the scarlet line, all within that house are in covenant safety, and shall be saved in that day. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not." She looks forth upon the host of Israel, but she fears no evil of them, for her heart is toward them, and toward their God, and if at any time her heart wavered, and unbelief and fears intruded, there, to strengthen her hope, she sees that true token of the sworn friendship between herself and Israel, the scarlet line bound in the window. One affectionate glance at this and her hope revives, and all is blissful peace, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

At length the day of Jericho's doom is come. "And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed

the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.★★★So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword." When the noise of the tumbling walls is hushed, and the dust of the ruins is fanned away, there unshaken stands the house upon the wall, that monument of God's sovereign grace, the sanctuary of the saved ones, the house of Rahab the harlot.

"And in the window still bound fast,
Above the fatal ram's horns blast,
There streams the precious covenant
sign,
The token true, the scarlet line."

"But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein; only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers which

Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."

Thus Rahab came forth in sacred blessedness, with gratitude filling her heart, and then in due time she is adopted into the family of Israel, for she is united in marriage to Salmon, a prince of the house of Judah, by whom she gave birth to Boaz, who married Ruth, the Moabitess, who gave birth to Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all God blessed forever. Amen. (Matt. i.5; Ruth iv. 21,22.)

The grace of our God is exceeding abundant, for it lifts up the poor from the dust, the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, causing them to inherit the throne of glory. Our Savior hath washed his people from all their pollutions, in his own blood, and his church is without blame in his sight. Who shall lay anything to the charge of Rahab, the wife of Salmon, the prince of the house of David? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

May this, dear reader, be our consolation, and when we draw near our journey's end, and our exodus from the earthly house of this tabernacle is at hand; when the things of time, our dearest earthly friends, and all nature swoon away, recede and fade from our view around our dying bed, what then? Then, O thou gracious Redeemer, give me a true token, hold thou before mine eyes the scarlet line; enable me with eyes of faith and love to look upon thy precious atoning blood. O Lamb of God, smile upon me; then with this true token a passport into heaven's glories shall be mine, and everlasting praises shall be thine.

Fred W. Keene

MEETINGS

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

One hundred forty second session original south Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Pilgrim Rest Church. Spetember 14, 15, 16, 1984.

Take highway 167, five miles north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Turn left on 273 and the church is located one half mile on left.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder John C. Townley
Moderator
Frances Townley
Church Clerk

**WEST COUNTRY
LINE UNION**

The West Country Line Union is appointed to be held with Pleasantville Primitive Baptist church the fifth Sunday in July. If it be the Lord's Will.

The church house is located on 704 near Madison, N.C.

We welcome the ministers, brethern and sisters and friends of our faith and order to meet with us.

Rachel Wray
Church Clerk

**SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene with Bell Spur Church the 1st Sunday in September, 1984 and Friday and Saturday before. The church is located just off the Blue Ridge Parkway. Those traveling south turn just before

mile post 184. Those traveling north turn just after you pass mile post 184.

Elder Amos Hash - Association Clerk

**LITTLE HOPE
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Little Hope Church looked out among themselves and recognized certain gifts. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Saturday May 26, 1984 at two o'clock at Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Route 1, Elliston, Virginia, for the purpose of examination of these gifts, Brother Junior Conner as Elder and Brother Lawrence Myers as Deacon and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of elder and deacon. The church had invited Elders William Holland, Raymond Goad, Willard Cox, and Rufus Brown to sit in the presbytery and all other ministers present were invited to sit with them.

The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder Denver Simpson. Elder Lane Carter pastor of Little Hope Church, was elected as moderator and Elder Kenneth R. Key to serve as clerk. Elder Noel Conner delivered the candidates to the presbytery and Deacon Hancel Conner was asked to be spokesman for the church.

The qualification for Elder and Deacon was read by Elder Lane Carter from the third chapter of First Timothy. Examinations followed by Elders Willard Cox, Rufus Brown, William Holland and Roy Agee. Brother Conner was asked to express some of his feelings as to his call to the ministry and did so to the satisfaction of the presbytery. The presbytery being satisfied proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Raymond Goad. The charge was delivered to Brother Conner by Elder Amos Hash and to Brother Myers by Elder William Holland. They were then delivered back to the church

as an ordained Elder and Deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery was read and adopted. Dismissed by prayer by Elder Roy Agee. The presbytery was composed of the following ministers: Elder Lane Carter, Elder Rufus Brown, Elder William Holland, Elder Amos Hash, Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Denver Simpson, Elder Willard Cox, Elder Noel Conner, Elder Roy Agee and Elder Kenneth R. Key. The following deacons were present: Deacon Nelson Reid, Lonzie Nichols, Donald Agee, Vance Duncan, W. T. Conner, Hassell Hale, Jessie Tyree, Tiras Conner, Bobby Bernard, Wilson King, Harry Cannady, Chester Haygood, C. T. Abshire, Guy Holley, Clay Brown, Fred Murphy, Claude Johnson, John Plunket, Lewis C. Aker, W. W. Abshire, Edwin Dyer and Hancel Conner.

Elder Lane Carter - Moderator
Elder Kenneth R. Key - Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR
MAY 1984

Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA	\$8.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY	10.00
Mrs. Mary Stanfield, VA	3.00
H.C. Harwell, MO.....	2.00
Eli T. Smith, NC	7.00
Mrs. Kathleen Martin, VA.....	3.00
Eld. Jack W. Cox, VA	2.00
Mrs. W.R. Pullig, LA	3.00
Mrs. J.F. Thompson, NC	7.00
W.F. Griffith, NC.....	6.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL.....	3.00
Mrs. John Philpott, VA.....	1.00
Mrs. Berdie S. Hall, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA	7.00
Mrs. Clemmie Bishop, AR.....	6.00

Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA.....	25.00
J.P. Steward, MS	7.00
Mrs. L.W. Warren, MD	7.00
Mrs. Maude Wallace, TX	3.00
Mrs. G.B. McAdams, MS	10.00
Eld. Harold A. Janes, CA.....	3.00
Eld. P.E. Ingram, VA.....	7.00
Mrs. Rolla E. Mallott, PA	4.00
Mrs. French C. Hogan, VA	2.00
Claude McKinney, NC.....	3.00
Eld. Bennie Clifton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX	2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Mann, FL.....	7.00
Mrs. R.M. Lester, VA.....	5.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ollie C. Gauldin, NC	3.00
Mrs. W.C. Sutherland, VA.....	1.00
Mrs. Maye C. Bissette, NC	3.00

OBITUARIES

Drucilla Frances Denny Evans

Drucilla Evans born April 18, 1906 and departed this life on April 25, 1984. She was a native of Rockingham County. She was the daughter of the late Thomas J. and India Gauldin Denny and had lived in the Pelham community most of her life. She was a retired employee of the Danville knitting company. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 24, 1958. She was a faithful member until death. A firm believer of salvation by Grace. She was loved by all who knew her. Surviving are husband Raleigh Evans; Sons- Malton Evans of Springfield, VA, Raleigh Evans Jr. of Route 1 Pelham; Brothers Russell Denny of Danville, Va; Herman Denny of Route 2 Ruffin, Wilford Denny of Stoneville. Sisters Mrs. Bessie D. Curry of Eden, Mrs. Odessa D. Williams and Mrs. Hazel Farbes of Danville, VA, Mrs. Doris Neighbors of Ruffin. Five grandchildren; three great grandchildren. Funeral services were held at Dan River Primitive

Baptist church by her pastor Elder David Spangler. She was buried in the church cemetery beneath beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Done by the order of Dan River Church in conference.

D.V. Spangler - Moderator
Boyd Minter - Clerk

Lynwood C. Dorman

Lynwood C. Dorman, son of the late Luther Dorman and Maymie Galbraith Dorman was born July 2, 1913 and died April 13, 1983. He is survived by his wife, Maidline McLawhorn Dorman, a son, Robert L. Dorman and a daughter Frances E. Tripp, two grandsons, two granddaughters, a great granddaughter - Also a great grandson born since Lynwood's death.

Lynwood was a man of integrity with an out going personality and a keen sense of humor and was always ready with an answer. He had a zest for life and was always cheerful, whether sick or well, never complaining. He was free hearted and always ready to share. He was aware of the frailty of man and that he was totality dependent on God for his Grace and mercy. For many years he was a regular church attendant, and he loved to mingle and talk with the brethren.

We miss him, but trust that our loss was his eternal gain.

Done by order of conference at Hancocks Church.

Elder Joseph L. Sawyer - Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn - Clerk
Mabel C. McLawhorn - Ass't Clerk

BOOK NOTICES

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84 Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1-(901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

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P O E T R Y

*Eternal Power! whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds.*

*The lowest step around thy seat,
Rises too high for Gabriel's feet;
In vain the favored angel tries
To reach thine height with wond'ring
eyes.*

*Lord, what shall earth and ashes do!
We would adore our Maker, too;
From sin and dust to thee we cry,
The Great, the Holy, and the High!*

*Earth from afar has heard thy fame,
And worms have learned to lisp thy
name;
But, O! the glories of thy mind
Leave all our soaring thoughts behind*

*God is in heaven, but man below;
Be short our tunes; our words be few;
A sacred reverence checks our songs,
And praise sits silent on our tongues.*

*"And lie hath put a new song
in my mouth, even praise unto our
God: many shall see it, and fear,
and shall trust in the Lord."*

Psalms 40:3

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EDITORIAL

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The apostle Paul was blessed in his writings to the churches and brethren of his day to leave on record more words of comfort and encouragement to the household of faith than any of the other writers of the new testament. His special calling and experience is reflected in all of his writings and they are especially beautiful and strengthening to other way worn pilgrims as they run the race that is set before them, those who also have been turned from their headlong pursuit of the vanities and pleasures of the flesh and made, in a moment of time to love and seek after the joy and peace that only the spiritual realm affords. All

of his writings bear witness of the sovereignty and mercy of a holy and righteous God who manifests himself to his children in ways and manners known only to him. If you removed these experiences and the mystery surrounding them there would be nothing that would cause his letters to be read and cherished two thousand years later with the same interest and intense longing that they were by those who lived in that day. Those who are born of the spirit in this the twentieth century are as concerned and involved in the truths set forth in these writings as the writer and the fellowship that they feel for him is as strong and present in their heart as that for their brethren who live in this day. The first verse in Paul's epistle is addressed to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, so, evidently the Apostle realized that this would be true and felt that he was indeed addressing the saints of all future ages who were called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of revelation.

Surely Paul must have been remembering his conversion on the road to Damascus as he wrote to his brethren stating again and again that his salvation, the salvation of the saints at Ephesus and the salvation of the faithful in Christ Jesus is sure simply because it is predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. He must have been remembering the way and manner in which his salvation was manifested to him and is acknowledging that it was only because of this sovereign mercy of God that he did not continue as a persecuter of the church. He could find nothing that would account for his sudden miraculous change except that it was the good pleasure of God and for purposes known only to him.

This is the experience that caused Paul to state emphatically several times

in this epistle that the salvation of the saints is absolute because it was predestinated of God and that before the foundation of the world. In the verse above he carries it even further by stating that this predestination is according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. I do not know of anything that is not included in this. "All things: if there is something that is not included then the statement is false. Isaiah says, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God and there is none else: I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." I firmly believe that the, "All things." in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians and "the things that are not yet done," in Isaiah's writing include the same things and both of the writers refer to the "things" being according to the will or the pleasure of God. The will and the pleasure of God are the absolute assurance that the "things" will come to pass and they will work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. If I have a hope it is in the sure and certain mercy of God who blesses his children with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ because it is his own good pleasure to do so. The way that I claim as a reason for the hope that is within teaches me that these things are true and that only such a plan of salvation would answer my need, then, now and in the future.

In his letter to the Galatian Church the Apostle Paul wrote of persecuting the Church, wasting it, profiting in the Jewish religion above many his equal, being more exceeding zealous of the traditions of the fathers or in other words, glorying in his own achievements in the religion of his fathers, enjoying the prestige and honor they bestowed on

him. He was satisfied and did not desire to change and certainly not to follow after the faith that he then despised, therefore would if left to him self continued in that way. He speaks of his change as being completely of God and that according to his own pleasure, "But when it pleased God who separated me from my mothers womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his son in me that I might preach him among the gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." No boasting or self esteem here, solely a work of Grace according to the good pleasure of God the Father in manifesting his love and mercy to one even when they were dead in trespasses and in sin and setting them about his business and manifesting the purpose and power of the calling. All whose experience causes them to fellowship Paul will ever confess that their salvation is of God and is a work wrought in them and not by them and rejoice in scriptures that declare the absolute certainty of the results of this work that has begun in them.

This doctrine has ever been declared by the Lord's people. They have ever referred to the Lord's people as a blessed people and this blessing is always because of a particular love that the Father had for them before time began, reserved for them in Christ and made manifest in time according to divine appointment. In the song that Moses was given as a witness against Israel it is recorded, "When the most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's people is his portion. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." This is the whole household of faith, there will be none added to it and there will be none removed from it but rather each at the appointed time of the Father will come forth making manifest that they are

children of God and acknowledging their claim to this inheritance and singing praises for his wonderful display of Love and mercy to such undeserving creatures as they now see themselves to be. David wrote, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and all thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom and talk of thy power." They all do come forth proclaiming the wonder and the perfection of this miracle of Grace that has wrought such a change in their heart and soul. It is beautiful to behold as one you have known for many years begins to manifest this change from the darkness of sin and fleshly pursuits to speaking of the power and the glory of the kingdom of God.

Anyone that does not love this doctrine and praise God that the salvation of all of his saints is assured by the perfect work of Christ has never been made to see and feel the exceeding sinfulness of the creature and realize the weakness and powerlessness to deliver themselves from their condition. When one does see and realize this they will never question the fact that all things are ordained of God but will daily praise him for his wisdom and mercy in causing it to be this way. The natural man delights in the earthly pleasures of the flesh and would be content to ever dwell in that state. Only the coming in of a stronger than they, by force, will disrupt this state of contentment and make them realize what they actually are in nature and what they must be by grace. If the salvation of the saints was not predestinated performed and perfected by the birth death and resurrection of Christ, all men would be born, live and die in their lost and sinful condition. This doctrine is not hard, unjust, unfair or fatalistic in fact it is actually the direct opposite. It is the work of a God of love and mercy performing everything that is needful to assure that all of those for whom his only begotten Son died

will dwell with them in heaven throughout eternity. There is purpose, direction and complete control exercised every step of the way in this plan of salvation. Fatalism has none of these characteristics. God's love and mercy for his chosen did nothing, for or against those whom he did not love, it left them as they were, in their sins, with no atonement for them. This is not a popular subject but it is the truth as set forth in the scriptures.

For by Grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast: For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This sets aside any legitimate claim that any man can make, of having anything to do in working out his salvation, except the experiencing of that which God hath ordained should be. They have nothing to boast of since it is all of grace and grace is of God as he exercises the heirs of mercy in his ways for their teaching and instruction. It is not to reveal to God what is in man but rather to reveal God and his ways to man and to work out the salvation that has been their heritage since before the foundation of the world.

O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out. Man with all of the accumulated wisdom of the flesh down through the ages of time can never fathom the depths of this wisdom or come to a knowledge of God and his ways. God dwells in a spiritual realm and man is born into a natural realm with no knowledge or ability to transcend the great gulf that separates the two. God moves freely within either and therefore he alone must perform all of the changes to this earthly natural man to make him a fit subject for the spiritual realm. This he did by sending his only begotten Son into the natural realm in a

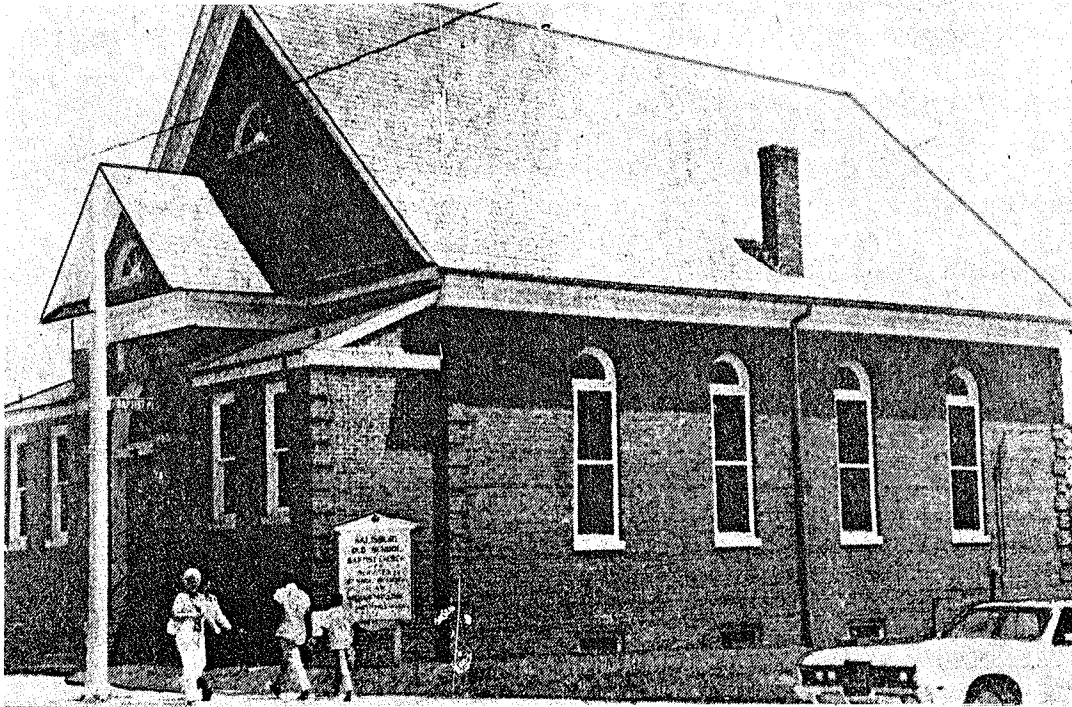
natural body to break down the middle wall of partition that would have forever barred all men from the spiritual realm. This Jesus did in his death, burial and resurrection when he fulfilled his promise to his disciples when he told them he was going to prepare a place for them. He did not tell this to the world, but was speaking to those he loved, those with whom he had desired to eat this last passover and those whom he loved to the end.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

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CORRESPONDENCE

1116 Chester Ave.
Nashville, TN 37206
Nov. 27, 1983

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) In order for one to believe something, one must first be given evidence upon which to base that belief. The natural man obtains evidence upon which he bases belief through his natural senses consisting of sight, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting. By these natural senses all the members of Adam’s race know from a natural or carnal observation that God does exist as is stated in the following scripture: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:” (Roman 1:20) This knowledge of god is not by faith for it belongs to the natural man who does not, will not and cannot receive the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness to him.

Now in as much as faith is a fruit of the spirit of God we again are reminded that the carnal man is not the recipient of it. Therefore one must conclude that the new man, new creature or spiritual man is the recipient of faith. The carnal man has no understanding of the eternal Godhead, only the evidence of His existence as is seen by the things God has made, so the carnal has no excuse for his denial of God’s existence and power. But the spiritual man through faith receives understanding of God, because faith is the evidence of the invisible Godhead to the spiritual man. “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things, which do appear.”

(Hebrews 11:3) If the spiritual things of God were made tangible objects so that they could be felt, tasted, smelt, heard, or seen then faith would be useless. Since the spiritual things of God are not tangible we need another foundation upon which to build our belief and that other is faith, the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. Faith is to the spiritual man as the senses are to the carnal man. The spiritual man is able to “see as through a glass darkly,” the otherwise invisible things of the spiritual realm through faith which is the evidence of those things which are not seen by the natural eye. God’s children are quickened into spiritual life here in this timely world but they will not receive the spiritual body with its spiritual senses until they are resurrected in Jesus’ likeness. As the natural man equipped with the five senses has no need of faith in the comprehension of natural things, neither will the spiritual man equipped with that perfect spiritual body have any need of faith in the comprehension of heavenly bliss, in the eternal presence of our God and Savior. “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even or also I am known.” (I Cor. 13:12) Since we see the spiritual things darkly and have knowledge of them only in part, we are in constant need of evidence of these spiritual blessings for which we hope and this evidence is faith. If it were not for this faith which gives evidence, God’s elect would utterly despair for lack of spiritual support for their hope of eternal bliss with their Creator. Then it is said they “are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” God’s people are dead and their life is hid with Christ in God; the life that they now live in the flesh, as they live by faith which is evidence enough to cause them to “believe to the saving of the Soul.”

(Hebrews 10: 38-39) It is the same faith that enabled those recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews to forfeit all carnal desires, resist all opposition and even perform super human feats. By faith they desired to be in possession of that which they had seen and tasted of by faith and that to the exclusion of all things which opposed their possession of it. Inasmuch as they had seen it by faith it was theirs. God does not reveal to one the things of the spiritual realm which does not belong to him. The knowledge of these spiritual things obtained by faith is what gives God's children the drive to seek a more complete possession of them. This is a progressive experience in that the more they taste of heaven, the more intense their desire becomes to be in full possession of it, although they realize this is possible only in eternity. Therefore it is said that they are dead and their life is hid with Christ in God. And they are saved by grace through faith which is not their own faith, but a gift of God, not of works lest any of them should boast. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." (I Cor. 13:13) Of the three charity or love is eternal. When we are in the eternal state with our Savior our hopes and faith will have been fulfilled, but love for our Savior shall forever be the theme of our songs of praise in that heavenly choir.

It is my sincere desire that this has been written by faith, for "without faith it is impossible to please God."

In bonds of love,
Gregory Duren

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

WHERE THE DOVE DWELLS (Song of Solomon ii. 14.)

“**O** my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock.” The Savior thus addresses his church in her present state of existence, and thus presents her condition of safety. The dove, pursued by birds of prey, would seek and enter into one of the clefts or fissures in the rocks, where she was safe from her enemy. This figure is used by the heavenly Lover to show in what consists the safety of his bride. He himself is the Rock, and the clefts of the rock represent the sufferings and death which he endured by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. When Moses struck the rock waters gushed out; so when the law struck Jesus waters of salvation came forth for all his people. At the second time that Moses struck a rock, in the desert of Zin, which was nearly forty years after he struck the first rock, he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and the Lord told him that he could not go over into the promised land. (Num. xx. 12.) So when the law struck Jesus, the Rock of salvation, its work was done, and it must die. The law could not take the Lord's people into the gospel land; its work ends with the crucifixion of Christ.

When the Lord would show Moses his glory, and cause all his goodness to pass before him, he put Moses in a cleft of the rock on which he stood, and covered him with his hand while his glory passed by. A cleft in a rock is not a pleasant place to be forced into, but it is safe.

“I am crucified with Christ,” Paul says. He says, “We which live [a spiritual life] are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.”—2 Cor. iv. He says, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comformable unto

his death." Here are the clefts of the rock where the dove is, where the Lord's people find their salvation. It is not in peace and quiet of mind, not while lying on beds of ivory and stretching themselves on their couches, that they find safety, but in affliction and trouble; in suffering with Christ; in "bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus." Here is Moses, held in a close, rough, unpleasant cleft of the flinty rock, trying to get out into liberty and see what is passing by; but for his salvation he is held down in a place he does not like, and covered with the Lord's hand. This is his salvation. If he had been outside of that rock he would have been destroyed. The power of the Lord's name which he pronounced would have been his destruction. No man could endure the last syllable of that name; it would destroy any of Adam's race: "And that will by no means clear the guilty." The Rock only could endure it. No man can see God's face and live, but hidden in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock, we can see his back parts; can see the glory after the Lord has passed by; can see the goodness and blessedness of what he has done.

How we fret, and worry, and complain at this constant trouble; this cutting off and hedging in; this daily crossing of our worldly desires, or the greater sorrow and shame when our fleshly desires are fulfilled; this constant dissatisfaction with ourselves and our works; this self-aborrence and self-loathing; this "great tribulation;" this withering of the glory and goodness of man like the grass; this lack of joy and comfort in worldly things, and often such questioning as to our interest in heavenly things. But in this is our safety. Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. All of those who stand before the great white throne have come out of great tribulation.

The dear Savior recognizes his people in this condition, and calls to them, as

his dove, seeing them in the clefts of the Rock. Also he speaks of them as "in the secret places of the stairs." The stairs were in the right side of the temple, and it was by winding stairs that the people went up out of the first into the second story, and out of the second into the third story, winding about, hardly knowing whether they are going up or down, often in a dark, secret place of the winding way. But he tells them where they are, they are in the stairs all the time. Every change, every turn, every new trouble and affliction, however it appears to oppress them and sink them down, is really lifting them higher. They are rising, they are in a secret place, hidden from the world, who cannot see them as the Lord's people, and who cannot understand the Lord's way of taking his people up from the world, up from self, up from legal works; but they are still going up by winding stairs out of the legal into the gospel dispensation, and out of the things that are seen from day to day into "the downward, and bear fruit upward."

The soil for plants generally must be broken up and rendered soft and fine, so that the roots can easily work into it. The soil for lilies of some kinds needs much softening by water, and in some kinds to be covered by it. There are a great many things of a most obnoxious kind that need to be gotten together to make a good rich soil for the lily. We speak of the soil as "good," and "rich," but put some of it out of place, on the face or on a white garment, and we pronounce it vile and loathsome.

What a sad, dark, fearful time that is for the poor soul when his thoughts are engaged day and night in searching his own vile heart and finding nothing but evil there. He cannot tell how he first came to see himself so sinful, cannot tell how his thoughts first began to be engaged in such a doleful search, in which he finds no good, but deeper and darker

depths of evil.

This broken heart, this depraved and sinful nature, this mass of corruption felt in the soul, is the soil which the Lord has prepared. It is he, the heavenly Husbandman, who has broken up the heart, who has made its corruption appear to our startled view, who has made us sick of sin, and sick of self because of sin.

Into this vile soil our thoughts are working downward, like roots from a good seed which the Lord has planted. This vile nature, this corrupt heart, is the "good ground" into which the good seed has fallen. It is "good ground" because it is well broken up and pulverized and made soft and tender. It is not the corruption, the sinfulness, which makes it good ground, but the knowledge of that corruption and sin, and the hatred of it. All men are corrupt and sinful, but until the law of god enters into the heart no one can know and feel it, and until that knowledge of one's just condemnation comes to him by the quickening power of God his heart is hard like the rock, the wayside or the thorny ground.

When the thoughts are working down in the darkness of our heart, and observing the sinfulness of all our life, trying if they can find some good thing there, what terrible anxiety and distress we feel. We cannot give up the search for something to give us hope, some good thing to relieve our anguish, some way of escape from the sin and evil that everywhere so afflict us. But we can find no relief, no way of escape from evil, for we seem to be all evil. Think of the roots that are working downward and abroad in the depth of the earth; what hopelessness we may imagine is theirs as they work in the darkness, the mass of fine, minute rootlets struggling, pushing themselves down into the soil, which grows more and more mellow, creeping and forcing themselves outward, to find they know not what. But they are doing

the work appointed for them, and it is through the work done by them that the tender blade finally appears in sight.

It is through the work done by the thoughts down in the broken soil of the heart that finally the tender hope appears. The thoughts have been working downward, but the hope is reaching upward. In proportion to the thoroughness of that search downward is the strength and beauty of that blade looking upward. The search must be exhaustive and in vain. Again and again we must learn the sad truth: no light, no hope, no good thing down there in the earth; in the flesh no good thing. That must be learned deeply again and again.

But the tender roots with their mysterious, delicate life-power are taking up something from that dark, obnoxious soil which will be conveyed by the miraculous processes of nature upward and cause the appearance of the blade, the flower and the fruit. So the thoughts have gathered the sad assurance that there is nothing but evil in us, and because there is left no question of that truth, and because we are cut off from all hope in ourselves, we are prepared to wonder and adore when a blessed hope is given unto us reaching upward instead of downward. What a glorious surprise when the hope in Jesus appears to us! What thanksgiving and praise fill our poor hearts!

So the lilies grow, and the corn and the vine. "They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." —Hosea xiv. 5, 7.

When at any time the roots cease to be sent forth downward and outward in the soil, then the plant or the tree will cease to grow. When the thoughts cease to work in the soil of a sinful, broken heart then the growth in grace ceases. When we lose sight of our sinfulness in any degree, and begin to feel some con-

tentment and satisfaction with our own condition, then we may think that we have attained to some excellent growth. But we have truly not grown at all in a spiritual sense; we have really diminished. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."

So from time to time the Lord sends a winter time upon us, when we can only send roots downward; when we can only think of our vileness; when our life looks to us utterly unworthy; when we can hardly see anything in our heart and life in which to take any comfort. The things that we have been enabled to do in obedience to the Lord we are thankful to him for, but we have still to think of our own unprofitableness as servants. All that was of ourselves in every work seems to display our own weakness and sinfulness. We feel a tender thankfulness to the Lord for his goodness in leading us in the paths of righteousness, but we feel also that "the sins of one most righteous day might sink us in despair."

How many a time I have seemed to be at the point of giving up, assured that my hope was not good, because for days I could seem to think of nothing but my own sinfulness and depravity. It was not long ago that while in this dark state of mind, my thoughts active, but active in a downward direction, all at once I saw them as the roots of a plant working downward that the plant might grow upward. What a sweet comfort that was.

Think of the pure, white flower of the lily looking downward at the black mud out of which it has grown! Think of the Spirit contrasted with the flesh. In the same person the flesh is felt lusting "against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." No wonder that the Lord's people feel conflicts within themselves. There must be a warfare where there are two contrary principles. None but quick-

ened souls can feel that warfare.

The lilies, how wonderfully beautiful they are. Do they know of their beauty? do they not feel ashamed as they look down at that black, uncomely soil where they live? Could they grow otherwise or elsewhere than they do? Could they transfer themselves to some whiter, cleaner ground? Can they be exerting some power of their own grow more rapidly, or by neglect can they cease to grow? Can they cause themselves to be more or less pure and fair and lovely? Consider them, how they grow, and then you will see how the Lord's children grow in grace. It is by no effort or power of their own, and yet they are constantly, when exercised by the Spirit, anxious to grow, and feeling that something depends upon them, and are chiding and condemning themselves for their lack of growth. But all their efforts are vain, and only show them how helpless they are, how unable to make themselves any more worthy in the sight of God. Then they come again to the knowledge that all their goodness and power are in Jesus; that he is their righteousness. Then they truly grow, not in themselves, but in Jesus. Then they grow, not in their own works, but in grace. Then it can be said of them:

Blessed are you when you strive in vain
 And all your works no comfort yield;
 For when you cease to toil and spin,
 You are as lilies of the field.
 And he who richly clothes the flower,
 Which passes almost as a breath,
 Will show his richer grace and power
 In you, O ye of little faith.

The plants in nature grow in the night. I have measured the growth of corn. Once from six at night to six in the morning it grew thirteen inches, and only an inch during the following day. It is authoritatively said that corn will sometimes, under most favorable circumstances, grow sixteen inches in one night. It is in the night time of sorrow and affliction that the

Lord's plants grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is while under a distressing sense of their own weakness that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Strength. It is through an especially dark and oppressive experience of their own sinfulness and depravity that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Righteousness. When their thoughts have long been working and groping, like the roots of plants, in the dark depths of their earthly nature, and have found no good thing dwelling there, but only evil, then with what glad surprise they see the same thoughts reaching upward and coming beautifully into flower, and rejoicing in the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then they learn that all their sad and weary night work has not been in vain. Those creeping, searching roots, those struggling, groping thoughts, have brought up into the soul something that was necessary to the real growth of the true plant of grace. Their work down there in the darkness has caused the growth to be away from the earth, away from self-confidence, and has caused the blade to reach upward, and the flower to bloom in the sunlit atmosphere of grace. The poor souls can now see that by the faith and hope and love that are at last blooming in their hearts, and filling them with the beauty and perfume of Jesus' blessed name, they are even more gloriously clothed than are the lilies of the field.

Elder Silas Durand

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Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Isaiah 54:1.

I have given much thought on this subject, I believe that this woman is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and all of the redeemed of the Lord are members of this body and every one of these are the children of God. This woman has never given birth to be added to the number that God chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, none of the prophets, or the apostles, or the ministers have ever caused one spiritual birth into the kingdom of God.

Jesus Christ said, I will build my church upon this Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Do not we see that this woman has something to cry aloud for. A child was given to her. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsler, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of the government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Isaiah 9: 6-7.

Jesus answered, Verily verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. St. John 3: 6-7.

And again, I will put my trust in him, And again, behold I and the children which God hath given me.

Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that

had power over death, that is the devil. Heb. 2: 13-14.

Jesus was both man and God, so the ones that have the Spirit of God they are both man and spirit. He was without sin, yet Jesus was made sin for us, yet he knew no sin. But after we receive the spirit, then we are half dead and half alive. Paul said, if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.

I want to prove that Jesus Christ came to save his people from their sins, Not to save righteous spirits, nor to change spirits, but to redeem his elect people, and in the resurrection he will change our vile bodies and fashion us like unto his own glorious body.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Matt. 1:21.

In all of the scriptures, I cannot find that anything will be changed but our vile bodies, I can not find that Jesus redeemed any thing but his elect people. And no spirit will ascend into heaven but that which came down from heaven, read St. John 3:13.

But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you, Romans 8:11.

It is said that he that has received another spirit you may bear well with him. I ask you dear readers do you mourn because of your sins, no spirit can mourn or hate sin other than the Spirit of God, this is he that is called the hidden man of the heart, this is he that is born of God that can not sin because he is born of God.

I only feel to write briefly, I do not want to be boresome. I do hope that the editors of the Signs will continue to publish sound reading for our hungry people in such a way we may continue to

grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in bonds,
Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Hebrews ix. (16, 27, 28.))

“**A**nd as it is appointed unto men once to die.” The inspired writer is not here merely stating the fact that all men must die; he is not impressing upon the mind the truth that is appointed unto men to die. The whole force of this sentence is that it is appointed unto men to die once, not twice, not many times, but only once. The apostle has been speaking of the work of Moses and Aaron in the worldly sanctuary in accomplishing the service of God. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; that is, the death of the sinner is necessary to satisfy the claims of justice. The high priest, in this ceremonial service, represented death when he entered into the second tabernacle alone once every year, not without blood. This “was a figure for the time then present.” Of course the high priest could not offer his own blood, for then he could not make another offering the next year. But Christ entered once into the holy place, even into heaven itself, by his own blood. He could not offer himself often, as the high priest did, “for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [the Jewish world] hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” He could not die often, for it is appointed unto men to die only once.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” Here is the first part of a comparison introduced by the word “as,” and intended to illustrate and open up some important thing concerning the sacrifice

of Christ and the manifestation of those for whom he died. The second part of this comparison is introduced by the word "so": "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The apostle has in this chapter introduced the figure of a man's will or testament, to illustrate the mediatorial work of Christ, and to show how by means of death he brought the New Testament into force, and secured to them that are called, the promise of eternal inheritance. He says: "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." The next expression proves that the apostle has in view as a figure the will or testament which a man makes, by which he bequeathes an inheritance. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

Now it seems to me that the apostle still has this figure in view in the comparison presented in my text. It is important to consider that a man's testament is of no force while yet he lives. He may say to me, I have made my will, and have given to you ten thousand acres of land, and I have given that will into the custody of a bank, and it is safely locked up, and so you are sure of the property. But I do not own a rod of that land. He may make another will the next day and devise the land to another. Also it is necessary to consider that as soon as a man is dead all that was his now belongs to others. But how shall it be decided who are the heirs? It must be by the judgment of the government under which the man lived and held the title to his possessions. It is in this sense that I

understand the apostle to use the expression, "but after this the judgement."

We are to keep in mind that the apostle is not merely stating the fact that it is appointed unto men to die once, only once; but he is using this as a comparison. "As"—"so." "As it is appointed unto men *once* to die, but after this the judgment so Christ was *once* offered," &c.

Earthly inheritances are greatly sought after by many. And the judgement of the government must be carefully rendered before any one can claim them, but this heavenly inheritance is not desired by any but the true heirs; they do desire it, and earnestly long for it, and seek for evidences that it is theirs.

Now all the blood that was used in the works of the law, "sprinkling the unclean," could not wash away one sin, nor could all the legal work cleanse the conscience of one sinner. But when Christ shed his precious blood he thereby obtained eternal redemption for all his people, and secured unto them the eternal inheritance promised in the New Testament, which is the new and "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Who are they whose sins he bore? What is the judgment which has been rendered upon this subject? This same Jesus who died to bear the sins of many is now risen again, and is at the right hand of God, and is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our King. He has rendered the judgment: "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The heirs of this spiritual inheritance, then, are those that look for him. This is the judgment concerning the heirs of God by this new testament.

But to know that we are looking for Jesus Christ! O, if we can only be sure of that. But so often we find our minds and our expectations fixed, apparently, upon worldly things. So often we feel

ourselves too depraved, too sinful, too vile, too full of transgressions, to dare to think that we are among those who are looking for him. What right have such as we to look for him to come to us? How dare we say to him, "Come"? yet he has said with divine and loving authority, "Let him that heareth say, Come." And we are sometimes assured that we have heard his voice saying, "Come unto me." We have heard his words of love to the poor and needy, his words of sweet command to those who labor and are heavy laden. We have from time to time received evidences that he has given us rest. We have at times felt "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," keeping our hearts and minds. His words have at times dropped into our hearts with holy power, and our hearts have been drawn out to him in love and praise. The doctrine that declares the name of the Lord as our only Savior has sometimes dropped upon us like the rain, and has distilled as the dew; "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass." Yes, at times we do feel assured that we are looking for him. We can do nothing of ourselves. When we look at ourselves we have to cry, Unclean. We are vile, we abhor ourselves; we have "the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." But we do trust in him, Jesus is our only trust, our only hope, he is our righteousness, our life; yes, we look for him.

And what is the inheritance we are heirs of? Himself. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." His appearing so far, and always while we are in the body, has been and shall yet be with sin, as our Sin-bearer, as having borne our sins. In our most exalted moments, while rejoicing in him, we remember him as having borne our griefs, as having suffered for our sins, and we thus know him in measure as having the

fellowship of his sufferings, "being made conformable unto his death." We must always while in this mortal state bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." As the Savior while in the flesh was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so must his followers be. It is in sorrow, in temptation, in affliction, that we know him while here; it is as having been tempted in all points like unto us that we know him as thus able to succor us who are tempted. But when he appears the second time it will be without sin unto salvation. That salvation, Peter says, is "ready to be revealed in the last time." That second appearing will be with no remembrance of sin; it will be to deliver us "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." It will be the end of mortality with us. When he appears the second time "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." He will be admired in all them that love him. Our vile body shall be changed then that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We do not know what we shall be, nor do we in the spirit want to know. It is enough to know that we shall be conformed to his image, and shall appear with him in glory.

Elder Silas Durand

JOHN 12:32

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

It is not needful perhaps to say that these are the words of the blessed Savior, and they were spoken concerning the death which he should die, as the inspired apostle tells us in verse thirty-three. The expression "lifted up," as applied to the blessed Redeemer, is

used several times in the word of God, and relates always to the crucifixion upon the cross; it always signifies what death he should die. He must die, not the death of ordinary men upon their beds, neither could he die by beheading, or drowning, or by any other manner of violence, he must be "lifted up," he must be crucified. This he himself knew, and more than once did he testify of this manner of death before it came. Thus the types of the Old Testament Scripture were fulfilled; thus only could they be fulfilled. The manner of his death was not uncertain, all that pertained to it was declared beforehand by the words of holy men of old; there was no room for chance in this greatest of all events that the world ever saw. "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him," was his own testimony.

The same expression is used elsewhere concerning him: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up," &c. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man." "The Son of man must be lifted up." In all these places Jesus sets forth the same truth as is contained in the Scripture written at the beginning of this article. Twice it is said, "The Son of man must be lifted up." There was no other way by which redemption could be completed and all his people drawn to himself, he must thus suffer in order to enter into his glory. He ought to thus suffer, because he bare the sins of his people, and because it was so written. This last expression does not mean that because it was so written therefore he was under necessity of suffering, but because his death was ordained of God it had been declared beforehand, and as all the words of God were true words, so must they be fulfilled. The declaration did not create the purpose, but the purpose of God caused the declaration of that purpose.

While we do not at all object to the ex-

pression which we have heard all our life more or less, that Jesus "must be held up upon the pole of the gospel," because the meaning of it is that Jesus must be set forth, or held up, in all our preaching, yet the words "lifted up" in the gospel, as used by the Savior, do not at all refer to that, but solely to the actual crucifixion upon the tree. Jesus, in the text, does not say, And I, if I be preached, will draw all men unto me, but, "If I be lifted up," (crucified.) True the crucified Savior must be preached as the sum and substance of the gospel, but Jesus is to be preached as not only the crucified, but also the risen Redeemer. Yet this is not that which draws all men, in the sense of the text, unto him, it is the work of the atonement itself that redeems and saves; it is to Calvary, and not to any preaching of the scenes that took place on Calvary, that we must look for all the blessings of grace. Sermons may be true and clear, but they do not save men; they do not bring men from the ends of the earth to Christ, this work results from the power of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and which by the Spirit is applied in the time of condemnation to the heart of a sinner. Not to him who preaches Christ must the convicted sinner look for healing, nor yet to the preaching, but to Christ himself, who was crucified.

There seems to us great force in the expression "lifted up." Jesus was literally lifted up from the earth in the hour of his crucifixion. It was the hour and power of darkness; it was the hour of his greatest humiliation, and yet he was exalted high above all that was earthly in the work that he came to do. In the sight of men he was humiliated, but in deed and in truth, he was glorified. As he had glorified the Father, so now he must be shown to be, not of the earth, but lifted up above it. The literal lifting up of the body of the Savior was symbolical of that other lifting up, which is his,

and which was always his, even when he was in the flesh. In the cross of Jesus, Paul therefore gloried, and that which was regarded as the most shameful thing among men, because Jesus hung there became the most glorious thing in all the world. Jesus used these words, "lifted up," the five times to which we have referred, advisedly. He did not say, If I be abased, but "If I be lifted up." Although it was the path of sorrow and shame that he trod, yet it was the path to glory, and in the spirit by which he came to the cross at last, he was separated from the world, and lifted up above it, up above all its worldliness, and sin, and folly, and selfishness, and enmity, up to that which was holy, and pure, and heavenly. The crucifixion to him was not a shame, but the humble fulfilling of the will of his Father, and in it, as well as in all his life, he had the assurance of the Holy Spirit, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Drawing all men unto him, does not mean each and every individual of the human race. If indeed Jesus did intend this, then his death has proven a most miserable failure. We speak here with reverence. Jesus declared, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And at the last he said, "It is finished." And it was declared of him in prophecy, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." If indeed the coming of the Son of man was intended to redeem the whole family of man, then the purpose of God has utterly failed. To-day, with the utmost stretch of charity in our judgment of men we must confess that not one in a hundred of the race of Adam believe savingly in Christ. The vast multitudes of men are repelled from him rather than drawn to him. Jesus means by this language that just as Jews will some of them be drawn to him, so will some out of all Gentile nations be drawn to him; Gentiles should

be sharers in this grace as well as Jews. This has been fulfilled, and it is being fulfilled now. If Jesus meant this, then his words have been shown to be true; if he intended more than this, then his words have proven untrue. But Jesus was and is truth itself, and all his words are true. Also, drawing does not mean driving or compelling, in the sense of bringing in the unwilling. The word draw is a mild and gentle word, but it is also a powerful word. It is not said that he will try to draw, but will draw. Jesus does not try to do, but he does things.

When Jesus said, If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to me, it implied, as it seems to us, that he would draw men up from the earth also. His people are not only redeemed from death and sin, but from the earth. Through his atonement they are lifted up from themselves, from worldliness, from all that is low and groveling, up unto all heavenly things; they are redeemed from sin, and death, and hell; they are redeemed, not only in the sense that they shall not be condemned, but in the sense that sin shall not have dominion over them. Paul expressed this in Romans 5:9, 10: "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." A present salvation is ours, as well as a final world of glory through the lifting up of Jesus from the earth, and so Paul could say in Colossians, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." This signifies in brief, as it seems to us, that as believers are risen with Christ, so should their affections be set on the things whereto they have arisen. Let us love the things which are where we dwell, at the right hand of

God, rather than the old, groveling, earthly things, from which believers have been raised; believers are thus raised through the death and resurrection of Christ. In other words, as he, their Redeemer, has been lifted up, so have they been exalted in him at the right hand of God, and as children of God a godly life becomes them.

In John iii. Jesus himself has told us what being lifted up means, and what being drawn to him also means: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The Old Testament narrative of the fiery, flying serpents, and the brazen serpent, which Moses commanded to be made and set up upon a pole, is familiar to all. We do not need to do more than state its most prominent features. First, the Israelites had sinned, and because of this the Lord sent these fiery, flying serpents to bite them. All that were bitten, unless a remedy should be found, must die. The bite of these serpents was not their sins, but wrought conviction for their sins; they had already sinned; now judgment fell upon them, and these fiery serpents were the judgment of God; they represent the fiery and forceful nature of the law of God when it comes to a man as it did to Paul, and that man, as did Paul, dies. The biting and the pain that followed well represent the sting and pain of conviction in the conscience, wrought through the just and holy law of God. All Israel had sinned, as we are told, but not all Israel were bitten. Some were bitten and were sore distressed; to what shall they flee? Where is there for them any remedy? Now grace and mercy appear in the brazen serpent for the bitten Israelites. It is erected in the camp of Israel, and the word is, That whosoever is bitten, and looks, shall live. No others save the bitten ones felt any need of looking to

the brazen serpent: all who were bitten did feel the need of salvation, the message concerning the brazen serpent would have no interest to those who were not bitten. So all men have sinned, but all men do not feel the need of salvation, only those to whom conviction has come, by way of the fiery law, do feel their need of salvation; the dear Redeemer came for just such as these. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Jesus came to heal the sick; he healed the sick by himself taking their sicknesses; he cleansed from sin by himself taking our sins; he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Serpents bit the Israelites, a serpent brought to the bitten ones healing. Sin destroyed us, and Jesus was made sin for us that we might be righteous and live. The brazen serpent was provided for the bitten ones, not for all who had sinned; so Jesus was provided for the convicted ones, not for all who had sinned in Adam, and in person also. The fiery, flying serpents were sent of God, and they did God's bidding, and went where they were sent. So the arrow of conviction finds every heart where God sends it, and whom the dear Lord thus wounds, he wounds to heal, where he sends the fiery, flying serpents, there also he has provided the brazen serpent for salvation. All these things we have thus briefly referred to, but the one thing which we had in view was this, that Jesus here shows that "looking" means "believing." The Israelites looked to the brazen serpent, and just so men believe on him. There must have been belief in the brazen serpent before any poor bitten soul would look, and so faith in Jesus leads men to look to him for salvation, and that means that they have turned away from every other source of help. It is thus then that Jesus draws men unto him. First, they have sinned. Second, they have been convicted of

their sins, and are pained and grieved, and ready to die, and then Jesus is presented as the one way of life and salvation, and the faith which God has given them looks to Christ, and rests in Christ entirely for redemption and eternal life, and all who have come to trust alone in this crucified Savior live, and live forever. Thus are they drawn to him, thus they come to live by him and in him, and thus they come to serve him in newness of spirit, thus making manifest in their mortal flesh the healing which has been wrought in them, and so Jesus comes to be all and in all to every such seeking soul.

Lastly, we feel there is nothing that can or will draw the people of God together like being drawn to Christ first. If there be dissension anywhere among those who love the Lord, to hold up Christ in his salvation is the best antidote of which we have any knowledge. If preaching Christ, if feeling the power of his salvation in the heart, if loving, living communion with him will not heal all breaches and soothe all soreness one toward another, we know of nothing that will do these things. The best way to heal any dissension is to keep right on preaching Christ, and as men are drawn to him, so will they perforce be drawn nearer and nearer to each other in him, and as Christ is magnified before their view, all lesser things will grow smaller and smaller, until they will disappear, and we shall wonder that they could ever have seemed so vast in our view.

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

ROMANS IV. 8.

“**B**lessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

This a wonderful consolation to a poor wayworn child of God who has been made to see and feel that he is a

vile, wretched and undone sinner. In the face of ample scriptural proof that there is not, nor has ever been a single Adamic being on earth who did not and does not sin, as is evidenced in Romans iii.10, “There is none righteous, no, not one,” then surely every one who is not righteousness is certainly sinful. There is no escape from this conclusion. Read Romans 4:8. Now that we have reached the pointed and scriptural conclusion that there is not, nor has ever been, one on earth (except Jesus) who is not a sinner, let us see who it is that the Lord will not impute sin to. Certainly there could be no misunderstanding as to what the text means. If it means blessed is the man who does not sin, or has not sinned, or will not sin, the text would not read as it does. But blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. *Impute means to charge to*, so there are some even though they are sinners, it will not be charged to. The question might arise, Are all men in this category? I say, No. If they were who would have sin to account for? Universal salvation would be the ultimate result. Is there any room for a scriptural proof of universal salvation of all Adam’s race? No, I have but to cite you to one passage of Scripture to prove this point: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.”—Matt. xxv. 46. This proves that their sins were charged to them, and as a result they received everlasting punishment. On the other hand, if you will read the rest of this verse you will find a good Scripture on which to base a good conclusion as to whom it is the Lord will not impute sin. I quote, “But the righteous into life everlasting.” So you see there are two different peoples in the world. We cannot escape this conclusion scripturally, no matter how hard we try, nor how intelligent we may be. In the beginning, with the first two boys born in the world, this very subject we are discussing was thoroughly de-

monstrated. Read the fourth chapter of Genesis, all of it, and you will find where Cain sinned and was punished. Surely he would not have been punished as he was if his sins had not been charged to him. Jacob and Esau are another shining example, and even though Jacob was worse, from a human standpoint, than Esau, we have the language of the Lord himself, in Romans ix. 13, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Now it is not only reasonable but scriptural to believe that the Lord did impute Esau's sins to him and they were visited upon him insomuch that in Hebrews xii. 17, Esau sought repentance from his sins and found no place, though he sought it carefully with tears? There is extensive effort on the part of almost all creeds (except the Old Baptists) to prove that the Lord's attitude towards Jacob was affected by conditions performed by the creatures, but this is so positively denied I cannot see how any one can fail to see it. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." — Rom. ix, 11. It is perfectly true that both were sinners, even in conception and immediately afterwards, but the one unto whom the Lord will not impute sin is the blessed one. Then I might also mention Issac and Ishamael, and so on down through the Bible. In short, before there was a world, or even the foundation of it, the all-wise, all-powerful, self-existent, perfect and unchangeable God determined to create and bring into existence a world, just as it is, was and shall be. he also determined, or purposed, that sin should enter into it. He also made choice of and determined to save some of this race of people. Let me quote one verse, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." — Eph. i. 4. "Having predes-

tinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. i. 5. Therefore, we see from these passages that they were chosen in Christ, the Savior, the Sinbearer, who stood in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world. Who was he the sin-bearer for? The whole Adamic race? No, but for those whom the Father chose in him before the world began; those to whom the Lord will not impute sin, or those of whom the angel said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Made the words, "His people," and you will see there is certainly quite a significant meaning in those two words. Then one who does not believe this doctrine might say, is not everybody his people? If so, then universal salvation will be the result, unless Jesus failed to do what he came to do. If he failed having all power in heaven and earth (Matt. xxviii. 18), holding the keys of death and hell (Rev. i. 18) and working all things after the counsel of his will, then what hope have we? There could be no hope at all for a sinner if his Sinbearer failed, but we would ask this question. How could one fail who has all power, the will, and who holds the keys of death? Another question that could be asked is. If he came to save his people from their sins, and our text says the Lord will not impute (or charge) their sins, how is he to save them from their sins? Well, here is the point: their sins were charged to Jesus by decree, or purpose, for him to atone for with his precious blood. The text does not for a moment in the least imply the idea that the sins of every one are not charged to some one. They are, and they must be satisfactorily and completely atoned for. That is why he came, and that is what he accomplished when he said, "It is finished." Now that this is done, the only way we are ever entitled to forgiveness

is by grace and mercy. All the gifts and graces and callings of our gracious heavenly Father are because all our sins were charged to Him who is mighty to save, and they were NOT charged, or imputed, to the Lord's people, but to Christ the Savior, the High Priest, the Prince of Peace. Let us see if we can find a suitable portion of Scripture which will prove this. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." All who? All unto whom the Lord will not impute sin; all who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before him in love (Eph. i. 4), all that he came to save, his people. As he said in John xvii. 2, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." As many, and no more. I will admit they are all his by creation, but not as his chosen people. If this were not so, then again universal salvation would be so. But to prove there is a sense in which they are not his people, read what St. John records in the tenth chapter: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." The sheep are all his but the goats were not his in a covenant sense. You will find in the end the sheep are all still his, and he says to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," etc.—Matt. xxv, 34. I want you to note the word "blessed" in the last verse quoted. Remember that is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Dear child of God, what a wonderful consolation that our sins were never charged to us (because we would not have been able to pay), but to our blessed Redeemer and Savior, who came traveling in the greatness of his strength and mighty to save. He paid the redemption price and delivered us from our sins with his precious blood, out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven.

No doubt every child of God would love to know that he is embraced in these precious and glorious promises of the Lord. We only have hope, yet we have abundance of evidence in our experience which, if the Lord blesses us to recall, gives us great hope, comfort and encouragement. Let me relate some of the identities of the blessed. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Do you ever feel hungry and thirst after righteousness? If so, you are one of those to whom the Lord will not impute sin. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Dear child of God, do you not often mourn because of your felt sense of sin? Then you are one of the blessed unto whom the Lord will not impute sin. Then Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." Dear ones, do you ever feel so low and destitute that you almost despair? Then you are in the kingdom of heaven. What a glorious and precious hope! It is worth more than all the vain treasures of this earth or all the glory of vain man. The hope of heaven shines in my poor mind and heart above all that I have ever thought of. I had rather dream of it, if the Lord will bless the dream to my comfort, than anything else I have dreamed of. Once I dreamed of the resurrection, and I can never express the beauties and glories to my satisfaction that I was blessed to see, say and feel at the time. I saw the graves burst asunder and those who were in them come forth dressed in the most beautiful white. They were ascending slowly toward heaven as I looked on in wonder and amazement, There was a voice that spoke to me that affected me to the extent that I was completely changed. I was dressed in the most beautiful white and ascended with them as long as the dream lasted. It was a glorious and blessed sight. and I was filled with praise as I saw, felt and heard. I felt free from

sin dressed in that beautiful white. I joined in the sweet anthems of praise, that I fully felt and understood at that time, but truly I am now, and have been, unable to relate much of it since I awoke at the time. Truly I saw, heard and felt "things unlawful to be uttered." I ascended until about fifteen feet from the earth and it seemed that a dark shroud of a cloud came between us and the earth. The elements were as white as the most beautiful snow, and white clouds were around as we were ascending heavenward shouting and singing praise to His blessed name. This Scripture came to me and seemed to awaken me, Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be kings and priests, and they shall reign with him on the earth. Oh how light I felt, but how I have wept that it was not a reality instead of a dream, yet I have often been made to shed tears of joy that I was given this beautiful experience, which I feel so unworthy of.

Dear children, I have digressed long enough to tell you a part of my dream. I desire to say that if you mourn, hunger and thirst, weep and cry, long and crave to be embraced in these blessed things, you are one of those to whom the Lord will not impute sin, and some sweet and blessed day you, together with the redeemed family of God, will ascend to meet the Lord in the air. Your soul, body and spirit will be quickened into the glorious likeness of the precious Redeemer and Savior, no more to hunger or thirst, mourn or weep, no more to find yourself a sinner in the flesh. Pain, death, sickness and sorrow will be felt and feared no more, but praise, glory and honor to His blessed name will be yours to sing and shout for evermore. Oh may this be the lot of every one who loves these things; yea, and it will be. May the Lord bless and keep every one who loves these blessed truths, is my

prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen. Beloved, pray for me, a poor and often cast down sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of continued mercy and great goodness.

Elder R. W. Rhodes

MEETINGS

FIVE MILE CREEK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Five Mile Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Association will convene the Lord willing on Friday before the 3rd Sunday in Sept (14-15-16) 1984. At New Hope Church. This Church is located on Sipsey Road just off Hwy. 69 between Cullman and Jasper, Ala. We invite all of our faith and order to join us in this meeting.

Elder H.C. Moon—Moderator
Rt. 1 Box 167A, Breman, Ala
Phone 205/287-1603
Rufus L. Jacks, Clerk
1050 Old Winchester Rd.
New Market, Ala.
Phone 205/379-2341

ORDINATION

Pursuant to a request by Goose Creek Island Church, a presbetry was called to examine Brother Jesse Foreman and if in their judgment is qualified, be ordained to the full work of the ministry.

Ministers composing the presbytery were Elders Oliver Allen, J.T. Prescott, Harmon Brown and Reeves Smith. Deacons present were Virgil Gaskill, Simey Brickhouse, Clayton Brown, E.J. Marslender, Joe Morton, Albert Manning, Ervin Futrell and H.W. Brinkley.

Service was opened by singing hymn number 704 and prayer by Elder Pre-

scott. Elder Allen was chosen moderator and Elder Reeves Smith was chosen clerk.

The candidate was presented to the presbytery by Deacons Earna Marslender and Virgil Gaskill. The moderator asked all the Elders if they had any questions to ask the candidate. All present declined any questions. Elder Prescott was chosen to give the charge. He spoke very comforting, yet emphasizing the problems and heartaches that would be encountered. He used 1st Timothy 3rd Chapter. Elder Allen also spoke of some things to be expected in his ministry.

With the laying on of hands by the presbety, Elder Reeves Smith gave the ordination prayer after which the church was asked if it was satisfied with the work of the presbety. The church answered yes.

Deacons then presented the candidate back to the church, an ordained Elder.

Minutes were read and approved and Conference was dismissed with prayer by Elder Harmon Brown.

Oliver Allen
Moderator
Reeves Smith
Clerk
January 21, 1984

SULPHUR FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-ninth annual session of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hope Church, Cass County, Texas, October 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1984. Pleasant Hope Church is located 7 miles south of Atlanta, Texas on Highway 251 at sign. For further information call 214-796-3011.

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Salem Primitive Baptist Church also known as "Head of the River," will have an all day meeting the fifth Sunday in September. This will also note their two hundredth anniversary and dedication of their new church building which is now being completed. We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us and we welcome all of our corresponding ministers.

The meeting house is located on highway #221, three miles south of Copper Hill, Va.

Elder A. J. (Roy) Agee
Pastor

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The ninety-fourth annual session of The South Ouachita Association will convene with Rehobith Church, located at Eldorado, Arkansas five (5) miles north on Hwy. 7 and ½ mile west on Hwy. 335. Beginning on Friday before the fourth (4th) Sunday in September, 1984.

Doyle Murphy
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JUNE 1984

Orville Beatty, PA	\$1.00
Mrs. E.W. Gibson, GA.....	5.00
Mrs. Lelah Hill, CA.....	2.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC	3.00

Bryan L. Shockley, MD	7.00
Hartzel B. Nelson, WV.....	3.00
Mrs. Connie M. Page, NC	3.00
Mrs. Era Barber, AL.....	3.00
Mrs. T.H. Graham, TX.....	7.00
W.B. Aaron, NC	12.00
In Memory of	
William P. Lewis, PA	7.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, NC.....	3.00
I.T. Wood, VA	12.00
Mrs. Myrtle Thomas, VA.....	10.00
Mrs. D.J. Wright, VA	3.00
Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA	2.00
Mrs. Jewel Pierce, TN	2.00
Mrs. Ila F. Herbin, NC.....	1.00
H.C. Brown, VA.....	3.00
Mrs. Roberta Womack, MO	3.00
Wiley S. Taylor, AL.....	2.00
Mrs. Harold May, AL	7.00
Y.W. Wade, WV.....	2.00
William L. Neal, NC	12.00
John T. Brooks, CA.....	3.00
Eld. R.H. Pennington, WV	3.00
Miss Ruth Fleming, NC	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Ira L. Bell, VA	6.00
A.S. Blalock, NC.....	4.00
Raymond Clayton, KY.....	7.00
B.T. Sowers, VA	2.00
W.W. Abshire, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Clara Cumbo, VA.....	7.00
Mrs. B.T. Hollandsworth, VA ...	8.00
C.M. Straughan, NC	3.00
T.D. Quesenberry, VA.....	7.00
DeWitt Ray Sr., MS.....	12.00
Mrs. Opel E. Hiatt, VA.....	2.00
Eld. William M. Holland, VA....	5.00
Mrs. Mamie L. Bisher, NC	3.00
Mrs. J.C. Macks, AR.....	2.00
Mrs. J.M. Jenkins, TN	1.00
Mrs. Amanda S. Saunders, NC ...	3.00
E.R. Graves, AL.....	5.00
L.T. Sadler, NC	2.00
M.M. Richardson, MS.....	1.00
Mrs. Frank Searce, VA	2.00
Mrs. Fay H. Quesenberry, VA...	3.00
H.R. Toney, MS.....	2.00
Mrs. Rachel Green, WV.....	2.00
Norman N. Bird, WV.....	2.00
Mrs. Priddy L. Shaw, VA.....	2.00

OBITUARIES

STEFANA GEARHEART AGEE

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to comply with Salem Church's request to write the obituary of our dear loved one.

Sister Stefana Gearheart Agee was born May 18, 1916 and passed away February 12, 1984. She was the daughter of the late D.A. and Lidy Conner. She was first married to Brother Roy Gearheart who served Salem Church as deacon and assistant clerk. He passed away March 22, 1970. She then married Elder James Leroy Agee September 13, 1975, whom she is survived by. She is also survived by three sons and wives, Melvin, Donald, and Larry Gearheart, two stepsons and wives, Donald and Larry Agee, three sisters, one brother, seven grandchildren and four stepgrandchildren.

Sister Stefana was laid to rest on February 14, 1984 with her funeral being held at the Copper Hill Brethren Church due to her church being in the process of constructing a new building which she supported greatly. Elders Amos Hash and William Holland conducted the service with Elder Kenneth Key dismissing the service at the Restvale Cemetery.

Sister Stefana fought a good fight, she finished her course and she kept the faith. Her love for her church was manifested in many ways. She joined the church September 12, 1959 and served her church the past ten years as assistant clerk. May we all be reconciled to His Holy will and be comforted to know that our loss is her eternal gain.

Approved in conference June 9, 1984 by Salem Primitive Baptist Church and agreed to send copies to the Signs of The Times and the family.

Submitted by Mary Poff—Clerk
 J.L. Agee—Moderator
 Willie Ratliff—Assistant Clerk

**RESOLUTION OF RESPECT
SISTER MARTHA LYNCH**

By the request of Tarboro Church, I attempt to write this resolution of respect in loving memory of Sister Martha Lynch.

Sister Lynch was born on December 2, 1904 and died June 23, 1984, making her stay on earth 80 years.

She was blessed to join Tarboro Church, July 7, 1968, after attending our church for over forty years. Most of the congregation thought she was already a member when she joined that day! Her husband, Brother Frank Lynch, was blessed to join at the water, and they were baptized together. He passed away ten years ago.

To know Sister Lynch was to love her, for she always carried a smiling face wherever she went. She was a faithful member and attended her church even when she really didn't feel like going. Sister Martha was always praising her God and she was a great believer of Salvation by Grace. She enjoyed her pastor's visits and would tell him about the goodness and mercy of her God.

The Church at Tarboro resolve that our loss is her eternal gain, for we feel she is resting in peace and love of our dear Savior. We send our sympathy to her family and trust God will comfort them and bless them to follow the path their Mother had set forth.

The church request that three copies of this resolution be made: one for the family, one for the church records, and one to be published in the Signs of The Times.

This done by order of conference at our July meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes
Moderator
John H. Coker
Clerk

ROSA MAY (SMITH) PAGE

Mrs. Rosa Page was born May 20, 1905; she passed away at her home Route Two, Elon College April 25, 1984.

She had a hard life, Daddy dying in 1945 leaving five children to provide for. I was only three years old at that time.

She loved her Bible, and her church, and her family. It was my blessed privilege to be at her bedside almost constantly the last four months of her life. She suffered greatly of lung cancer, but she never complained, saying "I am in the Lord's hands." These hours and days will always be some of my most precious memories.

She is survived by four of her children, the oldest Odell had passed away a few years ago, of heart attack: leaving Winford, Mrs. Nellie Reid, and Mrs. Rovena Ward, along with myself, William Page to mourn her loss. Also she leaves two brothers, Julius and Robert Smith; three sisters, Mrs. Ola Paschal, Mrs. Ara Terrell, and Mrs. Rena Loftis.

Her funeral was conducted at her church, Pleasant Grove, by her pastor, Elder Donald Smith, assisted by Elder Wallis Smith, and a former pastor, Elder W.J. Berry.

Written by her sorrowing son,
William Page

BOOK NOTICES

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Greensboro, N.C. 27405

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Williard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84 Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone 1-(901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

R.F.D. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N. C. 27405.

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WAS IT FOR ME?

*Did the Savior die for me,
When He hung there on the tree?
I'm not worthy to even claim a part.
Was that grace for me applied,
When they pierced His bleeding side?
Oh, it causes such great anguish in my heart!*

*Could my sins have caused one groan,
As He prayed out there alone?
Could one so vile have been remembered there?
Was the chaff taken from the wheat,
When nails were driven in His feet,
The crown of thorns placed on His head so fair?*

*Then while hanging on the cross,
Did He separate the dross,
When He asked His heavenly Father to forgive?
Did He give His life divine,
Just to make the gold to shine?
Did He die there on the cross that I might live?*

*Jesus heard the dying thief,
And that promise brought relief,
He said, "Today thy soul shall be with me."
First a cross we here must bear,
E'er the crown of life shall wear,
But He said, My grace shall all-sufficient be.*

*Just a sunset, then the dawn,
And the resurrection morn,
For He said, I'm coming back to earth someday,
So He will come and claim His own,
When our work on earth is done,
Each jot and tittle complete, they heard Him say.*

*Though these bodies they may hide
'Neath the mighty ocean's tide,
Yet His voice can still the murmur of the sea.
All His work was nobly done,
And the heavenly victory won,
For He died there just to set the captive free.*

Sister Evelyn Walker

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 Nannie E. Guy Varnier
 Deacon Gold Minter

EDITORIAL

I SEE A PICTURE

With such fear as I usually experience when called to speak to the Lord's people, I feel to-day as I attempt to write to a group wise in the knowledge of the truth.

We don't desire to correct, admonish or in any way declare the lord has favored us beyond others, but be allowed to bring to your mind some thoughts, we trust will present a view of God's work with His people.

In 2nd Tim. 2nd Chapter, 19th verse, we find "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let

every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Can we not see a great picture is unfolding, before our very eyes, ordered in all things and sure, a picture as it were painted by the finger of God's love, for the viewing of His people alone. The world at large will never see it or for that matter, know it exists. 2nd Cor. 4th Chapter, 4th verse "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, less the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

What beauty, as He gives a glimpse to His people, but only a small portion at a time as He unfolds it bit by bit, fold by fold as spiritual eyes search out the characters it portrays. We know natural man could never endure the entire picture at any one time.

We see a picture, of God being the foundation of all things, from the creation of the earth and all things therein until every timber as it were, is laid upon that foundation that composes the building of God, a tried stone.

I can not see God in the picture being disappointed in any way. He being the foundation and having sealed the work. Even in nature, as we all are, we know from a letter, to a King's decree, when something is sealed, it is after it is completed, nothing else to be added or taken from it.

The Foundation, the Rock, Jesus Christ, the Revelator, all one and the same, all standing sure was the only source Christ could have declared He would build His Church upon and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. Do we not believe all the building is as sure to stand as the foundation and His people have this seal, and are as secure as all the building having been sealed to It, through It, and by It.

And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Do we believe that God is asking any one to

do better, to leave sin and iniquity behind so he can bless them more. Has not He declared He would be to them a God and they shall be to me a people? Did He not promise I'll separate their sin and iniquity from them as far as the east is from the west and remember them against them no more.

God speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, so when He speaks to that inner man, that man begotten of God, that one that nameth the name of Christ, that one that knows God for He is known of His, for to such He has revealed Himself. To these, His elect, from the foundation of the world, when He says and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ etc., I see it as a Command, and if so, it shall be obeyed. The ones called by His name, His children, begotten of Him, and have departed from sin, in as far as God had delivered them from such.

Notwithstanding, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God in the flesh.

Do we ever suppose God is waiting for obedience from us before granting a blessing or wondering how we'll measure up to the situation? If this is true we must act first and God knows not what to grant us until we act. He could not have declared I'm the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, if this were true.

We read His people shall be a willing people in the day of His power, and all days from beginning to end are days of His power, so He has determined before time was, what He would give to all and what they needed, not that we deserve anything.

Isa. 65th Chap., 6th verse, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." We can not see any one that is left out of this condition or being worthy of the

least of God's notice. How can any that God has given an insight of their condition, try to tell His people how to live to obtain a blessing, much more soul searching to hear, God will do if you make the first move. Some even claim the true Churches would prosper more if we acted differently.

Thanks be to God, we see in this great picture that He unfolds before us, the picture has already been drawn, and as we read He never changes, then how could the picture. We see just as much as He reveals or never more than is unfolded.

The complete picture will be seen some day, I believe, but until we are made ready, our eyes can not behold Him in His glory.

By one that knows little but desires more.

Elder J. R. Williams

FOR SPECIAL NOTICE

RULES OF DECORUM

1. The association shall be opened and closed by prayer.
2. Only one person shall speak at a time, who shall rise from his seat and address the Moderator in beginning his speech.
3. EVERY BROTHER SPEAKING SHALL ADHERE STRICTLY TO THE SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION AND SHALL IN NO WAY REFLECT ON ANY OTHER BROTHER.
4. No Messenger shall absent himself from the Association while in conference, without permission.
5. No Messenger shall speak more than three times on the same subject without permission from the Association.

6. Messengers shall keep strict order while the business of the Association is being transacted.

7. No Messenger shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he violates the rules of this decorum.

8. No Messenger shall address another in any other term or application than the title of brother.

9. The names of the members composing the Association shall be enrolled by the Clerk and called over as often as the Association requires.

10. The Moderator shall not speak on any question before the Association until all the other Messengers are through speaking, when he may give his views, after which any Messenger having a right to speak, may reply to any new matter introduced by the Moderator.

11. Any member who shall violate any rules of the Association shall be dealt with by the Association as it deems proper.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

We, the messengers of the several churches composing the upper Country Line Association agree, for the satisfaction of our brethren and friends, to publish an abstract of the principles of faith upon which we unit and will endeavor with the help of the Lord to maintain.

1. We believe in the being of God as Almighty, eternal unchangeable of infinite wisdom, power Justice, Holiness, Goodness, Mercy and Truth, and that this God has revealed himself in his word, under the character of Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

2. We believe that Almighty God has made known His mind and will to the children of men in His word which word we believe to be of divine authority and contains all things necessary to be known for the salvation of man. The

same is comprehended or contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament.

3. We believe that God before the foundation of the world, for a purpose of His own glory, did elect a certain number of men and Angels to eternal life, and that this election is particular eternal, and unconditional on the creature's part.

4. We believe that when God made man he was good and upright, but by his own transgression he fell from that good and upright state, and being the head and representative of the whole human race, they being his natural offspring, he involved all of them in the same ruined state with himself, and they were partakers of, an exposed to, the miseries which sprang from his disobedience.

5. We believe that it is utterly out of the power of man as a fallen creature to keep the law of God perfectly, or to truly repent of his sins, or believe in Christ, except he be drawn by the Holy Spirit.

6. We believe in God's own appointed time and way, the elect will be called, justified, pardoned and sanctified, and that it is impossible that they can utterly refuse the call, but shall be willing by divine grace to receive mercy.

7. We believe that justification in the sight of God is only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, received and applied by faith.

8. We believe that God's elect will be converted and born again by the effectual work of the Holy Spirit.

9. We believe that those that are called by grace and born again will persevere in holiness and never fall finally away.

10. We believe it to be a duty incumbent on all God's people to walk religiously in all God's works, not in the old covenant way of seeking life and the favor of the Lord by it, but only as a duty from a principal of love.

11. We believe baptism, and the Lord's supper are gospel ordinances, both belonging to the converted or true believer.

12. WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY CHURCH IS INDEPENDENT IN MATTERS OF DISCIPLINE AND THAT ASSOCIATIONS, COUNCILS AND CONFERENCES OF MINISTERS OR CHURCHES, ARE NOT TO IMPOSE ON THE CHURCH THE KEEPING, HOLDING OR MAINTAINING ANY PRINCIPLE OR PRACTICE CONTRARY TO THE CHURCHES' JUDGMENT.

13. We believe in the general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, and final judgment.

14. We believe the punishment of the wicked is everlasting and the joys of the righteous eternal.

17. We believe that no minister has a right to administer the ordinances unless called and comes under the imposition of hands by the presbytery.

16. Lastly, we believe that for the mutual comfort, union and satisfaction of the several churches of the aforesaid faith and order that we ought to meet in an Association capacity wherein each church ought to be represented by their messengers to advise with each other in conference.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

1. The Association shall be composed of members chosen by the churches in Upper Country Line Association, who shall be members supposed to be best qualified for that purpose, and those producing letters from their respective churches, certifying their appointment, shall be entitled to seats in the Association, provided the church is in peace at the time appointment is made.

2. In the letters from the churches shall be expressed the number of mem-

bers in full fellowship, the number received by experience and baptism, the number received by letter, the number dismissed by letter, and the number excommunicated, and those who died since the last Association was held.

3. Members thus chosen and convened shall be denominated the United Primitive Baptists, known as the Upper Country Line Association, being composed of churches in the counties of Rockingham, Orange, Chatham and Granville, North Carolina, WHICH SHALL HAVE NO POWER TO LORD IT OVER THE CHURCHES COMPOSING IT; NOR SHALL IT HAVE ANY POWER OVER ANY CHURCH OR INFRINGE UPON THE RIGHTS OF ANY CHURCH IN THE UNION.

4. The Association, when convened, shall be governed and ruled by a regular and proper decorum.

5. The Association shall have a Moderator and Clerk, who shall be chosen by members composing it. The Moderator to be chosen annually at each Association; the Clerk to continue in office during his pleasure or the pleasure of the Association.

6. New churches may be admitted into the union by a written petition presented by Messengers with letter, and upon examination if found orthodox and orderly, it may be manifested by the Moderator giving the Messenger the right hand of fellowship.

7. Every church in the union shall be entitled to representation in the Association, but shall have only three messengers from each church.

8. EVERY QUERY PRESENTED BY ANY MESSENGER OF THE ASSOCIATION SHALL BE READ AND BEFORE IT SHALL BE DEBATED, THE MODERATOR SHALL PUT IT TO A VOTE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT IT SHALL BE DEBATED, AND IF A MAJORITY VOTES FOR DEBATING, THE QUERY SHALL BE DEBATED, OTHE-

WISE THE QUERY MUST BE WITHDRAWN.

9. Every motion made by any Messenger which receives a second shall be considered by the Association, unless it be withdrawn by the Messenger offering it.

10. The Association shall furnish the churches in the union with minutes of its proceedings.

11. We believe it to be absolutely necessary to have a fund for defraying the necessary expenses of the Association, and recommend that each church composing it voluntarily contribute such sum as they think proper, and send by their Messenger to the Association, which money shall be placed in the hands of the Clerk, who shall account for the same, and pay it out as directed by the Association.

12. The Clerk shall have a book, wherein shall be recorded the proceedings of each Association, as well as a record of the dates of each Association and each section meeting, and when Associations and section meetings are held at the different churches in the Union, for which he shall receive a yearly compensation.

13. The Association shall provide for the general union of churches, and shall preserve inviolably a chain of communion among the same; shall give churches all necessary advice **WHEN CALLED UPON TO DO SO**; shall inquire into the cause of failure on the part of any church not represented at each Association; shall appropriate the money contributed by the church for association fund to any purpose it deems proper; may appoint any member or members **BY AND WITH THEIR CONSENT** to transact any business connected with the Association; **SHALL HAVE POWER TO WITHDRAW FROM ANY CHURCH COMPOSING THE UNION WHICH VIOLATES THE RULES**

OF THE ASSOCIATION, OR DEVIATES FROM THE ORTHODOX PRINCIPLES OF OUR FAITH.

14. Visiting brethren may be invited to assist in the Association in every way except to vote.

15. Amendments may be made to this form of Government at any time by a majority vote.

16. The minutes of the Association shall be read and approved and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before adjournment.



The above article was a part of the Kehukee and Upper Country Line Association for many years, yet speaks for associations and churches in Gospel order today.

Editors



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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/84
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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church was established in the year 1784. Making this our 200th anniversary.

The church was established near Haw River-Crossroads, and known as Crossroads Church until the name was changed to Hillsdale.

The meeting house is located about

three miles north of Summerfield, N.C. on the Scalesville road.

The meeting time is second Sunday in each month at eleven o'clock and Saturday before.

Our present Pastor is Elder B. D. Hutchens Jr.

CORRESPONDENCE

Cozad, Nebr.

Dear Editors:

I feel a desire to call you all brethren, and truly hope, by the grace of God, I am related to all of his redeemed. I have often called the Baptist people my brothers and sisters, as you know it is customary among some of our people to do

so, and I think it is right, but I have often wondered if it is as often felt as it is spoken. To feel indeed to belong to the heavenly family and to be able by the same experience to say brother or sister is a gracious state, if we were made to view it as it is, but I am so often in doubt as to the relationship that exists between me and the dear ones. I read their experiences in many of the good papers published by the Baptist editors, and also listen to many tell their travels in life, and am made to feel that we are traveling the same lonesome

road, but I see them so bright in their experience of grace, that to me there is no doubt in their case, for they have the seal in their foreheads, and it is so distinct that we feel to know them to be of the fold; but for myself, I cannot tell of anything so sure, I am only hoping to be one, but this I really feel to know: that if I am one, and he is pleased to call me by his own power and grace, I am the least of the whole family, for oh how blind, how helpless I am. I am always full of sin, and can never feel to be free from it as I wish I could. I am not able to be what I desire to be, or what I hope I desire to be. The Lord alone knows whether I desire anything as I ought, but if I am not deceived in myself I think I desire to live an upright life that I can feel is pleasing to my Creator, and most of all I desire to know of a truth that I am one of the blessed number for whom it pleased the dear Savior to suffer and die. It seems that if I could be sure, or have positive knowledge that I am his, so that there could never be a fear or doubt arise, I would enjoy the hope better. But we are told that we hope for the things not seen, and our hope is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, for Christ is our hope. When we feel too weak to even cry we are made to view him as the Rock for which we long, and as our strength to deliver us. I realize I am in a hopeless condition if it is left to me, for I have lived thirty-six years, and as far as I can remember I have longed to live a christian life, but my whole life has been full of sin and darkness, and fears as touching the hereafter. I have, it seemed to me, ever since I can remember desired to be saved in the glory world. I sometimes fear it might be only of nature, for I have always desired it, but there was a time in my life when I was just like a child, that I felt to know I certainly was a sinner, lost in sin, and could not go to heaven in my sinful condition, so I began to cry to him to

save me. Of course I felt the debt, and tried to do something to make my condition better. I tried to pray, to see if I would be better. I thought I would have to do something good if I ever went to heaven, would have to live a perfect life. This began when I was seven years old, and as there was at that time, or very near it, a few days meeting going on; I went up to be prayed for, but it did not seem to help me at all, I only felt to be a worse sinner. Finally, in God's own good time, I received a hope. I was then between seven and eight years of age, and was made so happy I could not help shouting his praises aloud. So for a while I felt good and free, with nothing to grieve or distress me at all. I then wanted to join the church and be baptized, but at the time many of the Baptist people did not believe in children's experience at all; but the church received me, and I was baptized, so I felt good and thought I had done as I should. I did not even feel to be a sinner for a long time after that; then I began to doubt, and was in much fear. I knew I was still a sinner, but wanted so much to be a christian. I had thought that after sinners received a hope they were not sinners, but christians, and would not feel again to be sinners, but my feelings were telling me differently. I truly knew I still was a helpless sinner, depending upon the mercy of a loving Savior if I ever was permitted to enter heaven. Little by little I received a foretaste of his love, and was made at times to rejoice above my own control, and would shout his praises until I was made to feel it was enough. I was truly satisfied, and felt to know at the time that I was his child, but as soon as it was withdrawn I began to doubt, and such thoughts would arise: Now what have you done? There is no use in that, you could have helped that. Then I began to study over it and to think it might be as the world and those who have never tasted his love or the power of the world to come

believe it is; that it was just a weak mind, or of nature, and maybe there was nothing in shouting or rejoicing in his love, but just an imaginary mind, and I felt badly. In doubt I said, I never will shout or show any sign again, if I can help it. I will know next time whether I can help it or not. It is of myself I know I can help it, and will. These were my thoughts, and are yet. Then sometimes I would be so cold in spiritual life and enjoyment I would begin to desire to feel again some spiritual life and ask Him to fill me with his love and cause me to rejoice once more, that I could feel to not be left alone in a desert land, such as I felt to be in, for it seemed that the streams were dried up and I was dying spiritually for food and drink from that good land where all is peace, love and happiness. In his own good time he fed me, and I sometimes am made to feel that he is a God at hand, but I am often wondering in mind whether or not it is of the Spirit. I know this, that there are times with me when I am desiring a better country, and I have feelings concerning all things, and his work and my condition as a sinner, that the world nor I cannot control; whether it is of God, or not, I certainly am not able to tell, but I hope it is. I know at times I am so disgusted with wordly foolishness I just do not want to hear it talked, and then again, I am found in their company, joking and laughing and enjoying life here, but I cannot enjoy false doctrine at any time, for my experience (if I have one) teaches me that there is only one way, and Christ is the way; only one truth, and he is the truth; only one life, and he is the life; he is all and in all, from eternity to eternity; we are dead and our lives are hid with Christ in God. Thus we are (if children) in a safe place. How sweet to feel his love burning upon the altar of our sinful lives, for he is as a consuming fire. Consuming what? The sinner? No, but consuming our sinful

lusts, destroying the work of Satan, and forever perfecting them that are his, sanctifying them; the flaming sword is ever keeping the way of the tree of life. Men would love to have the honor of keeping it, but it is not left to them, for we are kept by the power of God, and we are not our own keepers. I am glad it is on a sure foundation, and Christ is the chief corner-stone; he is also the topmost stone, the beginning and the end, for it is Christ formed in us the hope of glory. There is never a doubt in my mind concerning his kingdom, as to the surety of it, for the one that created and made all things, and controls all things, is able and will bring out his bride, the Lamb's wife, more than conqueror over all evil, for even the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. He has already conquered all for his chosen people, and is only manifesting it as the pages of time unfold his purposes. He is not deceived in anything for all things were and are open before his face and he is not failing in any of his work. Neither can Satan deceive him and get or destroy one soul of his chosen people, for their deliverance is in Christ, their eternal head, and his will and pleasure is being manifested as time rolls on. Neither is he disappointed concerning anything, but has told us in his word, or in his testimony, that these things will come. Read Jude, the fourth verse. He was admonishing the church in the first of the chapter, and on to the fourth verse, to write unto them of the common salvation, and to exhort them and us, that we should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. It never has been delivered to any but his saints. Thus he tells us in the fourth verse of a certain people who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, they were undodly men. Also read Romans ix. 21-24, and 1 Peter ii. 8; Exodus ix 16; xiv. 17, and many others I could mention, but these are enough to get us started reading.

Well, I do not know whether I have said anything that is worth your notice or not. If you feel it is as worthless as the writer feels to be just cast it aside. I have told a few of my feelings as I have gone along in life, and if you can witness with what I have written you many publish it, if not, please do not. You know it does us little ones good to find that the strong able ministers and soldiers of Christ have the same to battle with, but my feeling is (O you of little faith) sometimes I am afraid I have not any God-given faith, but hope I have. If you are ever given a mind to turn your thoughts towards me in asking for his mercy to his little weak ones, please do so.

Your little sister in the grace given his people in Christ, I hope,

(Mrs.) Will Mathis

Topeka, Kans.

Dear Brother Sawin:

Brother in that blessed relationship which teaches us to "be pitiful, be courteous," to have compassion one of another, even as God for Christ's sake hath had compassion on us. Knowing that you have been deeply taught in these things gives me courage to try to address you. I well remember the kind words of comfort and encouragement sent me by you a few years ago, when I was feeling cast down, which I tried to acknowledge, but do not know if my letter ever reached you. Many times since then I have wished to commune with you, but a sense of deep unworthiness to intrude myself upon your notice, and fear that it was only fleshly impressions, hindered me; and neither do I feel any more deserving of an audience with you now, but a very kind letter recently from a dear sister, hitherto unknown to me, contained a request that I should write to you, hence this effort, which I make with the knowledge that of myself

I can do nothing, and without the guidance of One who is able to help I know I can write nothing of any value to one who knows all things so much better than I. But to hear of the love the little band at Cave City has for you, as expressed by sister Owens, stirred anew, I hope the same love in my heart, and I took courage in the words, "He made the stars also." He made the greater lights, and he made the little lights also, and set them in the firmament of the heaven, and they are for signs and for seasons. I have thought much on this, and know I never can portray the beauty I hope I see, and in an attempt to mention a few things I do not expect to speak a word you do not already know. I think we all agree that the moon, with her borrowed light, is a sign of the law. All the light it has is reflected from the sun, and represents the law, with its dim light reflected from the gospel day. It was the only light of that dark time, coming of the greater light. I have often wondered why it was written, "The evening and the morning were the first day," and so on, instead of saying the morning and the evening, but was it not so written because the evening, or night of the law dispensation, came first, before the morning of the gospel day. The law was our schoolmaster, not to bring us unto Christ as the supplied words make it read, but unto Christ. We were under its dominion unto Christ until he came and fulfilled it for us, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us and taking them away. None were left, so that if now we feel bound by one item of it we are debtors to do the whole law. But we are told to touch not, taste not, handle not any of these dead things, for they all perished with the using of them. The moon was a fit type, or sign, of that long, dark season of the law's dominion. The translators tell us that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, which is

another fallacy, for the law did perfect the very thing which it was ordained to do. Leave off the supplied word and read: The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope, or perfected nothing except the bringing in of a better hope, for by its thunderous exactions the one atoning sacrifice was made, whereby was perfected and brought in a better hope than the law itself could ever give. The moon gives light enough by which we may grope our way until the dawning of the morning. The law gave such a dim light that only a few could see the end of the law in its workings, as Abraham. He could see, and rejoiced in the view he had of the day of Jesus Christ. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." After the rising of that Sun, John saw the vision of the "woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet." The woman, the church, the new Jerusalem, clothed with the imputed righteousness of this glorious risen Sun. In the brightness of that Sun, the moon sinks into oblivion. The old types and shadows flee away, and as long as this day lasts, as long as the Sun of righteousness continues to shine, we have no further use of the moon. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." "Behold now," (leave out the supplied word "is"), and, "Behold now the day of salvation." "Arise, shine; for thy light is come," and the Sun of righteousness rules this long looked for day. What a brilliant sign is the Sun of this glorious gospel day. We cannot steadfastly behold it for the brightness of it. The glories of the Sun of righteousness can only be seen through a glass darkly. While in this mortal frame we could not bear the dazzling brightness of a view of him without the veil of flesh between. He shall arise with healing in his wings. It is as though the prophet had said, He shall arise with healing in his rising. His

wings signify his rising, and in his rising is our healing, our hope, not only in his appearing in this glorious morning, but in his rising from the tomb when the law could no longer hold him, for if he be not risen he is yet held by the law, and we are yet in our sins, our hope is vain and our preaching vain, for the bringing in of that better hope is not yet perfected if he be not risen from under the law. But glory to his name, the name of Jesus, which means he shall save his people from their sins, he is risen and ascended up on high and led captive the captivity of his people who were held under the law, and "he made the stars also." I had no thought of writing as I have. My mind was on the little lights and I wished to speak of them, for they seem to me to represent the little individual hopes of each one of the Lord's people. He set them in the firmament of the heaven. There is the place where our hopes are stayed, and, dear brother, have you not seen times when the darker the night, when the moon gives no light, the brighter the stars shine? When the moon shines clearly, or when we get to looking back to the law and see how condemned we are by its ministrations, its mandates eclipsing our better hope, and all seems so dark and vain and wild, then our hope almost fades away, but soon amid all the surrounding darkness the one little star of hope that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren stands out with a vivid brightness that never quite fades away. The wise men followed the star until it came and stood over where the young child lay, and so if we follow the leadings of our hope it will always lead us to Jesus, and not to our loathsome self-righteousness for justification. Again, dear brother, have you not seen nights so dark that gloomy clouds of doubt and unbelief, sorrows and tribulations, perils and persecutions, have gathered so thick that the little star is hidden from view, and you felt that these

things were against you, and feared his mercy was clean gone forever? When truly it seemed that the heavens above us is iron. Oh what a hard place to be in! Our prayers cannot penetrate the heavens; they seem to fall at our feet as empty sounds. There is no rest or comfort to be found in this hard old earth. Our cry is, "Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence." He alone is able to rend the barriers that separate between us and him. O, Lord, "my goodness extendeth not to thee." In us there is no merit, but his goodness does reach down to poor finite worms of the dust. "I was brought low, and he helped me."

*"A glimpse, a single glimpse of thee,
Would more delight my soul,
This vain world, with all its toys,
Could I possess the whole."*

With a view of him and a manifestation of his presence the mountains of trouble and distresses which had weighed so heavily upon us melt away and flow down at his presence. There is a rift in the clouds, a little gleam of light breaks through, we look, and there is the little star of hope still shining, sure and steadfast. It never entirely fades away, but with darkest clouds all about it looks the brighter. The darker it is the more we prize the light of hope. Sometimes as we gaze at a star it twinkles out of sight for a moment, and seems to vanish away, but soon twinkles back again. So does our hope in the perplexing vicissitudes of life, it twinkles and shines, and twinkles, but always there, whether we keep it in sight or not. Sometimes it seems to little we almost lay it by. But it will be sufficient when we are called to die. But perhaps a lurking enemy suggests that in some way we have merited the little light we have. Our hands have gotten us this. Fleshly pride is stirred, and we forget the greater Light from which all the little lights obtain their brightness,

and ere we are aware our little star has twinkled away in darkness. Sometimes for days we sit in darkness and eat no pleasant bread; we are looking only at earth and see nothing but gloom, and oh for me the way is dark, and I am often sighing for the dear Sun of righteousness to rise. It is to thee, dear Lord, that I am crying. Illumine with righteousness my darkened skies. But the stars are set in the firmament of the heaven, and are for signs and for seasons. We must look above for our hope.

*"Sorrows like a surge may roll,
And wild the storms may be;
Look above, O trembling soul,
The sun still shines for thee."*

We long for the companionship of those of like precious faith, and also of like trials and conflicts, and in our longing comes with renewed sweetness the one ever-abiding hope that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. In our abstraction we had for a little while forgotten that sweet assurance, but in that love for each other we see a reflection of the greater love of the Father of light for his afflicted and poor people. In great mercy he has returned unto us, the mountains flow down, and, lo, our little star has twinkled back again. What true typical signs the little stars are of our seasons of darkness and of light. These are the morning stars that sang together, saying, The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," for we are saved by hope. Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever, for he made the stars also. But one star differeth from another star in glory. We see that it is so. Some shine so brightly and some are so dim we can scarcely see them, yet, though their brightness may be partly hidden under a bushel, still we do discern them, and long to see them shine that God may be

glorified. The command to let your light shine is unheeded. They do not glorify our Father in heaven by keeping concealed the good work he has done for them, because they feel that the bushel or measure of themselves shows them to come far short of what they think the measure of a christian should be, so it is hidden under the vail of flesh and never mentioned. But glory to his name, whether we ever see the outward evidence of their little hope or not, they are of that innumerable host that no man can number, and none of them is lost for whom that better hope is perfected, for the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

*"There all together we shall meet,
Together we shall sing;
A countless throng to swell the song,
Of Moses and the Lamb."*

I know I should apologize for this long letter, but that is my failing. If it is of God and of the truth you will enjoy it; if not, it will fall to the earth from which it sprung. In that case, then I ask you to think with charity of a poor weak creature who has tried only to show remembrance to a precious old servant of the Lord. Do not let what I have written do any harm. I often feel that I should not send my imperfect thoughts to those young in experience and perhaps not fully established in the truth, lest I should lead them astray, while in my great unworthiness and ignorance I feel diffident in approaching those whom I esteem great in the kingdom of heaven, yet I feel that it is safer for me, for they will more surely detect my errors, and correct me as I need. So I am trusting you to not let pass any thing that seems to you as idle speculation, or contrary to sound doctrine. I greatly need the prayers and loving watchcare of all saints. Dear old soldier, you will soon be discharged. The bounty which has been dealt out to you so plenteously here will be enlarged.

The night is far spent and joy cometh in the morning. I, myself, am in my seventieth year, and will not be far behind you, if ineed I do not go on before.

*"Oh may we meet and be complete,
And long together dwell,
And serve the Lord with one accord,
And so I bid farewell."*

Pardon if you can, and remember at the throne of grace the least of all, your unworthy sister.

MARY ELLISON

Dear Brethren:-The apostle says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are seen," &c. The poet wrote,

*"Dark and thorny is the desert,
Through which pilgrims make their way
But beyond this vale of sorrows
Lie the fields of endless day;
Fiends loud howling o'er the desert,
Make them tremble as they go,
Often bring their courage low."*

In Deuteronomy xxxii. 9, 10, it is written, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." So it is with every one born from above. They find themselves in a desert land, in a far worse waste howling wilderness and desert land than a natural one. A natural desert has no water for miles and miles, no grass, no shade trees, burning sands, piercing thorns. Many poisonous reptiles and creeping things whose bite and sting are dangerous to life, and some said to be fatal if one is bitten or stung by them. You find all of these in your flesh and in the world in human shape. You have met some who were members in the church.

John the Baptist called some people a generation of vipers. Sometimes we get in a hurry for members and get some of these vipers in the church, then we have sorrow, pain and death. When you received a hope, you thought all the sin and sorrow was gone, and you never expected to have an enemy. So bright and glorious was the sight, you said, I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley, the beauty and fragrance was so plain, and you, seemed so white and clean, like the lily, but in a short time all the beauty and fragrance was gone that came from the Savior, and only the thorny bush was left, for every petal had withered and fallen off. The lily only blooms and remains for a few days then droops and dies. Solomon says, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Again, ii. 16, 17, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." The lilies are his loved ones. The shadows are the law dispensation. Paul says, Heb. x. 1, "For the law, having a shadow of good things to come," &c. Again, Col. ii. 16, 17, "Let no man before judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holy day, or of the new room, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come."

When "the day break" is the third morning, when the Savior arose. So the prophet said, Hosea vi. 2, "After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." But alas how soon you found you were still in a world of sin, and a desert land, and "In me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and the piercing thorns of the flesh were there to cause you pain. Paul says, because of the abundance of the revelation there was given me a thorn in the flesh, &c., and was told, My grace shall be sufficient for thee. When the Lord put the curse on the earth he said, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."

Gen. iii. 18. As sure as the natural earth brings forth thorns and thistles to all the sons and daughters of Adam, just that sure the flesh brings forth thorns and thistles to all the children of God. So the poet says,

*"But of all the foes we meet,
None so oft mislead our feet,
None betray us into sin
Like the foes that dwell within."*

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."-Gal. v. 17. Jesus said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. All of you little ones have found this true, not only natural worries, pains and losses, but anguish of soul, fightings without and foes within. Oh the horrid desert, the blasting, blighting, withering winds that sweep over the hot sands, the fearful howling wilderness, the awful thirst and fainting by the way, the dark and cloudy days, the long nights, and tears shed over and over on account of sin. Jesus is a covert from the tempest, an hiding-place from the wind, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, as rivers of water in a dry place, (Isaiah xxxii. 2,) but when he "holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it," Job xxvi. 9, you cannot find the covert, rock, or the rivers of water. Job x. 10, 11, "Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese? Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." Little mourning one, you will have to wait and suffer on and on until the Lord takes down the fence and calls you home. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Then he wrote that all of our afflictions were light, and but for a moment compared to the glory of eternity. Paul says, For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be

revealed in us. Not to us, but in us. Then you will "be filled with all the fullness of God"-Eph. iii. 19. God has not forgotten to provide for you in this awful desert land and waste howling wilderness. He says, Isaiah xliii. 20, "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." Again, Isaiah xxxv. 3-7, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you, then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap in his heart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes." Jesus says, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. The children of God have sorrows and trembling the world knows nothing of. Psalm lxi. 2: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Again, 1 Cor. xv. 9: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The wicked are the ungodly. Psalms lxxiii. 12: "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." James says, "Hath not God chosen the poor of his world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" No wonder Paul was full of sadness, and had a desire to depart and be with Christ. Listen to what he says, 2 Cor. xii. 15, "Though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Haved not some of you met this

on this rough, sad and weary way? Have you not sometimes had to sweat drops of blood, as it were? Have you had the flesh to crawl on your cheek bones on account of the slaps you have received, both in the world and among false brethren? Is it not written, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." The Book says so, Matthew xxiv. 12. So often your burden seems so heavy when some great wave of sorrow comes sweeping and rolling over you, and you say with David, The waters are come in unto my soul. So heavy was the burden you were ready to give up all hope. Little one, this was only perparing you to leave this land of disappointment. Every sigh the people of God ever uttered every pain, sorrow of distress they have borne Jesus held them up, they could not sink to rise no more, for "He is set for the fall and rise again of many in Israel."-Luke ii. 34. He suffers with you. Iſaiah lxiii. 9: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them: and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." The poet says,
*"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
 For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
 In all thy distresses thy head feels the pain,
 Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."*
 Hear Jonah in the whale say, "The earth with her bars was about me for ever." No way of escape. Then he says, "Salvation is of the Lord," and God caused the whale to spew him out on the land. Look, little distressed one, see the patriarchs, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain by the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth. You have never passed through such awful trials as these.

Many have been burned at the stake, and smothered to death by fire in caves, &c. Then think of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. Look there, who is that in the fire with them? Hear the king say, "Did we not throw three into the fire and lo! there are four, and one like unto the son of God." See Daniel in the lion's den. Lions' mouths all shut. So God will shut every enemy's mouth except such as are to afflict you for your good. David says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."-Psalms cxix. 67. A sad countenance maketh the heart better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, and "blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Then do not forget Jesus in the garden for you. So precious blessed of God are you. Now dry your tears and remember Solomon says, Better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth. All of your sorrows, distresses, pains, heart-aches and tremblings are only for a moment compared to eternity, and is for your good, and works for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. It was not an accident sin entered into this world, but was to cause you to rejoice when you were delivered from the power of darkness and translated unto the kingdom of his dear Son, but when you reach the eternal deliverance you will find Paul told the truth when he said, our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works (produces) for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Here you have the foretaste, there you will have all the fullness.

Your brother in hope of mercy,
I.R. Greathouse

HOW THEY GROW

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.” To his disci-

ples the Savior thus taught precious things concerning his people, how they are manifested, how they are provided for, how they are clothed in beauty and purity by no power of their own, and how their confidence and trust must be alone in the Lord.

The church is called a lily by her heavenly Husband, and is distinguished from all other religious organizations "as the lily among thorns."

The Lord says of Israel that he shall grow as the lily. Therefore we are sure that when we consider how the lilies of the field grow we shall be considering in this beautiful and striking figure that peculiar experience and doctrine of the Lord's people which distinguish them as a "peculiar people."

Growth in vegetable or animal is a great mystery. We cannot fully understand *why* things grow, for it is a part of the unsearchable mystery of life; but we can consider, and in some measure understand, *how* they grow. Growth cannot be regarded as an act, for that would imply that it depended upon an exercise of will. It is not an act of the thing growing, but it is a movement which is a necessary consequent of life. The will of the person or thing growing has nothing to do with the growth. It is an experience. The plant grows because of the life that is in it, not because it wills to grow. If that growth is to be increased it must be by the work of the one attending it in enriching and stirring the soil and giving it water and light and warmth. A man may affect his own natural growth, under certain circumstances, by attention of food and drink, while the principle of life that causes growth remains beyond the possible power of his will or his understanding.

In the figure of the lily in the text, and in similar figures throughout the Scriptures, the subject of God's spiritual work is regarded as a plant or tree, moved and controlled and exercised by

the power of the life within, but not exercising in the least degree any power over that life.

When a poor sinner, "who knows the plague of his own heart," considers the lilies of the field, so white, so pure, so beautiful, and then looks into his own heart, so sinful, so full of evil, how can he think of himself as one of those whom the dear Savior would represent by the lily? With what grief and consternation he sees the absolute contrast between the lily in its unspeakable loveliness, and himself. Where can he see in himself any principle or feature which can answer to the purity of the lily? In every respect they seem to him to be "contrary the one to the other." The poor soul cannot realize at such a time that only by the power of the Spirit can he see and feel the evil of the flesh. The natural man does not receive the truth that he is sinful and depraved; that is one of those things which can only be known by the revelation of the Spirit of God. That sad knowledge is an evidence of life, but the Spirit alone can make the poor soul see that evidence. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."—John i: 4, 5. "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."—Eph. v: 13.

But let us consider how the lilies grow. The first work in order to the growth of a plant is the preparation of the soil. This is the work of the gardener. The first movement made by the seed after it has been put into the soil prepared for it is to send roots downward. The roots will be working and extending into the ground for several days before the plant appears. This order in the work of growing, both in natural plants and in the Lord's plants which grow in the garden of grace, is recognized in the words of the Lord by Isaiah: "And the remnant that is escaped of the

house of Judah shall again take root of things which are not seen," into the building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

So Jesus, the heavenly Lover, speaks to his dear people as an afflicted and poor people, and tells them where they are. He recognizes them as suffering with him, as crucified with him, and lets them know while in the furnace of affliction that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i: 5. In their feeling of self-aborrence and humiliation their faces are in the dust; they would not dare to speak to him except in a cry for mercy, nor even lift up their eyes to him; but in infinitely tender and prevailing love he calls to them by this endearing name, and says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." That voice is expressive of mourning on account of a sinful heart, but how sweetly it comes up into his ears on that account; that face is full of sorrow, and their eyes are pouring out tears unto God; but the sadness and the tears make the countenance comely in the sight of the dear Savior; for there are expressed a hunger and thirst after righteousness, and a hatred of all sin. That is what makes the face of a poor sinner lovely in the Lord's sight. And when they hear the loving accents of his voice speaking unto them, and with tender power acknowledging them as his dove, his bride, whom he has redeemed from all iniquity, and when they see, by faith, his face looking upon them in love, with "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shining in it, how it makes their own sad faces lose the look of sadness and shine with holy and solemn joy because of his love to them. Then are they thankful that they have a dwelling place in the clefts of the Rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, and glad that it is their blessed

privilege to suffer with Christ, that they may by that fellowship of his sufferings be more effectually separated from the world, and glorified together with him.

ELDER SILAS DURAND

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

HEBREWS X. 23-25

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.”

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.” This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged beneath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance of the teaching of our Lord and Savior, both by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on

the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, “when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them,” saying, “Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.” How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord’s; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread? The great apostle declares in our text that “he is faithful that promised.” Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd? The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord’s, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again? Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” What was under consideration was, “I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me

drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, "he bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord," saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privileged to have meeting every Sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit of the Spirit a considering one another and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the

definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother, Paul says, "Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, thus showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, throughly and throughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue,

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches that may be without undershepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is? This the apostle says they should not do. These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but an earthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before it can speak forth his praise, and "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren? Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern "the signs of the times," there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of "when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves

teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God and that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, "but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Let us, therefore take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. That is that "new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh," that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son." He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of god, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this "one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything "among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who "kept back part of the price." There are those in the world today who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the "pearl of great price," and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter's day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together. Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering,

forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Finally, brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

Elder R.L. Dodson

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION MEETING

The 100 session of the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene, God willing, with Pleasant Ridge Church on Friday, October 19, 1984, to continue thru Sunday.

The meeting house is two miles west of Moore's Bridge about midway between Alabama highways 171 and 159.

All lovers of the truth will be welcomed. For further information, call (205) 556-5157.

Levert Howell, Clerk

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association, the Lord willing, will convene at North East Primitive Baptist Church in Onslow county the second week in October, starting Friday October 12th through Sunday, October 14th.

Visitors coming from the south traveling through Jacksonville, N.C., follow highway # 17 north about 4 miles to Moore Buick-Pontiac on left, turn right across railroad track and travel about 4 miles to church.

Visitors coming from the north travel # 17 from New Bern, N.C., continue # 17 until you come to Moore Buick-Pontiac on right, turn left at stop light, cross railroad track and travel about 4 miles to church.

We invite all ministers of our faith and order and all brothers and sisters and friends to meet with us.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor
L. J. Sammons, Clerk

ORDINATION OF DEACON GLENN SLATE

According to the expressed desire of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by a unanimous vote June 23, 1984, a Presbytery was requested to meet with the Dan River Church Saturday evening, July the 21st, 1984, at 6:30 p.m. and set apart the aforesaid Brother Glenn Slate to the office of Deacon of Dan River Church.

The Presbytery was formed by electing Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator, and Boyd Minter, Clerk.

Deacon Bob R. Collie was elected spokesman for the Church.

The moderator appointed Elder Haywood Wray, to read the first six verses of the sixth chapter of Acts of The Apostles, with stress being laid on verse three.

The moderator appointed Elder Kenneth Key to offer the ordination prayer.

The moderator appointed Elder D. V. Spangler, to deliver the charge to Brother Slate.

After the charge, Deacon Glenn Slate was declared to officially become a member of the Board of Deacons of the said Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, and as a seal of their work was given the right hand of fellowship.

This work now completed, as re-

quested by Dan River Church, being witnessed by the signatures of the following Elders: Elder H. W. Wray
Elder Kenneth R. Key
Elder D. V. Spangler

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR JULY, 1984

Mr. & Mrs. C.N. Barron, TX....	\$ 7.00
Mrs. Bertie F. Brown, NC.....	4.00
Mrs. Ruby Gilbert, WA.....	10.00
Mrs. Frances T. Jarvis, MD....	2.00
Wayne Germany, TX.....	7.00
Julian L. Ray, NC.....	2.00
Eugene Osborne, MD.....	20.00
Mrs. Ruth Steiner, NY.....	2.00
Mrs. Catherine M. Vass, NC....	7.00
Mrs. Tom Strickland, AL.....	2.00
Mrs. A.H. Shortt (deceased), VA..	10.00
Harry Troutt, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Havis Donaldon, AR.....	6.00
In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. W.A. Womack	
T.C. Austin, NC.....	2.00
Otis Hyler, NC.....	2.00

OBITUARIES

MRS. L. M. JOHNSON

In memory of our mother, the wife of L. M. Johnson (deceased). Mother was born January 1908, died April 1984, making her stay on earth 76 years. She was married to her husband in April, 1935. To this union were born nine children; six sons, three daughters, and she had one stepson. Two of her sons preceded her in death.

She received a hope in Christ several years ago and she united with the Primi-

tive Baptist Church some forty-four years ago. The hope given her was a comfort to her as long as she lived.

She made her home with her son Lewis after the death of our dad. They attended to her every need as much as possible. She bore her afflictions well with no complaint. She was made willing to accept these things until the Lord said it is enough.

Her funeral was preached at Allen's Funeral Home, and she was laid to rest beside her husband, in Carpenter Cemetery. Elder Amos Hash preached from the 23rd Psalm of David, and spoke words of comfort to family and friends.

We shall miss our mother but we would not wish her back for we believe our loss is her eternal gain, and believe she is at rest in Jesus.

Her son
Harold

THOMAS LEE SAWYER

ON December 21st, 1983, our father Thomas Lee Sawyer passed from this life. After much suffering and afflictions the Lord took him home.

He joined the Handcock's Primitive Baptist Church on May 11th, 1958. He was ordained a deacon the 3rd Sunday of December, 1964 and served as deacon until his death. He had a vast knowledge of the scriptures, and the Primitive Baptist doctrine. He loved to read the bible and was blind for several years before his death. He loved the church and the brethren and enjoyed the fellowship with the brethren. He was a devoted father, teaching us much about the old baptists. We will miss him greatly for we loved him very much.

He is survived by his wife, Minnie Sawyer, a son Elder Joseph Lee Sawyer,

three daughters; Phoebe Cannon, Ruth Gupton and Shirley Robinson. He has eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Daddy, we will miss you,
May you rest in peace,
Until the day you arise anew.
For when he is tired,
He shall receive the crown of life,
Washing away all your tears and strife.

In loving memory,
Your daughter,
Phoebe Cannon

NANNIE E. GUY VARNIER

It was one year ago to-day the writer visited this dear old Sister, Nannie Varnier, in Chesterfield County Nursing home near Richmond. Almost immediately, she began to tell me of her funeral plans and asked me if I would see that they were carried out as requested. In less than three months, our God of all Grace called her from her world of much pain and sufferings.

"Now cometh rest," came to Sister Varnier November 3, 1983 at Chippenham Hospital in Richmond, Virginia. She was born September 25, 1891 and having lived her allotted time, being 92 years, 1 month and 9 days.

Sister Varnier united with Richmond Primitive Baptist Church May 2, 1965 in the home of the writer and was baptized the same day along with another Sister, by her pastor, Elder C.N. Bunn. She loved her church and was a faithful member. She served as treasurer for many years, as long as her health permitted. She enjoyed so much attending her Association and the Sister Churches, as well as others from afar.

Sister Varnier leaves to mourn one daughter, Mrs. Ethel Malloy of Miami, Florida; one son, Oscar Jr. Guy of Richmond and one sister, Mrs. Lena Butterworth also of Richmond. Four grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and two great-great grandchildren also survive.

Grave side services were held by Elder J.R. Gardner and her pastor, Elder D.L. Simpson. Her request was for Brother Gardner to sing a hymn that she loved dearly, "Angel Bands". Amazing Grace has never sounded much more beautiful that it did by the little congregation on this chilly, crisp, November morning in Maury Cemetery.

Written by one who loved her and misses her.

By request of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder D.L. Simpson, Moderator
Sister Lee, Clerk

DEACON GOLD MINTER

Only those ministers who have lost a faithful deacon of almost fifty years of service and spiritual association can understand my feelings in the passing of Deacon Gold Minter, deacon of Dan River Church, Mayfield, N.C. My heart reaches out for him yet, though he has been called away months ago.

Gold Minter son of Joseph W. Minter and Lucy Franklin Minter, was born June 7, 1904 in Henry County, Virginia died March 29th 1984.

He presented himself before the Dan River Church for membership in October 1931, and was joyfully received. This was the second time he

had attended service at this church. He was baptised fourth Sunday morning in October, with Harry Weatherford, who later was ordained a Deacon, and his wife Beulah Weatherford.

Brother Minter was united in wedlock to Lottie Riddle November 9th, 1925. To this union was born one daughter Juanita M. Law, who survives. One granddaughter, Delores L. Sanders, two great grand children. A niece, Lottie M. Law was reared in the home of Brother Minter, and was loved as his own daughter.

Also surviving are three sisters, Mrs. Bertha Horsley, Eden, N.C. Mrs. Virgie Wyatt Martinsville, VA. Mrs. Estelle Wells, Martinsville, VA. and Mrs. Clara McGee, Martinsville, VA.

It was not too long after Brother Minter was received as a member until the church recognized that God had blessed the church with a gift, and in 1934, Brother Minter was ordained a Deacon of Dan River Church, which office he honored with faithfulness and stability. He gave himself fully and often went far and near in his work as deacon, often not able physically to carry on. I felt that our relationship was similiar to that of David and Jonothan.

Deacon Minter was blessed with a deacons wife, who was blessed to enter the church fold soon after his uniting.

I was on a bed of affliction when he passed, and unable to visit him. When the news came of his passing, I phoned the family that though absent in body when he passed, "I was there."

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, assisted by Elder Haywood Wray, and Elder Kenneth Key.

In loving memory,
D.V. Spangler, His Pastor



Signs of the Times

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams
Route 1, Box 65
Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65
Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555
Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115
Phone (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court
Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

RT. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane
Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405.

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Route 1, Box 65

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POETRY

*Sometimes things in life become
burdensome to bear*

*We get all involved with too
much worry and care.*

*We try once again to solve problems
in our own way*

*When we hear within a quiet,
still voice say*

*Cast all your burdens on me:
I care for you,*

*We feel that He will enable us
this to do.*

*Then a prayer flows freely
and a load is lifted*

*As on to our dear Lord our
cares are shifted*

*The true peace that follows is
hard to describe*

*Again, all the glory we must
to our lord ascribe!*

I Peter 5:6-7

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EDITORIAL

ALL THESE THINGS
ARE AGAINST ME (Gen. 42: 36)

Draw near dear readers. the test has been impressed upon your mind many times. In fact, among the humble followers of the Lamb there isn't one but what the text when spoken to their heart will be brought in sweet submission to the will of God in their lives. Thus it arms me with great boldness to proclaim to every heaven taught soul that here is the experience of a man that God is visiting. Here is a man that has been where every child of God has been or will be brought (Isa. 54: 13). I hope that this kind of doctrine strikes a

chord of harmony in the breast of every professed follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. If not, what we are to do with all of the array of testimony of the saints of yesterday, including all of them that are mentioned by name in the Bible. It seems that it is a pertinent question dealing with an important fellow traveller. At least it seems to be that the history of Jacob is mentioned in the Bible enough times to cause all of us to sit up and take notice of his history.

It besets me with many problems when I hear the testimony of such imminent brethren as was Jacob besmirched by men denying the sacred word of God. Let us take a look at the things that were against Jacob. What things were they? Were they things that God did not have anything to do with? Were any of them pleasant things? I have said before, and I now say again, that all of these things are related to the same history. They were all things that God had a hand in, that God had a purpose in. I have said, and I do say, that God did get Joseph down to Egypt with each event coming to pass as it did. God used the simplest of language in dealing with the subject matter all the way through. He did not mince words; He did not dodge the issue that He was talking about. There is not a man living, or that ever has lived, that can get Joseph down in Egypt at the head of the government by taking out a single event. In each event, regardless of how much of what men are pleased to call evil, Joseph is put nearer the head of the government. It is the height of ignorance to say that it could have happened some other way. Time and chance happeneth to men, but there is not the first happening in this array of events. Too, God did not send him part of the way and he walked the balance of it. It was not that God purposed for him to go, and something caused his way to fail or falter and he finished the way by his ingenuity or by happen so.

Now the question comes up, what was it that caused Jacob to exclaim, all of these things are against me? What was he talking about? Who was he talking about? What things was it that gave him such deep concern? In the first place, the dreams of Joseph. What about them? We that are parents know how weary we would be if one of our children dreamed such unheard of dreams. We would watch such a child with the deepest concern. Our minds would be in a whirl as to what it portended. What about us? Would the taking place of things in the life of a child be disturbing to us? Would it? I am asking every reader of these lines. Would spectres rising in the life of a son of ours be for us, or would it be something that we would know not how to handle? Let me ask once again, what would deep mysterious things in the life of a child do for you? What if God had gone before you, and before your child with an awe in his demeanor about your favored son? What would it do? If you were a believer in God, if he had guided you through misfortune, through dark and perilous times what would be your attitude? I can tell you what you would do. You would be like poor old Jacob. You would be casting anxious inquiries to a throne of grace. Anxiety would overpower you and the lamentations of your mind would be, O Lord, all of these things are against me.

In the midst of my reflections on the text, I do hope that our minds are staid on divine and heavenly things. I do not have any excuse for my sins. I am a sinner, and I know that I am, and I have a sublime and precious hope that my sins were all covered by that crimson flow from the pierced side of my redeemer God. I also have a precious and an abiding hope that I am an object of God's eternal love having been applied to me in such a way, in such a wonderful and delightful way, that I am trusting in that love and blood and grace; that the sin is

all mine. I do not have anything to hide-- in fact, if I was trying to hide my sins, as Joseph's brethren tried to hide their's, it would soon be revealed, as was theirs. I do hope that I am not seeking a cover for my shortcomings. My disappointments at not having been better able to withstand the nature of us all is keen, but I am not looking for the evil in the case of Joseph being sent to Egypt to shield me from guilt. However, an evil is evil, and I do not think that one sin is more grievous than another, therefore I believe with all of my heart and mind and soul that God sent Joseph to Egypt the way that he would have him to go.

That way or route entailed him going the way that he did go. I have been reading after the pen of men from various quarters of the United States that have talked right much about the sovereignty of God in a general way but have denied it in Joseph being sent to Egypt. God sent him. God sent Jesus into the world. God sent Jonah to Nineveh. God sent Moses also into Egypt. The Bible has sent any number of servants to certain places in the Bible. In many, if not the most, of cases wicked men were utilized in getting them where He would have them be. Especially do I urge that God had every step of the way planned, who would make those steps, and how much further, that they would get Joseph towards the work that he had to do down there. I do not think that I am being unreasonable, nor unbrotherly, nor inconsistent, when I ask my brethren that call the doctrine false, unneeded, ungodly, that I am advocating for them to take our of this account of the things that Jacob found against him, and give us an account of how God got Joseph to the right place and the right time. I know that this is unreasonable, I know that it cannot be done, but they are acting as though it can be done. They are accusing us of advocating that God is the instigator of all of the unrighteousness in

the world, and I am begging them to set the record straight, and if they can fathom the deep things of God and can find a better way of saving much people alive, as God did in doing it His way, then I promise never to say a word in the future about God sending Joseph by the hands of his wicked brethren and the wicked wife of the great man. If any of our brethren can do this miracle, they are heavily obligated to get it done, and they need to petition the Lord that he confess to His people that He made a mistake in sending Joseph to Egypt the way that He did.

You may think that I am writing in the wrong spirit. I do not intend it that way. I am trying to obtain redress for poor old Jacob's years of useless worry, I am trying to remove the blasphemy from the name of my precious God, for if, as my brethren claim, it is a blasphemous doctrine to advocate that evil works good, and I find upon careful examination, that in a number of cases that the evil deeds of a number of people did that very thing, then I desire to remove that stigma from His precious name.

Now let us sum up the whole journey. The evidence is overwhelming that God did send Joseph all of the way from the midst of his brethren to the uniting of the family together again. The situation was perfectly solved, everybody was fed, the poor old worn out servant Jacob is united with his family once again, and the guilty brethren are all found out, and they have all acknowledged their guilt from beginning to end.

Now what are we to say? Are we to listen to those fault finders, and say with them that God did not send them by wicked hands. I desire the truth just here. I desire to know whether God sent Joseph to Egypt by wicked hands, or have I been wrong all of the time about all things working together for good to them that love God? The wicked brethren thought to get rid of their brother.

Now that is right, isn't it? That is what Joseph told the brethren. That is exactly what the people of God have been preaching from the day of Paul's ministry until now, to wit, all things work together for good to them that love God. Now what did Joseph say to his brethren? What did he say? It seems to me that he said, to wit, come near me, I pray you. And they came near, and he said, I am Joseph your brother whom ye sold into Egypt. Now did you get that? They were wicked and they sold their brother Joseph into Egypt. That links them with the whole transaction. That puts them forward as instigator and the culminator of the whole scheme. Further, I want it definitely understood that at no time did God nor Joseph absolve them of the sin. However, let it be remembered that God did have mercy upon them all of the way through the whole of it. How wonderful that mercy was to them. What good news it was to them that God is so wonderful, so good, so merciful that he was able, and not only able but he did, take the whole of it, which they meant for evil and worked it for the good of His people.

I do not believe that any Bible character, nor, for that matter, anybody that has been made alive to righteousness, has ever made any attempt to minimize sin. Yet, listen at Joseph talk to his brethren. Listen at his kindness. Pay close attention dear brethren as to what he said to them. Now, therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourself, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life, for these two years hath the famine been in the land; and yet there are five years in which there neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your life by a great deliverance (Gen. 45: 4;7).

Now Joseph has been sent to Egypt. God has done the sending. There is not any need for anyone to dispute about who sent him. The brethren did not.

They done all that they could to get rid of their brother. What they intended, and what God intended are two different things. The object that they had and the object that God had was different. They did not have in mind saving a posterity to themselves; they did not have in mind the glory of God. **IT WAS GOD THAT SENT JOSEPH DOWN INTO EGYPT.**

Jacob did not know anything about what was going on. He was the son that he loved so well. The wicked lying brothers told one untruth and then told another to make the first one reasonable. He thought that it was all against him. No doubt he despaired of ever seeing his son again. In his case, as well as in the case of the apostle Paul and in the case

of every reader that has learned what these brethren did, have all travelled the road that our father Jacob travelled.

Now I beg the Lord to teach all of us, and make us alive and conscious of the fact that none of us have said any more about the evil that these brethren were caught in, than what Joseph said to his brethren, to wit, you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. What good? To save much people alive.

May the Lord teach us and make us submissive and reconciled to the will of God.

Tremblingly,
Elder W. D. Griffin
Route 6, Box 84
Fayette, Alabama.

R. LESTER DODSON.

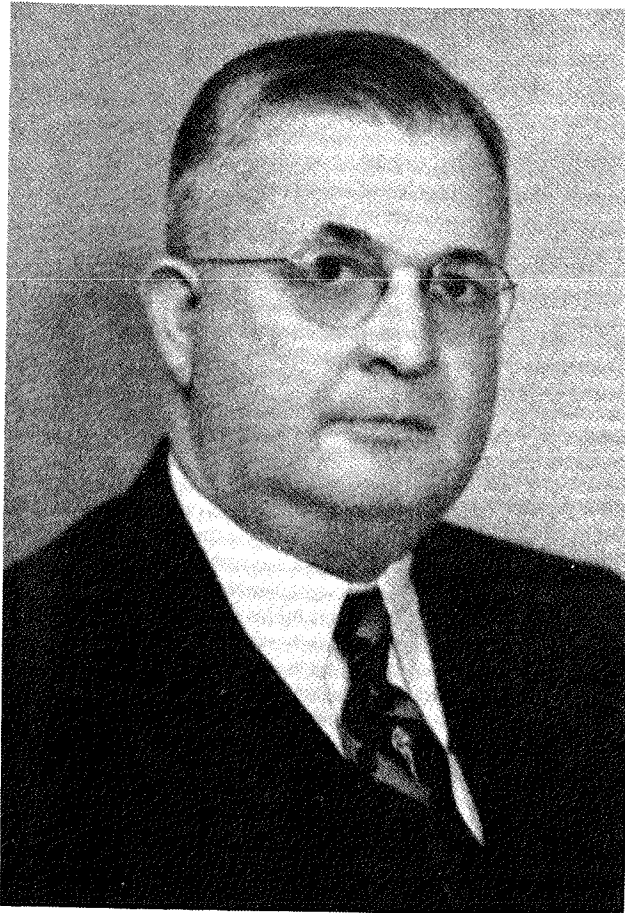
In collecting and publishing the material contained in this pamphlet, it has been the sincere desire of the undersigned to advance the cause of truth. The doctrine of Predestination, rightly understood, is God-honoring and most glorious of contemplation by his saints.

It has been suggested that the record be presented century by century, but this is out of the question at this time, for various reasons. It is believed, however, that the data here presented will suffice to show: (1) What the doctrine of Predestination is, and (2) that it has been regarded as a fundamental point of doctrine by true Baptists since the organization of the first church in this country, the same being attested to by the evidence supplied from Hassell's Church History, as well as the various American authors, whose writings appear. It will be readily agreed by all who know the truth that the knowledge of it did not come by man, and it is not expected, for a moment, that the mere reading of this little book will remove the scales from the eyes of those who see not the deep things of our God, but, rather is it hoped that those whose eyes have been opened

may see and admire with wonder and amazement how the Lord has not left himself without witnesses in every age of the world. That this has been one of the essential points of doctrine to distinguish between Old School, or Primitive Baptists, and all other denominations, from the time the first band came to America from Wales, cannot be denied, and it is still firmly believed by many that there will ever be a remnant who shall ascribe greatness unto our God, for "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

The writer has purposely refrained from publishing articles by men who are living today, feeling they are fully capable of speaking for themselves; however, he would acknowledge his gratitude for the assistance rendered by a number of his brethren in this work, as well as the encouragement afforded him by their approval and moral support. May the blessings of the Most High rest upon this work, if consistent with his holy and divine will.

December 15th, 1926.



R. LESTER DODSON

Born in Virginia May 12, 1886

Elder Dodson was a former editor and owner of "The Signs of the Times". He purchased it from the Beebee family in the early forties. The paper was incorporated in 1949, and Elder Dodson had control until he died in December 1950. He loved the "Signs" and left in his will two thousand dollars to the paper.

The following articles by Elders F.A. Chick and Silas H. Durand are excerpts from a book, "Predestination", compiled and published by Elder Dodson in December 1926. An article from the same book by Augustus M. Toplady will follow next month.

Editors

PREDESTINATION

By
ELDER F. A. CHICK
 (1845-1914)

Elder Chick was widely known through his able writings, having been on the editorial staff of the Signs of the Times from November 28, 1894, to the time of his death. It

is said of him that he was looked up to by his brethren far and near as being a standard of soundness in doctrine and church order, and that his views on the scripture and church affairs were sought after by inquirers all over the country. Under the caption of "PREDESTINATION" he had the following to say in the December 1, 1897, issue of the Signs of the Times:

PREDESTINATION

We have never had any disposition to make a belief in the doctrine of the predestination of all things, a test of fellowship among those who may and do differ upon this subject; but still we have, and do believe the doctrine, and to us it has seemed from our earliest knowledge of the Bible, to be a most God-honoring and self-abasing doctrine. We have never been able to see how we could believe in the existence of an infinite God, without also believing in the eternity, and all comprehensiveness, of his purposes. We have not often made it a subject of discussion in our preaching or writing. We have not desired to provoke controversy or strife upon this theme, and we think that those who have heard us preach for the last thirty years, will acquit us of making a hobby of it at any time. We suppose however that those among whom we have labored, have known all along that this was our faith. We remember the time when we had never met or heard of any one who bore the name of Old School Baptist, who did not believe this doctrine as earnestly as we ourself did. The denial of it among our people, is a thing of recent date. All our life we have heard the doctrine abused by those who laid no claim to being anything else but open Arminians. Our position, and the position of the SIGNS, has not changed in the least, from the first moment of our recollection, as regards this doctrine. We have been sorry to see, and to hear the most violent and bitter denunciations of this doctrine of late years, among those who are associated with our people, in different parts of the country. Some whom we have known as good and spiritual-minded brethren, seem to have been disturbed by the clamor against it, until they have come to think that it is a doctrine calculated to destroy all vitali-

ty in religion, and fraught with the most awful consequences to the name and honor of the God whom we worship. As long as such things were said by open Arminians, we did not feel troubled by them, but we must confess we are troubled when the people of God say such things. It is because we are troubled in this way, that we have concluded to respond to some questions which have been urged of late by brethren, upon our attention. It seems to us that the very being and immutability of our God is involved in this truth, so that if we deny this doctrine, we deny logically that there is an overruling power at all. It seems to us that this matter ought to be well considered, since such consequences are involved in it. Still further, this matter, as well as all that pertains to the character and attributes of the God whom we worship, should always be spoken of with the deepest and most solemn reverence. Nothing light of feeling or manner should be allowed to intrude when we speak of such vast and solemn things.

First question: Is the doctrine of the predestination of all things fatalism? If not, wherein do they differ? Those who assert that they are the same, certainly betray an entire lack of understanding of the meaning of words, or of their uses; and beside, they are certainly ignorant of what the doctrine of fatalism is. They are not in the slightest degree the same. Fatalism was held by some in the past centuries, and we are informed by writers, that some people in the east hold this dogma still. It means that there is an indefinite something which has no consciousness, and therefore no will, and which is blind, which fixes the destiny of God, as well as of men. It is a dumb and deaf power that is supreme, and from which the divine powers can no more escape than can men. In heathen ideas, the many gods whom they wor-

shipped, were all subject to this intangible, indefinable power, as completely as were men. On the other hand, the doctrine of predestination declares that there is a supreme being, who ever lives and reigns, and whose purpose is eternal, and who governs all things, and moves all things, and is moved by none. This God is the Sovereign arbiter of all, and all things must bow to his sway. There is no power back of him, but he is himself the source of all power, and being, and life. We trust that those who have been saying that predestination was fatalism, have been ignorant of the difference, for if they have not been, they have been guilty of willingly deceiving, or trying to deceive the people, by saying that they were the same. All things are fixed, but not as fatalism claims, by a dumb, dead power, above and beyond Diety, but by the sovereign will and power of the all-wise God himself.

Second question: Can anything be foreknown without also being foreordained? We have stated this question as it has been stated to us, and we have no hesitancy in replying, No. To say that anything can be foreknown, and yet not be foreordained, is to state an inconceivable proposition. The human mind, by the very law of its existence, refuses to entertain so incongruous a proposition. Nothing can be clearer than that if a given event or thing was known before it took place, or had an existence, that thing or event must have been appointed and fixed in its place, in order that it could be known. If out of his infinite foreknowledge, our God has told us that any given event will take place in the future, then we know that that thing must take place, or that it is fixed to take place, so that nothing can by any possibility hinder it. If our God foreknows anything whatever, then it follows that either he or some other being has immutably foreordained that thing. No matter

what the intermediate causes may be, the very moment that any act in the life of any man is foreknown, (not supposed, nor guessed at, but foreknown,) from that moment it is impossible that he should escape that act. Some who deny the doctrine of predestination, have come to see this, and therefore are saying nothing about the attribute of the foreknowledge of God. Ten years ago it seemed clear to our mind that the denial of predestination was but the entering wedge, from which would soon follow a denial of foreknowledge, and of the divine sovereignty and immutability of Jehovah. We are sorry to say, that among those who deny the doctrine of predestination, we do not now hear much said about these other principles of truth. We say this in sorrow, for if there is anything which has always been dear to our heart, and upon which we have delighted to dwell, and which has given assurance to our hope, these have been the chief things. How can any one feel a sure and abiding hope of everlasting life beyond the grave, and of perfect safety while on the road, if they believe at the same time that some things were not embraced in the infinite foreknowledge and predestination of God?

Third question: Does predestination destroy human accountability? We reply that if it does, then we must deny all predestination of events in which the element of human accountability enters. Arminians can make this assertion consistently, because they deny the predestination of anything whatever. But those who believe in the predestination of some things, cannot use this objection, because it would have the same force against the things which they do believe were predestinated, that it would against other things which they assert were not predestinated. If any one act of men, good or bad, has been predestinated, and the accountability of the doer of that act has not been destroyed, then all acts

of men may have been predestinated, and their accountability not be destroyed. There is no more difficulty involved in believing in the predestination of all things, than there is in believing in the predestination of some things. It seems sure as anything can be, that if the good acts of men are predestinated, and yet men are to be approved for them, so also the evil acts of men can be predestinated, and yet they be reprov'd for them. We have not yet found any Old School Baptist who will say that no act of man, good or bad, was ever predestinated. But he who admits the predestination of one act of men, will find himself as much put to it to answer questions that may be asked, as though he asserted the predestination of all things; and some questions occur that would not, if he asserted the predestination of all things. We will just simply call attention to the fact that the predestination of the man Judas to betray the Savior, did not destroy his accountability. The immediate cause of this act was his own wicked heart. But yet the act was prophesied of hundreds of years before, and he was accountable for it, and received the due reward of his deeds. We would never say any more concerning the predestination of any other thing, than was true of this act. This is a sort of key which will serve in all other cases. Man is most certainly accountable for his sins, and predestination does not destroy this in the least, though to our short sight it may seem to do so. In our own experience, we have never felt that we could take shelter behind the predestination of God. Only an unhallowed heart and mind would ever think of doing so. Arminians say so, and the devil would suggest to the Lord's people that they can do so, but the grace of God in the heart forbids it.

Fourth question: Does predestination destroy the idea of prayer? We answer, that on the contrary it assures the

value of prayer. The objection supposed in this question, cuts like a two-edged sword. If it be said to be of no use to pray against evil, which is embraced in the predestination of God, then it can be said with equal force, that it is of no use to pray for the good that he has predestinated. It may be said that the evil will come anyway, whether we pray for deliverance or not, but so may it be said that the good will come anyhow, whether we pray or not. This argument pursued to its conclusion, would drive all predestination out of the universe, or else it would drive all prayer out of the universe. It says that prayer and predestination cannot occupy the same ground. We are told that Elijah prayed for the very thing that God had determined should come upon the land, and which had been revealed to the prophet. The fact that it was in the predetermination of God, acted as an incentive for prayer, rather than as a deterrent, and it will ever be found to be so. We are sure that our God has never bestowed upon us any but predetermined blessings, and yet we have not felt restrained in prayer.

Fifth question: Would not the foreknowledge of God, and the doctrine of his immutability, destroy all accountability, and all prayer, as well as his predestination? It seems clear to our mind, that if one will do this, then the others will also. But we do not believe that either, or all these principles of truth, have any such result. Perhaps the best test of any doctrine, is the results in the lives of men; and we know that in the circle of our acquaintance, the brethren who have held most strongly to the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and predestination, and immutability, have been at the same time most jealous and careful of their lives and conduct. We have never met one yet who would say, when convinced of sin, I could not help it, for it was predestinated to be so; and,

as said before, this has never entered our mind, that we could excuse ourself for sin, because we have belived so firmly the universal predestination of God, as well as his foreknowledge and immutability. But we repeat, that it is sure that according to all known principles of human reason, foreknowledge, and the immutability of God, would do away with prayer and human accountability, as certainly as would predestination. But neither of these principles of truth are fraught with such results in the case of any who love the doctrine.

Sixth question: Can personal election be true, unless the doctrine of the predestination of all things be also true? Until of late we have never heard nor read of any one who denied the one doctrine, unless they denied the other. They have in all past ages been thought to be cognate truths. They have stood or fallen in the minds of men together. He that fought predestination, also fought election. It has seemed to the minds of men incontrovertible, that if the person of any man has been elected to life and salvation before the foundation of the world, then all the multiplied millions of things, and people, and events, which all from the beginning had their bearing upon the coming into the world of that man, were also predestinated and set in train, to bring him into the world just as the Maker of all intended he should come, and just when he would be needed as a vessel of mercy, to receive the spirit which God had appointed for him to receive at the set time. It is sure that if our God be unchangeable, he does nothing that he has not determined from the foundation of the world. Each of us may say with full assurace of its truth, as did Job, "He performeth the thing that he hath appointed for me." He works, but he works always according to his eternal purpose. And so every elect vessel of mercy comes to his first and second birth just as God has purpose from all

eternity.

Seventh question: Can prophecy be depended upon as a certain thing, unless predestination be true? We must confess that it is far beyond our comprehension to understand how a thing can be declared as sure to take place, with truth, unless that thing is so fixed upon some ground, that it must be; and the fixing of that thing is predestination. It is sure that if we are to have any reverence for the work of God, we must believe that all the prophesies are fixed things. Every event there declared must take place, otherwise the prophies are of no more value as predictions, than prognostications from the weather bureau. We would not speak lightly here, and we do not, for this seems like solemn truth to us. It seems sure to us that every special prophecy does prove that that special thing was predestinated.

Eighth question: Does not predestination conflict with the revealed law of God? That is, as we understand is meant by the question. Can it be true that our God has predestinated anything that would be a violation of his revealed law? The best answer to this question we think is the fact that we know from the word, that he has predestinated some things which were in entire violation of his commandments. It is a violation of his commandment that one man should kill another; and yet some men have reached the bound that has been set to their lives in that way. It is a violation of his commandments to bear false witness, and yet Peter, to whom the Lord had said several hours before, that before the cock crew he should deny him thrice, and who from the moment that word was spoken at least, was coming to fixed action in his life, did deny his Lord, which was the utterance of a falsehood; and all falsehood is a violation of the command of God. It is forbidden to condemn the innocent, and yet it was predestinated that men should condemn

and kill the most innocent and righteous man that the world has ever seen. In all these cases the law of God was violated, and yet the predestination of God was in it. Since these things are true, there really can be no conflict, though to our short sight there may seem to be. Our human judgment cannot measure the infinite judgment of God. We catch a glimpse here and there, and we vainly imagine that we are qualified to say to God what is right, and what is not right for him to do. We presumptuously say, that if he does so and so, and then does another thing, it is inconsistent, and not right. "Nay but, O man," does he not say to our presumption still, "who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" The ninth chapter of the Romans has ever been the most hateful of chapters to those who would set themselves upon an equality with God, and who would presume to judge his ways as an equal might do. But as long as this chapter shall be held in reverence as the word of God, there will be one witness to the perfect right of God to do with all his creatures exactly as he pleases. When any man would say in reply to the predestination of God, concerning his wicked acts, "Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" Paul, inspired of God to answer, says only this, "Who art thou that repliest against God?" When men bring up the same subject today, as all do, who would say that it is unjust to condemn those who have done what has been predestinated for them to do, let this be our answer. If they have any quarrel, it is not with us, but with the inspired Paul; nay rather, it is with the Spirit which spake through Paul, that they have their quarrel.

We have thus tried to present such

answers to these questions as we could, because they have been pressed upon our attention. The constant thought in our mind as we have written, has been this: How hard it is for the pride of man to confess his dependence upon God, or to acknowledge his perfect right to do with us all as it shall please him.

**"THOUGHTS ABOUT
PREDESTINATION"**

By
ELDER SILAS H. DURAND
(1833-1918)

Elder Durand Needs no introduction to most of the readers of this pamphlet, having travelled extensively, from Canada to Florida and from the Atlantic Coast to the Mississippi River, and being known throughout the country by his able writings in the Signs of the Times, as well as other writings published in book form. He studied law, but after being admitted to the bar, felt so strongly the call be be about his Master's business, that he gave up the practice of law and devoted his life to the work of the ministry. Under date of December 7th, 1910, he wrote the following:

When the Lord made the world and created man upon it he foreknew that this man would sin, and that by this sin death would enter into the world. So far as I know, all of our brethren believe this. Having this foreknowledge that man would sin, and still going on in the work of creation, does it not necessarily follow that the Lord's purpose included the entrance of sin and death into the world? Can any one think that when the infinitely wise and omnipotent God created man it was his wish and purpose that he might not sin? Could he not have so arranged that man should not sin? Why may we not think that the eternal God, in his infinite wisdom, purposed thus to display the principles of his infinite justice and judg-

ment, which are the habitation of his throne, and the glorious riches of his love and mercy? Why may we not think that "it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high"? I cannot see anything in these thoughts that should cause one to be offended at them, or at him who utters them, especially one who loves the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace, and this grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Of course the Lord does not regard sin in the same way that he regards holiness. Of course his attitude towards it is not the same. How could one have such a thought? He hates and abhors sin; his infinitely holy nature is absolutely and forever opposed to it; it is obnoxious to him and abominable in his sight. The thoughts I have expressed are not contrary to this truth, although they present a deep mystery which human intelligence cannot fathom. The Lord has power and control over sin, instead of being in any sense controlled by it. It could not have entered into the world if it had been his will and purpose that it should not, and after sin came into the world, and ever since, his control over it has been absolute. Men of the world and wicked men are his hand and sword. Psalm 17: 13, 14. The wicked can go no farther in executing their wicked designs than will be for the fulfilling of his decrees concerning them. To them, as to the sea, he says, "Hitherto shall thou come, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He must have had a purpose concerning all sin and wickedness, and does overrule all the wicked devices of men to the fulfillment of that purpose. Would not any other consideration of this subject force the conclusion that the Lord was in some degree limited in power and wisdom? The devil can do nothing only as the Lord gives him the power; he cannot even drown a herd of swine without the permission of Jesus. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to

pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Pro. 16:4. Could it possibly be that God was ever disappointed or disconcerted? Could anything ever occur contrary to his purpose?

"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah 46: 9-11. How clearly this Scripture, as also many other portions of the inspired Scriptures of truth, declares the sovereign counsel, purpose and power of God.

In opposing the doctrine of the predestination of all things, some, not many, I hope, constantly repeat a list of the vilest crimes and then ask, Did the Lord predestinate these? When Scriptures are quoted to them which declare plainly that God did predestinate some wicked actions of men, and that he did before of old ordain certain men "to this condemnation," and they are asked to explain such Scriptures, they return to the same line of argument, and repeat again the list of horrible crimes, and speak harshly in denunciation of those who can even think that a holy God could predestinate that such things should be done. But few, I think, venture to deny that all the wicked acts of the men who crucified the dear Savior were predestinated by the Lord. Several years ago I asked a dear, good brother in the ministry how it was that he could believe that all of this wickedness manifested in the crucifixion of Christ was predestinated, and that no other wicked actions were. His reply was, "That was different." Jesus was delivered to those wicked men "by the determinate coun-

sel and foreknowledge of God;" they were gathered together to do what God's "hand and counsel determined before to be done." What God had declared by all the prophets "he hath so fulfilled." The Lord is under no law but his own will; whatever he does is right in him. His will is the only criterion by which to judge of what he does. His command is the only criterion by which to judge of what is right for any man to do. One says, if God predestinated any evil thing to be done by a wicked man, then he is responsible, and the man is not to blame. This is the reasoning of the carnal mind with regard to the doctrine of election and predestination. But the Bible does not say so. The nonelect feel the blame of their sinful acts, but do not hate the sin, and perish in their wickedness, having not the love of God in their hearts. The elect take blame to themselves for all their sins and sinfulness, and abhor themselves. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, but acknowledge God's justice in their condemnation, and love him. In his own time the Lord reveals to them Jesus as their righteousness and salvation.

The Lord put a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets for a purpose. Dare we question him as to that act? (1 Kings 22: 23.) We are not qualified to judge of the Lord's work by our natural reasoning powers, we must simply take his word. He works, and none can hinder, and he causes all things to work together for good to them that love him; to them who are called according to his purpose. Many dear timid souls are often silenced by the effrontery of those who arrogantly denounce both the doctrine of predestination and those who believe it to be taught in the Bible, so that they almost fear and hesitate to mention certain portions of Scripture, even without comment, for fear of being sharply denounced. But

the Scriptures are there, and there they will ever remain; they read the same today as they did in Paul's day, and mean the same, and declare as comfortingly now as they did then the infinite sovereignty of God. The natural man is still saying, as in Paul's day, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" And Paul is still replying with apostolic authority and boldness: "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with such long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Romans 9: 19-23. It cannot be denied that our carnal nature is strongly opposed to this doctrine of personal election and of predestination. The carnal mind is felt by quickened souls to be "enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." How keenly and bitterly I have felt at times, this opposition in my own natural mind and heart. It has caused me many deep inward trials as to the Lord's ways and thoughts, trying to understand them, though the Lord tells us that they are higher than the earth. I have been tempted sometimes to listen to those who say of certain clearly expressed Scriptures that they do not mean as they read, because the Lord would not do that way; but there has so far been raised up in my soul a power that has delivered me from these temptations, and has told me to "hold fast the form of sound words," whether I understand them or not, and has shown me a beauty and power and sweetness in the

words of truth as given us by the Holy Spirit, and has caused me to feel an unspeakable joy in the truth that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and that "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He doeth his will in heaven, and in earth, and in all deep places."

When I first wrote upon this subject, more than forty years ago, I was not familiar with the London Confession of Faith. I was then reading the Bible constantly; it was my soul's delight to read it. I was thankful to the Lord then, I truly think, for this desire, and I have been more thankful since for that desire and privilege then, when at times my mind has been to me like a desert and a wilderness. But I understood at that time that the London Confession of Faith expressed the sentiments of the Old School Baptists in this country and in England. Since then I have become more familiar with the language of that Confession, and I have to say that I do not see how my sentiments upon this subject could be more clearly and fully expressed outside of the Bible than they are in that Confession of Faith. This doctrine has been called a heresy by some. But why call one a heretic for expressing the doctrine that for two hundred years has been distinguished as the doctrine of the Baptist Church? The Scriptures there referred to are unanswerable.

Suppose that Stephen when suffering the agony of that terrible death at the hands of wicked men could have been made to believe that the Lord had not embraced that wickedness of his enemies in his eternal purpose; would there have been any comfort for him? If he had thought that this act of theirs was not the Lord's will and purpose, could he have been submissive and restful, trusting in the Lord? Could he have had the infinite comfort of saying, "Thy will be done"?

Could he have said, in the abiding trust and confidence of heavenly love, assured of the wisdom, power and mercy of God. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge?" When sorely tried by affliction, or persecuted by wicked men, could the saints endure it if they did not believe in a God of purpose, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," in whom they can absolutely trust? Could the poor tried souls endure one stroke which they believed was not purposed by the God of love and power? How good to feel assured that:

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

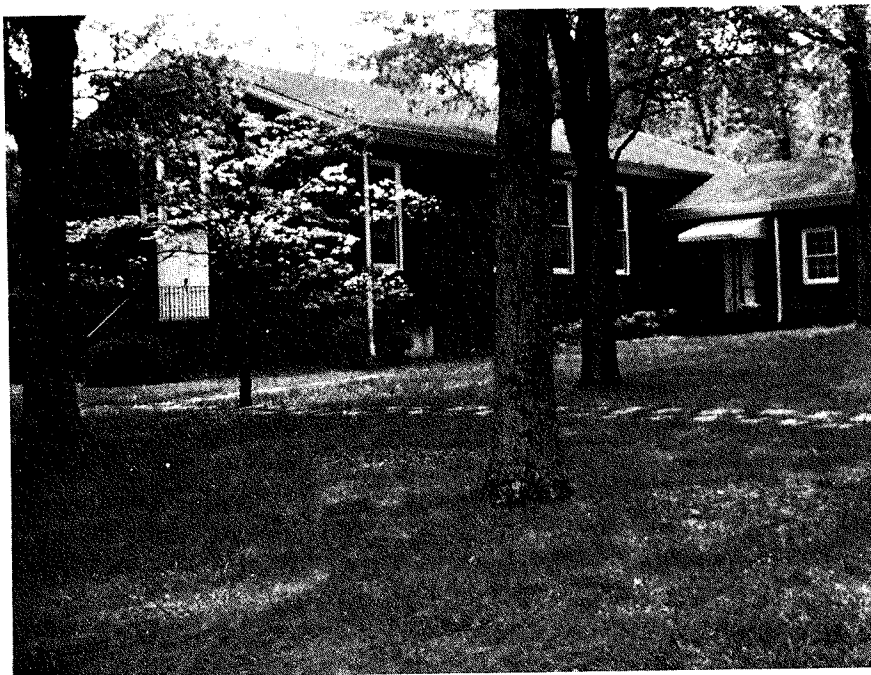
How can any one approach such a subject as this, concerning the purposes and work of the eternal God, in a light and trifling manner? While in a state of mind suitable to the contemplation and discussion of so awful and sublime a subject as that of the eternal purpose which God purposed in himself before the world began, we can hardly think of one being able to bandy epithets with an opponent in debate, and use harsh terms and coarse language, and bitter denunciations, such as might be expected from rough men disputing in the streets. I do not see why these deeply mysterious and glorious things may not be the subjects of kind, frank and brotherly conversation, without any rancor or ill-feeling. When we are in intimate conversation with a brother whom we dearly love, if there appears a difference of understanding on any point, how carefully we try to see alike, and to avoid any serious difference, and if we cannot see alike how careful we desire to be that no root of bitterness shall spring up; nothing to cause any disturbance of love and fellowship between us. Upon the subject of predestination I have never considered that there should be a breaking or disturbance of fellowship. If it is to be made a bar of fellowship it must be done by the other party. My fellowship for one whom

I esteem and love as a subject of grace cannot be broken or disturbed because he differs with me on that subject, but it may be broken by the manner in which

one expresses his difference, and the kind of spirit he manifests in doing so.

December 7, 1910.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



DURHAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1885 and is located on Pacific Avenue in north Durham, N. C.

They meet for service the Third Sunday of each month. Elder Cleo Robertson is their pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Eustace, Texas
August 21, 1984

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS;

Ever since the departure of my loved one from this world, I have wished from the depths of my heart that there was some way I might convey to the dear saints scattered abroad, the deep and

lingering thanks for "every remembrance" during his illness and death. How overwhelming it was to both of us to see and feel the love of God which was so richly manifested through the concern, the comfort, and support given to us by His precious people in so many, many ways. Feeling so inadequate for words to express my heartfelt feelings and also realizing my weakness and unworthiness of such love, I have hesitated to make known in this manner the deep

and abiding thanks to such precious, humble, and God-fearing people. How I do desire, if not deceived, to know more of the depths of this sweet doctrine of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and which my dear husband loved so much, and is so sweetly proclaimed by His servants far and near.

For many years I was a stranger to these dear people (and in God's sight, I may still be) but oh, I do hope and believe that somehow my eyes and ears have been opened to some understanding of the truth and my heart made to rejoice as I have experienced a portion of His grace and mercy. How I desire to know more of the wondrous love of such an all-wise, all-powerful God in Heaven who gave His only begotten Son to suffer, bleed, and die to redeem His people from their sins. How my heart cries out, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner" since the day I feel I was surely made to realize that I could do nothing of myself and it was ALL in His hands. These words of that precious old hymn came into my heart so forcefully and continued with me for many days: "*Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling. Black I to the fountain fly, wash me Saviour or I die. All for sin could not atone, thou must save and THOU ALONE. NOT the labor of MY hands can fulfill the laws demands.*" Oh, how different that is from the teaching I had received of men, that I must do something or I could not be saved. Dear precious brethren, I do hope and feel I was MADE to realize that in my weak and sinful self lies no good thing and as nothing I surely am at the mercies of a gracious all-powerful God who promises His children, "My grace is sufficient," and "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," Romans 9:16. How I do long to know how to give Him thanks and praise, not only for His goodness to me in so many other ways, but most of all for "turning me" to what I surely believe

to be the true doctrine as taught in His Holy word.

I am enclosing a beautiful writing from the pen of a dear sister in Christ (I hope) who means so much to me and at her request, name to be withheld. If I am not deceived, this is from her heart and she was led by the Holy Spirit to expound upon this precious truth found in I Peter 5: 6-7, as she has been such an inspiration and comfort to me and to my dear husband so many times. Oh, how wonderful it is to feel the beautiful love that flows from God to us and then to see it flow from breast to breast among the brethren. How graciously this was manifested to us throughout my dear companion's few short years of proclaiming the truth to God's little ones, and how NEVER-ENDING is that wondrous love! May each of you know (especially those we were privileged to travel among) the love he felt in his heart and I'm let to believe he gave thanks and praise to Almighty God for His great blessings. Tho I do miss his sweet presence so much, I hope and pray to be reconciled as Job, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." If I know my heart, I do beg from the Lord above for the sweet peace that seemed so real to my loved one before his departure. How my heart was filled with comfort and praise to our kind and loving Heavenly Father as Elder Hamrick so beautifully proclaimed the truth concerning that peace in John 14:27 and as he spoke so sweetly from Ecc. 7:1 "A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth." Also how sweet and consoling were the deep expressions of love and truth by Elder Haygood and Elder Daniel. May it be our Heavenly Father's will to gather us together in that world that shall never end, where, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more sorrow, no crying, neither shall there be

any pain for the former things are passed away," Rev. 21:4. How my dear one loved and dwelt on that portion of God's Holy word, as well as all the truth's therein.

I realize this is lengthy and I feel so inadequate for words to express my feelings and if you feel my scattering remarks to be unworthy of space in the precious Signs which I enjoy so much, please don't hesitate to discard it.

I do hope and pray (in my weak way) it may be God's will for me to be blessed to continue among these brethren of like precious faith, and to be led to know more and more of God's great love and mercy, unworthy tho' I be. And oh, may I be led to say from my heart, "Give joy or grief, give ease or pain, take life or friends away, but let me with my Saviour reign in that eternal day," for this world holds nothing of lasting value.

Of the many precious memories the Lord in Heaven has so richly blessed me with, the most outstanding and joyous experience of my life occurred on the day, when, at the close of three days of listening (I do hope with understanding) to the precious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and His redeeming love so beautifully proclaimed by His able servants, it seemed "my cup runneth over" and I could no longer refrain from asking for a home (unworthy tho' I felt to be) with those precious people at Hopewell Church. After being so graciously received I was baptized that afternoon (October 1, 1978) by my precious husband. Oh, may I ever be given to praise the matchless and adorable name of Christ the Redeemer of His people, for His is surely our all in all.

A Weak and unworthy one,
Cloma McLaughlin
(Widow of Elder McLaughlin)

THE ORIGIN OF THE HYMN, "AMAZING GRACE"

John Newton, the celebrated English preacher and hymn writer, realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Mr. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend as he read the 15th chapter of I Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the Grace of God I am what I am," Mr. Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, by the grace of God I am what I am."

John Newton could say that with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught and stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with African slave traders. He went from bad to worse until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a Negro woman who bought him, and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed under the table. He had fallen to the depths of human degradation. And yet the grace of God found him, and saved him, and made him one of the greatest ministers of Christ, and a writer

See obituary for Elder B.J. McLaughlin
in this issue.

of hymns that have stirred the hearts of men the world over. Truly, he could say, "I am not what I once was." And truly he could say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Knowing this do you wonder at John Newton's message in the grand old hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

When we read this account of John Newton's life, we can understand why he wrote the nine verses (along with the regularly sung verses) which are so seldom used today.

EPHESIANS I: 3-6

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

This letter of Paul's is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." All those saints at Ephesus which Paul had in mind have long since been removed from time, but the letter and its words are still in effect, and to a people even to-day, for there are yet some "faithful in Christ Jesus," who love this doctrine as did our eminent apostle Paul, who so earnestly contended for the truth as he had been taught it, giving God pre-eminence in all things. Man of himself has never believed the truth, never will. The vital truth of God and the funda-

mental principle on which it is founded have ever been distasteful to man, for one prime reason: it robs man of any glory and places the invisible God pre-eminent in all things. Of all creatures and things in existence man has the least right to boast or array himself in any way as prominent in the least things, or capable of even thinking a thought, much less putting one into execution, for man was the last manifestation in creation. Even the beasts of the field, grass and herbs, were brought into a manifest existence before man was, and man after being formed of earth was an inanimated lump of clay until the Lord God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and he, man, became a living soul. Now since he has become a living soul by reason of the God-given breath he exalts himself above the Creator and limits the Holy One, circumscribes his movements and places him in an inferior position to man. If there is one thing God wishes to do or have done and he cannot do it or cause it to be done then he is not omnipotent. If there is anything, even the minutest detail that his all-seeing eye has not seen, even "from ancient times," then he is not omniscient. If there is any vacuum in space that is not filled with his presence at any and all times, then he is not omnipresent, and many have borne false witness, for Bible writers declare these three attributes as belonging to him, and to no other. They who feel they can keep the law, or even a part of it, and reap a reward, in claiming this ability to procure a benefit for doing righteous acts and receiving blessings thereby, either in time or eternity, have broken the commandment that reads, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." For to say that salvation, all of it, or any part of it, for time or eternity is in any way conditional is bearing false witness against Christ and overthrowing the testimony of the holy men of old who

spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The teachings of Christ are in no uncertain terms. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Here is a positive declaration of Christ that forever bars man coming of his own free will: he must be drawn. They are not drawn against their will, as some affirm that we believe. The psalmist says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God's ways are equal. When he draws one he makes that one willing. There is much could be written about one's willingness and acceptance. Of course God's people accept him and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The "elect according to the foreknowledge of God" are the only people that do, ever have or shall accept God the Father and his Son, or the salvation which he has wrought. When one talks about accepting Christ as his Savior and feels he can do something to aid his redemption or final preservation in glory, he has not accepted Christ, but he who is wholly and solely dependent upon Christ for salvation, both now and forever, does accept him as his Savior. There is not a text in the whole Bible that can be claimed as foundation for conditionalism that is not to their destruction, for such "they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Scripture means what it says; if not, it would say what it means. No mortal hated this doctrine more than the writer, but by hard and trying experiences, both in providence and grace, he learned that all power in heaven and earth is of God, and was given unto Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, for the accomplishment of God's purpose in earth. Then if all power in heaven and earth, which is time or eternity, the church or the world, providence or grace, is in him it is a foregone conclusion, an undeniable fact, that there is none in man. "It is not in man that

walketh to direct his steps." Are we going to doubt Jeremiah's word, "the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath?" who said, "He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light." Would any walk in sadness and affliction if it could be avoided? It was by faith that Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Faith is the gift of God, therefore it was of God, and not of Moses, that he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Would Paul have been struck down and turned about in a career of which he was so zealous if left to his own will? Most assuredly not, for his will was to go to Damascus, but like all other of God's chosen, elect and precious, he was made willing in the day of God's power. This power revealed Jesus Christ, whom he was persecuting as an impostor, and now he sees "Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor," as his Savior, and accepts him whom he had rejected, because a power over which he had no control smote him to the ground and blinded him. By the power and magnificence of "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" he was now willing to accept God the Father and God the Son. Now it was no wonder Paul could write the words at the beginning of our writing: "To the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." Who are the faithful? They who are full of faith. These are the people to whom this writing is addressed and for whom it is kept, and it does not apply to the ones who feel they can help the Lord in his work, either for time or eternity. In sending this message to the faithful he could boldly and freely speak of them as being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is useless for man to speculate on such solemn truths, or expect to reconcile them to reason. It

is a senseless undertaking for one to try to make God's ways plain to any natural mind. Our finite mind cannot grasp the nearly six thousand years of time, then why dispute or attempt to explain away the mystery of that which took place before time began? There is no measure in eternity. Time and time things alone are measurable. As God is immeasurable, so are all his ways and attributes. Were his mercy or love measurable, we would sometimes come to the limit and be without the mercy and law of God, but his mercy endureth forever and his love never fails. Because we cannot measure and understand God is no reason why we should deny the testimony of Paul, this faithful witness, who declares that God chose certain ones in Christ before the world was. It is essential that he did, and this being true there is a living unity between Christ and his people, for he was with the Father before the world was, and we were chosen in him. Then we must have been alive through him, or else he was then composed of dead members. It is not incredible then to one who sees God as sovereign to believe that all his people were foreknown and chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, for when Christ came in the flesh he was just as verily God as he was verily man, God manifest in the flesh, otherwise he could not be seen, could not suffer, bleed and die; neither could he have been born of a virgin except in the flesh. When man starts out to make the Scripture plain and understandable to natural reason he has reached the height of folly. No man dares question the prerogative of God, for all he does is right. The very fact that he does it is positive proof it is right. It is according to the blessing of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ that he chose us. It is a blessing, and not a recompense due us. "For the children (Esau and Jacob) being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose God,

according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." It was said unto her (Rebecca), "The elder shall serve the younger." "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." One would necessarily have to blot out such Scriptures as these in order to establish a conditional salvation for either time or eternity, and when he has eliminated this truth he has no foundation on which to stand, much less to build. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The foundation of God is sure and unless we build on this foundation our building must surely fall, so why try to remove some of the foundation which God has laid and eliminate a timber or stone that is objectionable to the natural mind, or try to smooth over a rough place, or make this hard and unendurable doctrine a soft, pliant thing that any man can bend about his finger to suit his own taste? Having faith in God no doctrine is too hard, and we glory in it because it abases man and exalts God. Makes us dependent creatures upon an independent God. By reason of the fact that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children of Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, we were appointed to be children of God before time, and the appointing or choosing is done, the election is past. By an unchangeable purpose, irrevocable, impossible of change, sure and certain, all that were thus chosen are surely safe in him. Nothing that I can do can make me any other than the son of my father. Yet not for one moment does one of God's children wish to take advantage of this truth, or use it as a cloak for sin to excuse his wrong doing. Being children there is a law and reverence and a desire to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Having seen his holiness we long to be holy as he is holy; we long to live right,

being dead to sin, or separated from sin, by the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. We hate sin and hunger and thirst after righteousness. He saw all from the beginning, even the behavior of all men, nothing is hung on a contingency and nothing comes as a surprise, for each event is so fitted as to be in perfect harmony with its predecessor and successor, all things going along in the stupendous plan that God alone saw and determined, and he executes his decree according to the good pleasure of his unchangeable will. The doctrine of predestination of all things is so clear that it seems all could see it, but God did not determine that all should see. This doctrine does not in any way charge God with being the author of sin, for how can he who is above any law commit sin? For sin is the transgression of the law. Further, the fact that man is not able to resist sin is not a misdemeanor chargeable to the Creator, for even in this his purpose is so far beyond our finiteness we are lost in the infiniteness of his plan. He had as rich a purpose in the transgression of our foreparents as he had and has in everything else. In speaking of Pharaoh the wicked king, it is written, "And in every deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." To which Paul also refers in Romans. If God sees fit to manifest his power in this way, what right has man to interfere? All the acts of God are alike good. Also we read of the suffering of Christ in which Peter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." In type Joseph was also taken in the same way and sold into Egypt where he was evil treated, but afterwards he could look at his brethren who had sold him and say, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to save much

people alive. It is because we cannot see far enough into God's plan, and lack of faith, that we cannot see and believe in the predestination of all things. God had some wise purpose in sin coming into the world, and remember this, had he not seen the awful consequences of sin, that it would condemn the whole world by the act of one man, he would not have prepared the antidote for Adam's transgression. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made right righteous." This is not contingent upon the act of any mortal, Christ alone could and did atone for all sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The atonement has been made by one offering by Christ himself without blemish or spot unto God, which is the only acceptable sacrificial offering for sin. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The perfect gift is Christ, the good gifts refers to the temporal blessings we enjoy in nature. God's plans are as unalterable as they are unchangeable; he having designed from all eternity the course of events as they come along. Knowing exactly what Adam would do, to prepare for this he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. As we were in Adam, so also then were all that ever should be born of the Spirit in Christ. We may take two apples, and before they were ever opened there are just so many seeds in each one. Manifesting them does not add nor diminish the number. The number is fixed. As in Adam there is a fixed number of people to be born on the earth, so there is also a fixed and certain number in Christ. There is not one thing by chance. No event too large to have been managed, designed and planned by him, nothing too finite to escape his decree. It is a truth that he will be glorified in all he does and in all that is done. "Surely

the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." There are no teachings in the Bible to warrant the assertion that salvation for either time or eternity is contingent, or conditional, or that God is not sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing. It is an admissible fact that if we do certain things the result will be so and so. If we fall into the water we shall get wet. If we put our hand into the fire we shall be burned. "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." No one denies the "if" in this, but this does not alter the predetermined act, step or thought of any man, being or thing; neither do we have the ability to alter our course, and the fact that one does or does not do a thing is proof positive that they were to have done or refrained from doing, the thing. If by the grace of God we refrain from an evil act, it is done by his grace, and we are not rewarded for doing, but in the doing we have our reward; and, further, this does not frustrate the eternal plan of God. It is the only sure foundation upon which one can rest. Inasmuch as God saw and foreknew all things and determined this course, he saw who would and who would not live a godly life and walk carefully. There is no disposition on the part of a child of God to enjoy the pleasures of sin, for being made dead to sin he has no desire to live any longer therein, but longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Even while in this ungodly world he longs to keep unspotted by its evils, even though he be ostracized and have to live alone. There is no pleasure in the transient things of this existence, for there is a continual longing of the heart, soul and mind to be at rest. The only support we have here is the hope that is in mercy given us in Christ

Jesus, that we are children, and if children, heirs, joint-heirs with Christ. The plan of God is so sure and certain that all hell, with its legions of tormenting devils, can never pluck us out of his hand, but all for whom he died, which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, are eternally safe. This, then, is our rest, our only rest in this life. May the Lord enlighten his people that they be not entangled with unsound doctrine.

F. S. FISHER

MEETINGS

ORDINATION

Pursuant to a request by Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery was called to examine Brother W. R. Mumford and if in their judgement he is qualified, to ordain to the office of deacon.

Members of the presbytery were Elders Jesse Foreman, O. V. Allen, J. T. Prescott, Harmon Bowen and Reeves Smith. Elder Jesse Foreman was chosen Moderator and Elder Reeves Smith was chosen clerk. Deacons present were Joe Morton, Ervin Futrell, Clayton Bowen and Virgil Gaskill.

Deacon Virgil Gaskill presented the candidate to the presbytery. Elder Prescott was consen to question the candidate. He asked the candidate if he understood the necessity of the close relationship of deacon and pastor and also that he should understand the mind and feelings of the church in all church matters. The candidate answered satisfactorily. Elder Allen gave the charge to the candidate using 1st Timothy, 3rd Chapter. With the laying on of hands by all ministers present, Elder Prescott gave the ordination prayer.

The moderator asked the church if it was satisfied with the work of the

presberty and the church answered yes. The candidate was then presented back to the church a duly ordained deacon. He was then given the right hand of fellowship. Minutes were read and approved.

Elder Jesse Foreman, Moderator
Elder Reeves Smith, Clerk, Pro-Tem

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST
FOR AUGUST 1984

J. L. Proctor, NC.	\$ 7.00
Milton D. Houston, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Nellie Collie, NC.	2.00
Mrs. J. T. Flippen, NC.	2.00
Elder G. W. Jones, LA.	2.00
B. T. Jeter, VA.	2.00
Mrs. A. H. Davidson, LA.	7.00
Mrs. Shirley DeBow, NC.	2.00
C. W. Wood, VA.	2.00
Raymond L. Brammer, VA.	2.00
Ira G. Strader, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN.	10.00
Hassell A. Hale, VA.	7.00
Mrs. W. W. Stutts, TX.	2.00
Mrs. Robert E. Smith, NC.	2.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER B. J. McLAUGHLIN

Elder B.J. McLaughlin ceased his life on earth March 9, 1984, at his home following a lengthy illness.

Many close friends and loved ones met together on March 12th in the Eubanks Funeral Chapel in Mabank, Texas to pay their last respects to Elder McLaughlin. Members from six different

states plus nine ministers were present.

He was born November 28, 1921 to the union of Austin C. and Willie Kate McLaughlin. He graduated from Athens High School and was a road construction contractor while living in Dallas and later at Clear Creek Resort near Eustace. He was an Army Air Force veteran of World War II.

He is survived by his wife, Cloma McLaughlin, of Eustace; two daughters: Anita Scott of Garland, Texas and Sheryl Jackson of Carrollton, Texas; two brothers: Earl H. McLaughlin of Eustace and Jack C. McLaughlin of Bryan; one sister: Annyce Morrison of Houston; three grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Brother McLaughlin was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry at Hopewell Church, Saturday morning, September 9, 1978 and had the sweet privilege of baptizing his daughter, Sheryl, that afternoon. He was also privileged to baptize his devoted wife, Cloma, October 1, 1978.

Brother McLaughlin was a great lover of the truth. He was given grace and knowledge to preach with power, "Jesus Christ and him crucified." He was always willing and ready to go where he was needed and asked for. After his surgery, the doctors gave him no hopes of living but only a few months. After being given this sad news, he told his wife that the greatest peace of mind and soul came over him that he had ever experienced in his entire life. This peace remained with him until the very end. John 14:27 was a great comfort to him. "Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Brother Mac was not afraid to die, his only regret concerning his death was leaving his precious wife, children, and loved ones. "Lord now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word," Luke 2:

29. His greatest desire during his remaining days was to be able to spend as much time as possible among the people he so dearly loved. We believe with all our heart, his soul and spirit is now in heaven rejoicing in the sunshine of God's love and mercy toward him. "He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me," Psalm 55:18. We have all felt a great loss, but we sincerely believe our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted by the writer assisted by Elder C.M. Haygood and Elder Paul Daniel. Interment was in Moorehead Melton Cemetery near Eustace.

Written by one who loved him,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

SISTER SABRA CONNER SHORT

Once more it has fallen my lot to write a memorial for one of our dear sisters in Christ at Roanoke Church.

Sister Sabra Jean Conner Short was born August 28, 1909 and fell asleep in Jesus at Lewis Gale Hospital June 10, 1984. She was united in marriage to Mr. Andrew Short on May 2, 1927, who survives her.

She is also survived by her mother, sister Marcella Conner, Salem, Va; One son, Robert Henderson Short, Montvale, Va; Three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. One sister, Mrs. Ada Lynn Bohon, Salem, VA; three Brothers, Mr. Estral Conner and Brother Hansel Conner, Salem, VA; Mr. Bacil Conner, Chino Valley, Ariz.

Sister Sabra joined the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church November 1, 1953 and was baptized by Elder Cecil E. Turner on November 29, 1953.

She died as she lived, a faithful and lovely sister in Christ, always walking

softly and in humbleness, always desiring to meet with the brethren and sisters, many times when it seemed physically impossible for her to go.

All was done for her that human hands could do, but the Lord has done more. She was removed from her pain and suffering in this world to rest in the bosom of her blessed Lord Jesus.

My own personal loss is great, but cannot grieve, feeling only gratitude for the privilege of knowing such a lovely sister, of having her fellowship and love these many years.

Her funeral was conducted June 13, 1984 at Lotz-Salem Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner and Mr. Short's pastor, D. M. McGrady, after which she was laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery. There to sleep until the coming again of her blessed Lord Jesus whom she adored.

Then all will be well.

Written and humbly submitted by,
Mrs. H. C. (Rlee) Houchins

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CIRCULATION OFFICE

Elder J. R. Williams

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

EDITORS

Elder J. R. Williams, Editor

Route 1, Box 65

Keeling, Va. 24566

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Editor

721 Willard Street

Greensboro, N.C. 27405

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

Rt. 6, Box 84, Fayette, Ala. 35555

Phone (205) 695-7756

Elder Richard H. Campbell

9195 Holmes Rd., Memphis, Tenn. 38115

Phone (901) 755-6049

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

Rt. 4, Box 21A, Winnsboro, TX 75494

Elder D. B. Stokes

1029 Daniel Court

Jacksonville, N.C. 28540

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Elder D. V. Spangler

RT. 6, Box 270, Beechwood Lane

Danville, Virginia 24541

Elder John D. Wood

9802 Cherry Tree Lane

Manassas, Virginia 22110

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J. R. Williams, Rt. 1, Box 65, Keeling, Virginia 24566. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405.

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P O E T R Y

ROCK OF AGES

Rock of Ages, shelter me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

(Not the labors of my hands,
Can fulfill thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.)

(Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace'
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wassh me, Savior, or I die!)

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eye-strings break in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown.
See thee on thy judgment throne.
Rock of Ages, shelter me,
Let me hid myself in thee!

Augustus M. Toplady

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 EDITORIAL

“**B**e still and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

There are many experiences in the lives of God's Children, in all ages of time, which are common to all and which create a bond of fellowship among them that is stronger and more enduring than any of their ties in nature. These experiences make them aware that there is a difference between them and their neighbors or even very near and dear friends or loved ones with whom they have so much in common in the things of the world. It is sad when they begin to realize that these experiences are separating them from their friends, family and loved ones and they cannot even ex-

plain how, what or why it is happening to them. Any attempt to explain only accelerates the growing apart and stresses the differences more. It is sad, in a way, but not to the extent that you would desire to return but you would love for them to understand. The command in the above scripture is the way in which these experiences begin. It is known and lived by all who have been called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light of revelation and made to realize, for the first time, that the Lord of hosts is with them. They would not turn back to the dark and beggarly elements of nature if it was their choice, but alas, they find that return they must. They find that after the lesson of the moment is learned and the season of rejoicing in this new found love passes, they find the captivity of their carnal nature taking them back into its fold and they are again subject to its demands. They are back in nature but it is not the same as they will always have this hope and live in the flesh in anticipation of new manifestations of the spirit of God in their lives.

The Apostle Paul experienced this command in his journey on the road to Damascus when the light shined around him brighter than the noon day sun, he was struck blind and fell to the ground. Certainly he was made to be still and know the only true and living God. In natural terms we would say that only such an experience as this and the power that accompanied it would cause Saul of Tarsus to halt in his zeal and determination to rid the world of all who called upon God in the name of Jesus Christ and listen to the voice that spoke to him. It certainly got his attention and made him be still and hear the Lord speaking to him. With all of the evidence that he had at the moment he could not deny that this was a power that he had never known before and he could but say, “Who art thou Lord,” and “What wilt

thou have me to do?" The man who asked these questions was a completely different person from the Saul of Tarsus who began this journey and so it is with all who are brought to this point in their life and made to be still and know. There is no scripture, that Paul ever returned again to his former way of life after the truth was revealed to him and neither do any of the others return to their former ways in which the gods of this world has their allegiance, willingly as in former days. They are powerless to retain the spirit but the fact that they know the truth of its existence and have experienced its indwelling they will live in hope of its return and the time when they will be released from nature and live in the spirit in its fullness around their Fathers throne.

It would take an extreme exaggeration of the facts and distortion of the truth for anyone to read these scriptures of Paul's conversion and proclaim that the coming to a knowledge of the truth is of the creature or is in any way a result of any favorable characteristics that are found in the creature. There was nothing in the life or actions of Saul of Tarsus that would cause God to have mercy on him and yet he did and Paul declared in his epistle to Timothy that he obtained mercy that in him first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them which should thereafter believe on him to life everlasting. The scriptures on the conversion of the Apostle Paul and his writings of being turned from darkness to light have strengthened and caused more rejoicing in the hearts of wayworn pilgrims in their travels in this vale of tears than the writing of any other. This is because that all can relate to his experiences by the similarities that each fellowships from their own travels.

Moses was commanded to stand still and to take his shoes off his feet as God made himself known to the prophet and

told him the things that would be required of him and the things he must suffer. Each time that one is made to be still they are taught something that they had not known or understood before and are made aware that the eternal God is their God and is leading them in ways that are pleasing to him and that are for their eternal good and his eternal glory. Just as Moses responded by saying that he could not go, could not speak, each will feel their inability in doing that which is required of them but I have never read where Moses or anyone else was released from the command because they did not feel worthy or capable of doing those things that they were commanded to do. The command is always, do, not will you do.

I know of several who believe the truth and have manifested it in their conversations and actions over a period of many years and yet they do not come forward and confess their hope because they do not feel worthy to ask for a home with the saints of God. They use this as a reason for not asking for a home in the church and yet this is the only reason that the church will accept as a cause to receive them into fellowship with brethren, the fact that they realize their unworthiness by having been made to know the only one who is worthy. My prayer for such is that God will make them to stand still and judge with righteous judgement their own situation and respond according to the longing in their heart and the hope that they cannot deny that dwells in their innermost being. May he make them to realize that they have been added to the church, but just have not come inside and may he grant them grace to do so. It is a step that I have never heard of being regretted by anyone who has taken it. They will always feel their unworthiness in and of themselves but not regretful of having confessed the hope that is in them unto their brethren. It brings a

peace of mind and comfort to the soul that is sacred and precious to them and will be as long as they live. I do not say they will never have any doubts and fears, but regret, NEVER. This is the beautiful step of that perfect work that is being manifested in their lives and it will be completed on schedule. It is difficult at times to be still and wait upon the Lord, but how the church does rejoice to behold the work unfold and the beauty and majesty of His power made known.

It was hard for the children of Israel to stand still at the Red Sea as the Egyptians approached from the rear, the sea ahead and the mountains on either side, yet, the command was, "Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." So it is many times in the lives of the children of God as they journey thru life. They are brought to places where it seems that there is no possible solution, no way that they can be delivered and indeed according to nature there is not. That is why it is so sweet to be blessed, to stand still and behold your God as he works out your deliverance and places you again on solid ground as another trial of your faith is proven more precious than gold, tried by fire and renders praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. You feel at that moment in time that surely you will never question again the fact that you are a chosen vessel unto him but nature being what it is and the weakness of the flesh finds you again and again in need of this wonderful demonstration of his mercy and loving care for you. But right now you can say with David, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." At this point in your experience, your faith is strong and you are confident that you will be kept by this mighty power. You can say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Surely Paul must have been at such a point in his experience as he wrote the fifth chapter of his letter to the Church of Rome. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." When one has been made to stand still for a brief moment in time, know God and be made aware of and see their salvation, the beauty, the surety, peace, glory, love and the tender mercy that is their heritage, then the confidence that all the powers of this world, the forces of satan and his kingdom cannot take it from them, is their refuge as stated in the about scripture. Yes, they will even glory in tribulations because in being blessed to see their salvation, they can see that even these work for good in manifesting patience, experience, hope and even God's love shed abroad in their hearts.

All of the blessings of God in the lives of his elect are experienced at times when their minds and attentions are turned away from the stress and turmoil of this life and they are made to stand still, cease their efforts and know that God is in control. He is in control all of the time, but man will only realize and acknowledge it when they are made to do so. Of themselves they would always wait for a more convenient time or make it conform to their schedule and whims, and by so doing would miss the most precious mementos and experiences that they will ever know in this life.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



LIBERTY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

In the year 1892, Liberty Primitive Baptist Church was organized, and remodeled many years later. The house is located about one mile west of Manchester, Ky., on Hooker Road.

Meeting time is 10 o'clock a.m. on 4th unday of each month. The present pastor is Elder Arnold O. Thompson, from Tipp City, Ohio.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

BY
AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY
1740-1778

Toplady flashed upon and past the world like a meteor. A brilliant streak of light, and he was gone. But he will ever live in the affections of all who love pure religion, and scorn every touchstone save the Holy Scriptures. To have produced the greatest hymn in the English language—"ROCK OF AGES" has, by general consent, been assigned the place

of honour—would alone have earned him the gratitude of the churches. So remarkable, indeed, has been its vogue that the public are apt to overlook the fact that he was the author of many other hymns, some of which—for example, "Deathless Principle," and "What Though My Frail Eyelids Refuse"—surpass in euphony and ethereal beauty, though not in depth and intensity of feeling, his acknowledged masterpiece. In these hymns, written in rapturous moments that come only to the privileged few, and to them but rarely, the ardent soul dis-severs itself from earth, mounts on eager and confident pinions, and flutters ecstasied before its God. But it is

not as a hymn-writer only that Toplady excels. The best of his essays are studied with vitalizing thoughts expressed in noble and virile English. His sermons, which contain many magnificent passages, are storehouses of sound and lucid divinity."

Necessary to be premised, in order to our better understanding the Doctrine of Predestination.

Although the great and ever Blessed God is a Being absolutely simply, and infinitely remote from all shadow of composition; he is, nevertheless, in condescension to our weak and contracted faculties, represented in Scripture as possessed of divers properties, or attributes, which, though seemingly different from his essence, are in reality, essential to him, and constitutive of his very nature.

Of these attributes, those on which we shall now particularly descant (as being more immediately concerned in the ensuing subject), are the following ones; 1. His eternal wisdom and foreknowledge. 2. The absolute freedom and liberty of his will. 3. The perpetuity and unchangeableness both of himself and his decrees. 4. His omnipotence. 5. His justice. 6. His mercy.

Without an explication of these, the doctrine of predestination cannot be so well understood: we shall, therefore, briefly consider them, by way of preliminary to the main subject.

1. With respect to the divine wisdom and foreknowledge, I shall lay down the following positions:

Pos. 1. God is, and always was, so perfectly wise that nothing ever did, or does, or can, elude his knowledge. He knew, from all eternity, not only what he himself intended to do, but also what he would incline and permit others to do, "Known unto God are all his work, from eternity."

Pos. 2. Consequently, God knows nothing now, nor will know any thing hereafter, which he did not know and foresee from everlasting: his foreknowledge being co-eternal with himself, and extending to every thing that is or shall be done. All things, which comprise past, present, and future, are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Pos. 3. This foreknowledge of God is not conjectural and uncertain, (for then it would not be foreknowledge) but most sure and infallible; so that whatever he foreknows to be future shall necessarily and undoubtedly come to pass. For his knowledge can be no more frustrated, or his wisdom be deceived, than he can cease to be God. Nay, could either of these be the case, he actually would cease to be God; all mistakes and disappointment being absolutely incompatible with the divine nature.

Pos. 4. The influence which the divine foreknowledge has on the certain futurity of the things foreknown does not render the intervention of second causes needless, nor destroy the nature of the things themselves.

My meaning is that the prescience of God does not lay any coercive necessity on the wills of beings naturally free. For instance, man, even in his fallen state, is endued with a natural freedom of will; yet he acts, from the first to the last moment of his life, in absolute subserviency (though perhaps, he does not know it nor design it) to the purposes and decrees of God concerning him; notwithstanding which he is sensible of no compulsion, but acts as freely and voluntarily as if he was, subject to no control, and absolutely lord of himself. This made Luther, after he had shewn how all things necessary and inevitably come to pass, in consequence of the sovereign will and infallible foreknowledge of God, say that "We shall carefully distinguish between a necessity of infallibility and a

necessity of co-action; since both good and evil men, though by their actions they fulfil the decree and appointment of God, yet are not forcibly constrained to do any thing but act willingly."

Pos. 5. God's foreknowledge, taken abstractedly, is not the sole cause of beings and events; but his will and foreknowledge together. Hence we find, Acts ii. 23, that his determinate counsel and foreknowledge act in concert; the latter resulting from, and being founded on, the former.

We pass on.

II. To consider the will of God; with regard to which we assert as follows:

Pos. 1. The Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge, but likewise of absolute liberty of will; so that whatever he does, or permits to be done, he does and permits freely, and of his own good pleasure.

Consequently, it is his free pleasure to permit sin; since, without his permission, neither men nor devils can do any thing. Now, to permit is, at least, the same as not to hinder, though it be in our power to hinder if we please; and this permission or non hindrance, is certainly an act of the divine will. Hence, Austin says, "Those things which seemingly thwart the divine will are, nevertheless, agreeable to it; for if God did not permit them, they could not be done, and whatever God permits, he permits freely and willingly. He does nothing, neither suffers any thing to be done, against his own will." And Luther observes that "God permitted Adam to fall into sin, because he willed that he should so fall."

Pos. 2. Although the will of God, considered in itself, is simply one and the same; yet in condescension to the present capacities of men, the divine will is very properly distinguished into secret and revealed. Thus it was his revealed will that Pharaoh should let the Israelites go; that Abraham should sacrifice his son; and that Peter should not deny

Christ: but as proved by the event, it was his secret will that Pharaoh should not let Israel go, Ex. iv. 21, that Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac, Gen. xxii. 12, and that Peter should deny his Lord, Matt. xxvi. 34.

Pos. 3. The will of God, respecting the salvation and condemnation of men, is never contrary to itself; he immutably wills the salvation of the elect, and *vice versa*: nor can he ever vary or deviate from his own will in any instance whatever, so as that should be done which he willeth not; or that not be brought to pass which he willeth. Isaiah xli. 10. My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure—Psalm xxxiii. 11. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Job xxiii. 13, 14. He is in one mind, who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him. Eph. i. 11. Being predestinated, according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Thus, for instance, Hophni and Phineas hearkened not to the voice of their father, who reproved them for their wickedness, because the Lord would slay them, 1 Sam. ii. 25. And Sihon, king of Heshbon, would not receive the peaceable message sent him by Moses, because the Lord God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into the hand of Israel, Deut. ii 26, 30. Thus also, to add no more, we find that there have been, and ever will be some, whose eyes God blindeth, and whose hearts he hardeneth, i.e. whom God permits to continue blind and hardened, on purpose to prevent their seeing with their eyes, and understanding with their hearts, and to hinder their conversion to God, and spiritual healing by him, Isa. vi. 9. John xii. 39-40.

Pos. 4. Because God's will of precept

may, in some instances, appear to thwart his will of determination, it does not follow either, 1. That he mocks his creatures, or 2. That they are excusable for neglecting to observe his will of command.

1. He does not hereby mock his creatures; for if men do not believe his word, nor observe his precepts, the fault is not in him, but in themselves; their unbelief and disobedience are not owing to any ill infused into them by God, but to the vitiosity of their depraved nature, and the perverseness of their own wills. Now, if God invited all men to come to him, and then shut the door of mercy against any who were desirous of entering; his invitation would be a mockery, and unworthy of himself; but we insist on it, that he does not invite all men to come to him in a saving way; and that every individual person, who is, through his gracious influence on his heart, made willing to come to him shall, sooner or later, be surely saved by him, and that with an everlasting salvation. 2. Man is not excusable for neglecting God's will of command. Pharaoh was faulty, and therefore justly punishable, for not obeying God's revealed will, though God's secret will rendered that obedience impossible. Abraham would have committed sin, had he refused to sacrifice Isaac; and, in looking to God's secret will, would have acted counter to his revealed one. So Herod, Pontius Pilot, and the reprobate Jews, were justly condemned for putting Christ to death, inasmuch as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will. "Thou shalt do no murder;" yet, in slaying the Messiah, they did no more than God's hand and his counsel, i. e. his secret ordaining will, determined before should be done, Acts iv. 27, 28; and Judas is justly punished for perfidiously and wickedly betraying Christ, though his perfidy and wickedness were (but not with his design) subservient to the accomplishment of the

decree and word of God.

The brief of the matter is this; secret things belong to God, and those that are revealed belong to us; therefore, when we meet with a plain precept, we should simply endeavour to obey it, without tarrying to inquire into God's hidden purpose. Venerable Bucer, after taking notice how God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and making some observations on the apostle's simile of a potter and his clay, adds that, "though God has at least the same right over his creatures, and is at liberty to make them what he will, and direct them to the end that pleaseth himself, according to his sovereign and secret determination, yet it by no means follows that they do not act freely and spontaneously, or that the evil they commit is to be charged on God."

Pos. 5. God's hidden will is peremptory and absolute; and, therefore, cannot be hindered from taking effect.

God's will is nothing else than God himself willing: consequently it is omnipotent and unfrustratable. Hence we find it termed by Austin and the schoolmen, *voluntas omnipotentissima* because, whatever God wills cannot fail of being effected. This made Austin say, "Evil men do many things contrary to God's revealed will; but so great is his wisdom, and so inviolable his truth, that he directs all things into those channels which he foreknew." And again "No free-will of the creature can resist the will of God; for man cannot so will, or nill, as to obstruct the divine determination, or overcome the divine power." Once more "It cannot be questioned, but God does all things, and ever did, according to his own purpose: the human will cannot resist him, so as to make him do more or less than it is his pleasure to do; *quandoquidem etiam de ipsis hominum voluntatibus quod vult facit* since he does what he pleases even with the wills of men."

Pos. 6. Whatever comes to pass comes

to pass by virtue of this absolute, omnipotent will of God, which is the primary and supreme cause of all things. Rev. ix. 11. Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Psalm cxv. 3. Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased. Dan. iv. 35. He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? Psalm cxxxv. 6. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places. Mat. x. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. To all which, Austin subscribes, when he says, "Nothing is done but what the Almighty wills should be done, either efficiently or permissively." As does Luther, whose words are these, "This, therefore, must stand; to wit, the unsearchable will of God, without which nothing exists or acts." And again, "God would not be much, if he was not almighty, and if any thing could be done without him." And elsewhere, he quotes these words of Erasmus: "Supposing there was an earthly prince who could do whatever he would and none were able to resist him, we might safely say of such a one, that he would certainly fulfill his own desire, in like manner, the will of God, which is the first cause of all things, should seem to lay a kind of necessity upon our wills." This Luther approves of, and subjoins, "Thanks be to God, for this orthodox passage in Erasmus's discourse! but, if this be true, what becomes of his doctrine of free-will, which he at other times so strenuously contends for?"

Pos. 7. The will of God is so the cause of all things as to be itself without cause; for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of every thing.

So that the divine will is the *ne plus ultra* of all our inquiries; when we as-

send to that, we can go no farther. Hence we find every matter resolved ultimately into the mere sovereign pleasure of God, as the spring and occasion of whatsoever is done in heaven and earth. Matt. xi. 25. Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Luke xii. 32. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Matt. viii. 3. I will: be thou clean. Mark iii. 13. He went up into a mountain, and called unto him whom he would. Jam. i. 18. Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth. John i. 13. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Rom. ix. 15, 18. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Therefore, he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. And no wonder that the will of God should be the main spring that sets all inferior wheels in motion, and should likewise be the rule by which he goes in all his dealings with his creatures; since nothing out of God, i. e. exterior to himself can possibly induce him to will or nill one thing rather than another. Deny this, and you, at one stroke, destroy his immutability and independency; since he can never be independent who acts *pro re nata*, as emergency requires, and whose will is suspended on that of others; nor unchangeable, whose purposes vary and take all shapes, according as the persons or things vary who are the objects of those purposes. The only reason, then, that can be assigned why the Deity does this, or omits that, is because it is his own free pleasure. Luther, in answer to that question, "Whence it was that Adam was permitted to fall, and corrupt his whole posterity; when God could have prevented his falling, &c., says, "God is a being whose will acknowledges no

cause: neither is it for us to prescribe rules to his sovereign pleasure, or call him to account for what he does. He has neither superior nor equal; and his will is the rule of all things. He did not, therefore, will such and such things because they were in themselves right, and he was bound to will them; but they are therefore equitable and right because he wills them. The will of man, indeed, may be influenced and moved; but God's will never can. To assert the contrary is to undefy him." Bucer likewise observes, "God has no other motive for what he does than *ipsa voluntas* his own mere will; which will is so far from being unrighteous, that it is justice itself."

Pos. 8. Since, as was lately observed, the determining will of God, being omnipotent, cannot be obstructed or made void; it follows that he never did, nor does he now, will that every individual of mankind should be saved.

If this was his will, not one single soul could ever be lost; (for who hath resisted his will?) and he would surely afford all men those effectual means of salvation without which it cannot be had. Now, God could afford these means as easily to all mankind, as to some only; but experience proves that he does not; and the reason is equally plain, namely, that he will not; for whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does he in heaven and on earth. It is said, indeed, by the apostle, that God would have all men saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; i. e. as Austin, consistently with other Scriptures, explains the passage, "God will save some out of the whole race of mankind," that is, persons of all nations, kindreds and tongues. Nay, he will save all men, i. e. as the same father observes, "every kind of men, or men of every kind," namely, the whole election of grace, be they bond or free, noble or ignoble, rich or poor, male or female. Add to this, that it evidently militates against the majesty, omnipotence, and supremacy of God,

to suppose that he can either will any thing in vain, or that any thing can take effect against his will; therefore, Bucer observes very rightly, ad Rom. ix. "God doth not will the salvation of reprobates, seeing he hath not chosen them neither created them to that end." Consonant to which are those words of Luther, "This mightily offends our rational nature, that God should, of his own mere unbiassed will, leave some men to themselves, harden them, and then condemn them; but he has given abundant demonstration, and does continually, that this is really the case; namely, that the sole cause why some are saved, and others perish, proceeds from his willing the salvation of the former, and the perdition of the latter, according to that of Paul, He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

Pos. 9. As God doth not will that each individual of mankind should be saved, so neither did he will that Christ should properly and immediately die for each individual of mankind; whence it follows that, though the blood of Christ, from its own intrinsic dignity, was sufficient for the redemption of all men; yet, in consequence of his Father's appointment, he shed it intentionally, and, therefore, effectually and immediately, for the elect only.

This is self evident. God, as we have before proved, wills not the salvation of every man; but he gave his Son to die for them whose salvation he willed; therefore, his Son did not die for every man. All those for whom Christ died are saved; and the divine justice indispensably requires that to them the benefits of his death should be imparted; but only the elect are saved; they only partake of those benefits; consequently for them only he died and intercedes. The apostle, Rom. viii. asks, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, i. e. his elect, exclusively

of others; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died for them, exclusively of others. The plain meaning of the passage is that those whom God justifies, and for whom Christ died (justification and redemption being of exactly the same extent), cannot be condemned. These privileges are expressly restrained to the elect; therefore, God justifies and Christ died for them alone.

In the same chapter Paul asks; "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, (i. e. for all us elect persons) how shall he not, with him, also freely give us all things? i. e. salvation, and all things necessary to it. Now, it is certain that these are not given to every individual; and yet, if Paul says true, they are given to all those for whom Christ was delivered to death; consequently, he was not delivered to death for every individual. To the same purpose St. Austin argues, in Johan. 45. col. 335. Hence that saying of Ambrose, *si non credis non tibi passus est*, i. e. "if you are an unbeliever, Christ did not die for you." Meaning, that whoever is left under the power of final unbelief, is thereby evidenced to be one of those for whom Christ did not die; but that all for whom he suffered shall be, in this life, sooner or later, endued with faith. The Church of Smyrna, in their letter to the dioceses of Pontus, insist every where on the doctrine of special redemption. Bucer, in all parts of his works, observes, that "Christ died restrictively for the elect only; but for them universally."

Pos. 10. From what has been laid down it follows that Austin, Luther, Bucer, the scholastic divines, and other learned writers, are not to be blamed for asserting that "God may, in some sense, be said to will the being and commission of sin." For was this contrary to his determining will of permission, either he would not be omnipotent, and sin has place in the world; which it could not have, if God willed otherwise; for who

hath resisted his will? Rom. ix. No one can deny that God permits sin; but he neither permits it ignorantly, nor unwillingly; therefore, knowingly and willingly. Vid. Aust. Enchir. c. 96. Luther steadfastly maintains this in his bood *De Serv Arbitr* and Bucer in Rom. i. However, it should be carefully noticed, 1. That God's permission of sin does not arise from his taking delight in it; on the contrary, sin, as sin, is the abominable thing that his soul hateth; and his efficacious permission of it is for wise and good purposes. Whence that observation of Austin, "God, who is no less omnipotent than he is supremely and perfectly holy, would never have permitted evil to enter among his works, but in order that he might do good even with that evil," i. e. over-rule it for good in the end. 2. That God's free and voluntary permission of sin lays no man under any forcible or compulsive necessity of committing it; consequently, the Deity can by no means be termed the author of moral evil; to which he is not, in the proper sense of the word, accessory, but only remotely or negatively so, inasmuch as he could, if he pleased, absolutely prevent it.

We should, therefore, be careful not to give up the omnipotence of God, under a pretence of exalting his holiness; his is infinite in both, and therefore, neither should be set aside nor obscured. To say that God absolutely nills the being and commission of sin, while experience convinces us that sin is acted every day, is to represent the Deity as a weak, impotent being, who would fain have things go otherwise that they do, but cannot accomplish his desire. On the other hand, to say that he willeth sin doth not in the least detract from the holiness and rectitude of his nature; because, whatever God wills, as well as whatever he does, cannot be eventually evil: materially evil it may be; but, as was just said, it must ultimately be di-

rected to some wise and just end, otherwise he could not will it; for his will is righteous and good, and the sole rule of right and wrong, as is often observed by Austin, Luther, and others.

Pos. 11. In consequence of God's immutable will and infallible foreknowledge, whatever things come to pass come to pass necessarily; though, with respect to second causes, and us men, many things are contignet; i. e. unexpected, and seemingly accidental.

That this was the doctrine of Luther, none can deny, who are in any measure acquainted with his works: particularly with his treatise, *De Serva Arbitrio*, or free-will a slave; the main drift of which book is to prove that the will of man is by nature enslaved to evil only, and, because it is fond of that slavery, is therefore said to be free. Among other matters, he proves there that "whatever man does he does necessarily, though not with any sensible compulsion; and that we can only do what God from eternity willed and foreknew we should; which will of God must be effectual, and his foresight must be certain." Hence we find him saying, "It is most necessary and salutary for a Christian to be assured that God foreknows nothing uncertainly; but that he determines, and foresees, and acts, in all things, according to his own eternal, immutable, and infallible will; adding, Hereby, as with a thunderbolt, is man's freewill thrown down and destroyed." A little after, he shews in what sense he took the word necessity; "by it," says he, "I do not mean that the will suffers any forcible constraint, or co-action; but the infallible accomplishment of those things which the immutable God decreed and foreknew concerning us." He goes on: "Neither the divine nor human will does any thing by constraint; but, whatever man does, be it good or bad, he does with as much appetite and willingness as if his will was really free. But, after all, the will of

God is certain and unalterable, and is the governess of ours." Exactly consonant to all which are those words of Luther's friend and fellow-labourer, Melancthon: "All things turn out according to divine predestination; not only the works we do outwardly, but even the thoughts we think inwardly:" adding in the same place, "There is no such a thing as chance, or fortune; nor is there a readier way to gain the fear of God, and to put our whole trust in Him, than to be thoroughly versed in the doctrine of predestination." I could cite, to the same purpose, Austin, Aquinas, and many other learned men; but for brevity's sake, forbear. That this is the doctrine of Scripture very adapt in those sacred books cannot but acknowledge.—See, particularly, Psalm cxxxv. 6. Matt. x. 29. Prov. xvi. 1. Matt. xxv. 54. Luke xxii. 22. Acts iv. 28. Eph. i 11. Isa. xlvi. 10.

Pos. 12. As God knows nothing now which he did not know from all eternity; so he wills nothing now which he did not will from everlasting.

This position needs no explanation nor enforcement; it being self-evident that, if any thing can accede to God, *de novo* i. e. if he can at any time be wiser than he always was, or will that at one time which he did not will from all eternity, these dreadful consequences must ensue: 1. That the knowledge of God is not perfect, since what is absolutely perfect, *non recipit magis et minus*, cannot admit either of addition or detraction. If I add to any thing, it is from a supposal that that thing was not complete before; if I detract from it, it is supposed that that detraction renders it less perfect than it was. But the knowledge of God, being infinitely perfect, cannot, consistently with that perfection, be either increased or lessened. 2. That the will of God is fluctuating, mutable, and unsteady; consequently that God himself is so, his will coinciding

with his essence, contrary to the avowed assurances of Scripture and the strongest dictates of reason, as we shall presently shew, when we come to treat of the divine immutability.

Pos. 13. The absolute will of God is the original spring and efficient cause of his people's salvation.

I say the original and efficient; for, *sensu complexo*, there are other intermediate causes of their salvation, which, however, all result from, and are subservient to, this primary one, the will of God. Such are his everlasting choice of them to eternal life: the eternal covenant of grace entered into by the Trinity on behalf of the elect; the incarnation, obedience, death, and intercession of Christ for them; and which are so many links in the great chain of causes; and not one of these can be taken away without marring and subverting the whole gospel plan of salvation by Jesus Christ. We see, then, that the free, unbiassed, sovereign will of God is the root of this tree of life, which bears so many glorious branches, and yields such salutary fruits: he therefore loved the elect, and ordained them to life, because he would; according to that of the apostle, having predestinated us according to the good pleasure of his will; Eph. i. 5. Then, next after God's covenant for his people and promises to them, comes in the infinite merit of Christ's righteousness and atonement; for we were chosen to salvation in him as members of his mystic body, and through him, as our surety, and substitute, by whose vicarious obedience to the moral law, and submission to its curse and penalty, all we, whose names are in the book of life, should never incur the divine hatred or be punished for our sins, but continue to eternity as we were from eternity, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. But still the divine grace and favour (and God extends these to whom he will) must be considered as what gave birth

to the glorious scheme of redemption, according to what our Lord himself teaches us, John iii. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.; and that of the apostle, 1 John iv. 9. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that he sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him.

Pos. 14. Since this absolute will of God is both immutable and omnipotent, we infer that the salvation of every one of the elect is most infallibly certain, and can by no means be prevented. This necessarily follows from what we have already asserted and proved concerning the divine will, which, as it cannot be disappointed or made void, must undoubtedly secure the salvation of all whom God wills should be saved.

From the whole of what has been delivered under this second head, I would observe that the genuine tendency of these truths is, not to make men indolent and careless, or lull them to sleep on the lap of presumption and carnal security, but, 1. To fortify the people of Christ against the attacks of unbelief and the insults of their spiritual enemies. And what is so fit to guard them against these as the comfortable persuasion of God's unalterable will to save them, and of their unalienable interest in the sure mercies of David? 2. To withdraw them entirely from all dependence, whether on themselves or any creature whatever; to make them renounce their own righteousness no less than their sins, in point of reliance, and to acquiesce sweetly and safely in the certain perpetuity of his rich favour. 3. To excite them, from a trust of his goodwill towards them, to love that God who hath given such great and numberless proofs of his love to men; and in all their thoughts, words, and works, to aim, as much as possible, at his honour and glory. We were to consider.

III. The unchangeableness which is

essential to himself and his decrees.

Pos. 1. God is essentially unchangeable in himself. Were he otherwise, he would be confessedly imperfect; since whoever changes must change either for the better or for the worse: whatever alteration any being undergoes, that being must, *ipso facto*, either become more excellent than it was, or lose some of the excellency, which it had. But neither of these can be the case with the Deity: he cannot change for the better, for that would necessarily imply that he was not perfectly good before; he cannot change for the worst, for then he could not be perfectly good after that change. *Ergo*, God is unchangeable. And this is the uniform voice of Scripture. Mal. iii. 6. I am the Lord: I change not. James i. 17. With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Psalm cii. 27. Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Pos. 2. God is likewise absolutely unchangeable with regard to his purposes and promises. Numb. xxiii. 19. God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? 1 Sam. xv. 29. The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent. Job xxiii. 13. He is in one mind, and who can turn him? Exek. xxiv. 14. I, the Lord, have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it: I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent. Rom. xi. 29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 2 Tim. ii. 13. He abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself.

By the purpose of decree of God we mean his determinate counsel, whereby he did from all eternity pre-ordain whatever he should do, or what permit to be done, in time. In particular, it signifies his everlasting appointment of some men to life and of others to death; which appointment flows entirely from his

own free and sovereign will. Rom. ix. The children not yet being born, neither having done any good or evil (that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth), it was said, the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

The apostle then, in the very next words, anticipates an objection which he foresaw men of corrupt minds would make to this: What shall we say, then? is there unrighteousness with God? which he answerw with, God forbid! and resolves the whole of God's procedure with his creatures into his own sovereign and independent will: for he said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

We assert that the decrees of God are not only immutable as to himself, it being inconsistent with his nature to alter in his purposes or change his mind, but that they are immuable likewise with respect to the objects of those decrees; so that whatsoever God hath determined concerning every individual person or thing shall surely and infallibly be accomplished in and upon them. Hence we find that he actually sheweth mercy on whom he decreed to shew mercy, and hardeneth whom he resolved to harden: Rom. ix. 18. For his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure: Isa. xlvi. 10. Consequently his eternal predestination of men and things must be immutable as himself, and, so far from being reversible, can never admit of the least variation.

Pos. 3. "Although," to use the words of Gregory, "God never swerves from his decree, yet he often varies in his declarations:" That is always sure and immoveable; these are sometimes seemingly discordant. So when he gave sentence against the Ninevites by Jonah, saying, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," the meaning of

the words is, not that God absolutely intended, at the end of that space, to destroy the city, but that, should God deal with those people according to their deserts, they would be totally extirpated from the earth; and should be so extirpated unless they repented speedily.

Likewise when he told king Hezekiah, by the prophet Isaiah, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live;" the meaning was that, with respect to second causes, and considering the king's bad state of health and emaciated constitution, he could not, humanly speaking, live much longer. But still the event shewed that God had immutably determined that he should live fifteen years more; and, in order to that, had put it into his heart to pray for the blessing decreed; just as in the case of Nineveh lately mentioned, God had resolved not to overthrow that city then; and, in order to the accomplishment of his own purpose in a way worthy of himself, made the ministry of Jonah the means of leading that people to repentance. All which, as it shews that God's absolute predestination does not set aside the use of means, so does it likewise prove that, however various the declaration of God may appear (to wit, when they proceed on a regard had to natural causes), his counsels and designs stand firm and immoveable, and can neither admit of alteration in themselves, nor hindrance in their execution. See this farther explained by Bucer, in Rom. ix., where you will find the certainty of the divine appointments solidly asserted and unanswerably vindicated. We now come,

IV. To consider the omnipotence of God.

Pos. 1. God is, in the most unlimited and absolute sense of the word, Almighty. Jer. xxxii. 17. Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there

is nothing too hard for thee. Mat. xix. 26. With God all things are possible. The schoolmen very properly distinguish the omnipotence of God into absolute and actual: by the former, God might do many things which he does not; by the latter, he actually does whatever he will. For instance, God might, by virtue of his absolute power, have made more worlds than he has. He might have eternally saved every individual of mankind, without reprobating any: on the other hand he might, and that with the strictest justice, have condemned all men, and saved none. He could, had it been his pleasure, have prevented the fall of angels and men, and thereby have hindered sin from having footing in and among his creatures. By virtue of this actual power he made the universe; executes the whole counsel of his will both in heaven and earth; governs and influences both men and things, according to his own pleasure; fixes the bounds which they shall not pass; and, in a word, worketh all in all: Isa. xlv. 7. Amos iii. 6. John v. 17. Acts xvii. 26. 1 Cor. xii. 6.

Pos. 2. Hence it follows that, since all things are subject to the divine control, God not only works efficaciously on his elect, in order that they may will and do that which is pleasing in his sight; but does likewise frequently and powerfully suffer the wicked to fill up the measure of their iniquities by committing fresh sins. Nay, he sometimes, but for wise and gracious ends, permits his own people to transgress; for he has the hearts and wills of all men in his hand, and inclines them to good, or delivers them up to evil, as he sees fit: yet without being the author of sin; as Luther, Bucer, Austin, and others have piously and scripturally taught.

This position consist of two parts: (1.) That God efficaciously operates on the hearts of his elect, and is thereby the sole author of all the good they do. See

Eph. iii. 20. Phil. ii. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Heb. xiii. 21. St. Austin takes up no fewer than nineteen chapters in proving that whatever good is in men, and whatever good they are enabled to do is solely and entirely of God; who, says he, "works in holy persons, all their good desires, their pious thoughts, and their righteous actions; and yet these holy persons, though thus wrought upon by God, will and do all these things freely: for it is he who rectifies their wills which, being originally evil, are made good by him; and which wills, after he hath set them right and made them good, he directs to good actions and to eternal life; wherein he does not force their wills but makes them willing." (2.) That God often lets the wicked go on to more ungodliness: which he does, 1. Negatively, by withholding that grace which alone can restrain them from evil. 2. Remotely, by the providential concurrence and meditation of second causes; which second causes, meeting and acting in concert with the corruption of the probate's unregenerate nature, produce sinful effects. 3. Judically, or in a way of Judgment. Prov. xxi. 1. The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters; he turneth it whither-soever he will; and if the king's heart, why not the hearts of all men? Lam. iii. 38. Out of the mouth of the Most High proceeded not evil and good? Hence we find that the Lord bid Shimei curse David, 2 Sam. xvi. 10. That he moved David himself to number the people, compare 1 Chron. xxi. 1 with 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. Stirred up Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt, Gen. 34, 20. Positively and immediately hardened the heart of Pharaoh, Ex. iv. 21. Delivered up David's wives to be defiled to Absalom, 2 Sam. xii. 11. and xvi. 22. Sent a lying spirit to deceive Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 20-23. And mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of Egypt, i. e. made that nation perverse, obdurate and stiff-necked, Isa. xix. 14. To cite

other instances would be almost endless, and, after these, quite unnecessary; all being summed up in that express passage, Isaiah xlv. 7. I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things. See farther 1 Sam. xvi. 14. Psalm cv. 25. Jer. xiii. 12, 13. Acts ii. 23 and iv. 28. Rom. xi. 8. 2 Thess. ii. 11. Every one of which implies more than a bare permission of sin. Bucer asserts this, not only in the place referred to below, but continually throughout his works: particularly on Matt. vi. 2, where this is the sense of his comments on that petition, Lead us not into temptation; "It is abundantly evident, from most express testimonies of Scripture, that God occasionally in the course of his providence, puts both elect and reprobate persons into circumstances of temptation: by which temptation are meant, not only those trials that are of an outward, afflictive nature; but those also that are inward and spiritual; even such as shall cause the persons so tempted actually to turn aside from the path of duty, to commit sin, and involve both themselves and others in evil. Hence we find the elect complaining, Isa. lxiii. 17. O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, an hardened our hearts from thy fear? But there is also a kind of temptation which is peculiar to the non-elect; whereby God, in a way of just judgment, makes them totally blind and obdurate: inasmuch as they are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." See also his exposition of Rom. ix.

Luther reasons to the very same effect; some of his words are these; "It may seem absurd to human wisdom that God should harden, blind, and deliver up some men to a reprobate sense; that he should first deliver them over to evil, and then condemn them for that evil: but the believing spiritual man sees no absurdity at all in this; knowing that God would be never a whit less good, even though he should destroy all men." and

again; "God worketh all things in all men; even wickedness in the wicked: for this is one branch of his own omnipotence." He very properly explains how God may be said to harden men, &c. and yet not be the author of their sin: "It is not to be understood," says he, "as if God found men good, wise and tractable, and then made them wicked, foolish and obdurate, but God, finding them depraved, judiciously and powerfully excites them just as they are (unless it is his will to regenerate any of them) and, by thus exciting them, they become more blind and obstinate than they were before." See this whole subject debated at large in the places last referred to.

Pos. 3. God, as the primary and efficient cause of all things, is not only the author of those actions done by his elect as actions, but also as they are good actions; whereas, on the other hand, though he may be said to be the author of all the actions done by the wicked, yet he is not the author of them in a moral and compound sense, as they are sinful; but physically, simply, and, *sensu diviso*, as they are mere actions, abstractedly from all consideration of the goodness or badness of them.

Although there is no action whatever which is not in some sense either good or bad, yet we can easily conceive of an action purely as such without adverting to the quality of it; so that the distinction between an action itself, and its denomination of good or evil, is very obvious and natural.

In and by the elect, therefore, God not only produces works and actions through his almighty power, but likewise through the salutary influences of his Spirit, first makes their persons good, and then their actions so too; but in and by the reprobate he produces actions by his power alone; which actions, as neither issuing from faith, nor being wrought with a view to the divine glory, nor done in the manner prescribed by the divine

word, are, on these accounts, properly denominated evil. Hence we see that God does not immediately and *per se*, infuse iniquity into the wicked; but, as Luther expresses it, powerfully excites them to action, and withholds those gracious influences of his Spirit, without which every action is necessarily evil. That God, either directly or remotely, excites bad men as well as good ones to action, cannot be denied by any but atheists, or by those who carry their notions of freewill and human independency so high as to exclude the Deity from all actual operation in and among his creatures, which is little short of atheism. Every work performed, whether good or evil, is done in strength and by the power derived immediately from God himself, in whom all men live, move, and have their being, Acts xvii. 28. As at first without him was not any thing made which was made; so now without him is not any thing done which is done. We have no power or faculty, whether corporeal or intellectual, but what we received from God, subsists by him, and is exercised in subserviency to his will and appointment. It is he who created, preserves, actuates and directs all things. But it by no means follows from these premises that God is therefore the cause of sin; for sin is nothing but illegality, want of conformity to the divine law, 1 John iii. 4, a mere privation of rectitude: consequently, being itself a thing purely negative, it can have no positive or efficient cause, but only a negative and deficient one, as several learned men have observed.

Every action, as such, is undoubtedly good; it being an actual exertion of those operative powers given us by God for that very end; God therefore may be the author of all actions (as he undoubtedly is), and yet not be the author of evil. An action is constituted evil three ways; by proceeding from a wrong principle, by being directed to a wrong end, and by being done in a wrong manner. Now, though God, as we

have said, is the efficient cause of our actions, as actions, yet if these actions commence sinful, that sinfulness arises from ourselves. Suppose a boy who knows not how to write has his hand guided by his master, and nevertheless makes false letters, quite unlike the copy set him; though his preceptor who guides his hand is the cause of his writing at all, yet his own ignorance and unskilfulness are the cause of his writing so badly. Just so, God is the supreme author of our action, abstractedly taken; but our own vitiosity is the cause of our acting amiss.

I shall conclude this article with two or three observations. And, (1) I would infer that if we would maintain the doctrine of God's omnipotence we must insist upon that of his universal agency: the latter cannot be denied without giving up the former. Disprove that he is almighty, and then we will grant that his influence and operations are limited and circumscribed. Luther says "God would not be a respectable being, if he were not almighty, and the doer of all things that are done; or if any thing could come to pass in which he had no hand." God has at least a physical influence on whatsoever is done by his creatures, whether trivial or important, good or evil. Judas as truly lived, moved, and had his being from God as Peter; and Satan himself as much as Gabriel; for to say that sin exempts the sinner from the divine government and jurisdiction is abridging the power of God with a witness; nay, is raising it from its very foundation.

(2) This doctrine of God's omnipotence has a native tendency to awaken in our hearts that reverence for, and fear of, the divine majesty which none can either receive or retain but those who believe him to be infinitely powerful, and to work all things after the counsel of his own will. This godly fear is a sovereign antidote against sin; for if I really believe that God by his unintermitted operation upon my soul produces actions in me, which, being

simply good, receive their malignancy from the corruption of my nature (and even those works that stand opposed to sins are more or less infected with this moral leprosy); and if I consider that, should I yield myself a slave to actual iniquity, God can, and justly might, as he has frequently done by others, give me up to a reprobate mind and punish one sin by leaving me to the commission of another; surely such reflections as these must fill me with awful apprehensions of the divine purity, power and greatness, and make me watch continually, as well against the inward risings as the outward appearance of evil.

(3) This doctrine is also useful as it tends to inspire us with true humility of soul; and to lay us as impotent dust and ashes at the feet of sovereign omnipotence. It teaches us, what too many are ignorant of, the blessed lesson of self-despair; i. e. that in a state of unregeneracy our wisdom is folly; our strength weakness, and our righteousness nothing worth: that therefore we can do nothing either to the glory of God or the spiritual benefit of ourselves and others but through the ability which he giveth; that in him our strength lieth, and from him all our help must come. Supposing we believe that whatsoever is done below or above God doeth it himself; that all things depend, both as to their being and operation, upon his omnipotent arm and mighty support; that we cannot even sin, much less do any good thing, if he withdraw his aid; and that all men are in his hand, as clay in the hand of the potter; I say, did we really believe all these points, and see them in the light of the Divine Spirit, how can it be reasonably supposed that we could wax insolent against this great God, behave contemptuously and superciliously in the world, or boast of anything we have or do? Luther informs us, that he, "used to be frequently much offended at this doctrine because it drove him to self-despair; but that he afterwards found that this sort of despair

was salutary and profitable, and near akin to divine grace.”

(4) We are hereby taught not only humility before God, but likewise dependence on him, and resignation to him. For if we are thoroughly persuaded that of ourselves, and in our own strength, we cannot do either good or evil; but that being originally created by God we are incessantly supported, moved, influenced and directed by him, this way or that, as he pleases; the natural inference hence will be that with simple faith we cast ourselves entirely, as on the bosom of his providence, commit all our care and solicitude to his hand; praying without hesitation or reserve that his will may be done in us, on us, and by us, and that in all his dealings with us he may consult his own glory alone. This holy passiveness is the very apex of Christianity. All the desires of our great Redeemer himself were reducible to these two; that the will of God might be done, and that the glory of God might be displayed. These were the highest and supreme marks at which he aimed throughout the whole course of his spotless life and inconceivably tremendous sufferings. Happy, thrice happy that man, who hath thus far attained the mind that was in Christ.

(5) The comfortable belief of this doctrine has a tendency to excite and keep alive within us that fortitude which is so ornamental to, and necessary for, us while we abide in this wilderness. For if I believe with the apostle that all things are of God. 2 Cor. v. 18, I shall be less liable to perturbation when afflicted, and learn more easily to possess my soul in patience. This was Job's support: he was not overcome with rage and despair when he received news that the Sabeans had carried off his cattle and slain his servants, and that the remainder of both were consumed with fire; that the Chaldeans had robbed him of his camels; and that his seven sons were crushed to

death by the falling of the house where they were sitting: he resolved all these misfortunes into the agency of God, his power and sovereignty, and even thanked him for doing what he would with his own, Job. i. 21. If another should slander me in word, or injure me in deed, I shall not be prone to anger when, with David, I consider that the Lord hath bidden him, 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

(6) This should stir us up to fervent and incessant prayer. For does God work powerfully and benignly in the hearts of his elect? and is he the sole cause of every action they do, which is truly and spiritually good? Then it should be our prayer that he would work in us likewise both to will and to do of his good pleasure: and if, on self-examination, we find reason to trust that some good thing is wrought in us, it should put us upon thankfulness unfeigned, and cause us to glory, not in ourselves, but in him. On the other hand, does God manifest his displeasure against the wicked by blinding, hardening, and giving them up to perpetrate iniquity with greediness? Which judicial acts of God are both a punishment for their sin and also eventual additions to it? We should be the more incited to deprecate these tremendous evils, and to beseech the king of heaven that he would not thus lead us into temptation. So much concerning the omnipotence of God. I shall now,

V. Take notice of his justice.

Pos. 1. God is infinitely, absolutely and unchangeably just.

The justice of God may be considered either immanently, as it is in himself, which is, properly speaking, the same with his holiness; or transiently and relatively, as it respects his right conduct towards his creatures, which is properly justice. By the former he is all that is holy, just and good; by the latter he is manifested to be so in all his dealings with angels and men. For the first see Deut. xxxii. 4. Psa. xcii. 15; for the

second, Job viii. 3. Psa. cxlv. 17. Hence it follows that whatever God either wills or does, however it may at first sight seem to clash with our ideas of right and wrong, cannot really be unjust. It is certain that for a season he sorely afflicted his righteous servant Job; and on the other hand enriched the Sabeans, an infidel and lawless nation, with a profusion of wealth and a series of success; before Jacob and Esau were born, or had done either good or evil, he loved and chose the former and reprobated the latter; He gave repentance to Peter and left Judas to perish in his sin: and as in all ages, so to this day he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. In all which he acts most justly and righteously, and there is no iniquity with him.

Pos. 2. The Deity may be considered in a threefold view: as God of all, as Lord of all, and as Judge of all.

(1) As God of all, he created, sustains, and exhilarates the whole universe; causes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall upon the evil and the good, Matt. v. and is the preserver of all men, 1 Tim. iv. 19. For as he is infinitely and supremely good, so also is he communicative of his goodness; as appears not only from his creation of all things, but especially from his providential benignity. Every thing has its being from him, as Creator; and its well-being from him as a bountiful preserver. (2) As Lord or sovereign of all, he does as he will (and has a most unquestionable right to do so) with his own; and in particular fixes and determines the everlasting state of every individual person as he sees fit. It is essential to absolute sovereignty that the sovereign have it in his power to dispose of those over whom his jurisdiction extends just as he pleases, without being accountable to any; and God, whose authority is unbounded, none being exempt from it, may, with the strictest holiness and justice, love or hate, elect or reprobate,

save or destroy any of his creatures whether human or angelic, according to his own free pleasure and sovereign purpose. (3) As Judge of all he ratifies what he does as Lord, by rendering to all according to their works; by punishing the wicked, and rewarding those whom it was his will to esteem righteous and to make holy.

Pos. 3. Whatever things God wills or does, are not willed and done by him because they were, in their own nature, and previously to his willing them, just and right; or because, from their intrinsic fitness, he ought to will and do them; but they are therefore just, right and proper, because He who is holiness itself wills and does them.

Hence Abraham looked upon it as a righteous action to slay his innocent son. Why did he so esteem it? Because the law of God authorized murder? No; for on the contrary both the law of God, and the law of nature peremptorily forbid it: but the holy patriarch well knew that the will of God is the only rule of justice, and that what he pleases to command is on that very account just and righteous. It follows:

Pos. 4. That although our works are to be examined by the revealed will of God and be denominated materially good or evil, as they agree or disagree with it; yet the works of God himself cannot be brought to any test whatever; for his will being the grand universal law, he himself cannot be, properly speaking, subject to, or obliged by, any law superior to that. Many things are done by him (such as choosing and reprobating men) without any respect had to their works; suffering people to fall into sin, when if it so pleased him, he might prevent it; leaving many backsliding professors to go on and perish in their apostacy, when it is in the divine power to sanctify and set them right; drawing some of his grace, and permitting many others to future misery whom, if he

pleased, he could undoubtedly save, with innumerable instances of the like nature (which might be mentioned), and which, if done by us, would be apparently unjust, inasmuch as they would not square with the revealed will of God, which is the great and only safe rule of our practice. But, when he does these and such like things, they cannot but be holy, equitable, and worthy of himself; for since his will is essentially and unchangeably just, whatever he does in consequence of that will must be just and good likewise. From what has been delivered under this fifth head I would infer, that they who deny the power God has of doing as he will with his creatures, and exclaim against unconditional decrees, as cruel, tyrannical, and unjust; either know not what they say nor whereof they affirm; or are wilful blasphemers of his name, and perverse rebels against his sovereignty: to which at last, however unwillingly, they will be forced to submit.

I shall conclude this introduction with briefly considering in the,

Sixth and last place, the mercy of God.

Pos. 1. The Deity is throughout the Scriptures represented as infinitely gracious and merciful. Exod. xxxiv. y. Mehem. ix. 17. Psalm ciii. 8. 1 Pet. i. 3.

When we call the divine mercy infinite, we do not mean that it is in a way of grace extended to all men without exception (and supposing it was, even then it would be very improperly denominated infinite on that account, since the objects of it, though all men taken together, would not amount to a multitude strictly and properly infinite), but that his mercy towards his own elect, as it knew no beginning, so is it infinite in duration, and shall know neither period nor intermission.

Pos. 2. Mercy is not in the Deity as it is in us, a passion, or affection; every thing of that kind being incompatible with the purity, perfection, independency and

unchangeableness of his nature; but, when this attribute is predicated of him, it only notes his free and eternal will or purpose of making some of the fallen race happy, by delivering them from the guilt and dominion of sin, and communicating himself to them in a way consistent with his own inviolable justice, truth and holiness. This seems to be the proper definition of mercy, as it relates to the spiritual and eternal good of those who are its objects. But it should be observed.

Pos. 3. That the mercy of God, taken in its more large and indefinite sense, may be considered, (1) as general, (2) as special.

His general mercy is no other than what we commonly call his bounty, by which he is more or less providentially good to all mankind, both elect and non-elect: Matt. v. 45. Luke vi. 35. Acts xiv. 17; and xvii. 25, 28. By his special mercy, he, as Lord of all, hath in a spiritual sense compassion on as many of the fallen race as are the objects of his free and eternal favour: the effects of which special mercy are the redemption and justification of their persons, through the satisfaction of Christ; the effectual vocation, regeneration and sanctification of them by his Spirit; the infallible and final preservation of them in a state of grace on earth; and their everlasting glorification in heaven.

Pos. 4. There is no contradiction, whether real or seeming, between these two assertions, (1) That the blessings of grace and glory are peculiar to those whom God hath in his decree of predestination set apart for himself; and (2) That the gospel declaration runs that whosoever willeth may take of the water of life freely, Rev. xxii. 17. Since, in the first place, none can will or unfeignedly and spiritually desire a part in these privilege but those whom God previously makes willing and desirous; and secondly, that he gives this will to, and excites

this desire in, none but his own elect.

Pos. 5. Since ungodly men, who are totally and finally destitute of divine grace, cannot know what this mercy is, nor form any proper apprehensions of it, much less by faith embrace and rely upon it, for themselves; and since daily experience, as well as the Scriptures of truth, teaches us, that God doth not open the eyes of the reprobate as he doth the eyes of his elect, nor savingly enlighten their understandings; it evidently follows that his mercy was never, from the very first, designed for them, neither will it be applied to them: but, both in designation and application, is proper and peculiar to those only who are predestinated to life; as it is written, the election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded, Rom. xi. 7.

Pos. 6. The whole work of salvation, together with every thing that is in order to it, or stands in connection with it, is sometimes in scripture comprised under the single term mercy; to shew that mere love and absolute grace were the grand cause why the elect are saved, and that all merit, worthiness and good qualifications of theirs were entirely excluded from having any influence on the divine will, why they should be chosen, redeemed, and glorified, above all others. When it is said, Rom. ix. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, it is as much as if the apostle had said, "God elected, ransomed, justified, regenerates, sanc-

tifies and glorifies whom he pleases:" every one of these great privileges being briefly summed up, and virtually included in that comprehensive phrase, "He hath mercy."

Pos. 7. It follows that whatever favour is bestowed on us; whatever good thing is in us, or wrought by us; whether in will, word, or deed: and whatever blessings else we receive from God, from election quite home to glorification, all proceed, merely and entirely, from the

good pleasure of his will, and his mercy towards us in Christ Jesus, To him, therefore, the praise is due, who putteth the difference between man and man, by having compassion on some and not on others.

Though a member of the Church of England, are there any who will deny that he was most deeply taught of the Lord?

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends:

We want to thank you for the prayers, visits, telephone calls, letters, candy, food and flowers you sent us during our surgery and stay in the hospital and recovery at home. It meant so much to us. Yes, for one to say I thought about you was a great comfort. We have to be there to know how much our Brothers, Sisters and kind friends mean to us.

We do thank you.

Most of all we thank our Heavenly Father.

In Bonds of Love,
Ellen & Frank Simpkins

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Malmaison Church, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before, in December.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Peggy Wells, Clerk

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held the 5th Sunday in December at Dan River Church with Big Meadows Church as host.

Brother Casey Johnson, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST
FOR SEPTEMBER 1984

J. E. Mosley, AL.	\$ 2.00
Ervin Holley, VA.	2.00
F. G. Bird, OH.	5.00
Eld. J. T. Prescott, NC.	7.00
T. L. Batts, NC.	10.00
Billy F. Poindexter, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC. ...	2.00
Eld. A. T. Hash, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Christine Shelton, VA. ...	5.00
Alonzo Davis, VA.	2.00
Reuben French, NC.	5.00
Mrs. G. G. Fralin, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Fred A. Baker, AL.	7.00
James L. Howell, AL.	17.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY.	5.00
Mrs. John Hudson, VA.	2.00
Bill & Wanda Boatman, NM.	8.00
Mr. & Mrs. Dave Honeycutt, TX.	2.00
Marvin J. Clay, OH.	7.00
E. B. Dotson, TX.	2.00
Ms. Lavenia Biggs, TN.	7.00
D. H. Sartin, NC.	2.00
F. K. Morgan, AR.	2.00

OBITUARIES

GEORGIE HAWTHORNE

Sister Georgie Otto Josey was born April 2, 1889 in Bivins, Texas. Her dad was working at a saw-mill there, but soon left Bivins and bought a farm in the Huffines Communi-

ty. She and her parents attended the Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church which was near their farm. When Sister Georgie was about nineteen, she joined that church and was a devoted member for seventy-five years and never missed a meeting when she was able to go.

Sister Georgie Married Brother Fred Hawthorne in 1927 becoming a loving step-mother to his children. Brother Fred joined the Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church and together they worshipped there for about twenty-three years or until Brother Fred's death in 1951.

Sister Georgie's friends could be numbered by the people who knew her because to know her was to love her. She lived a rich, active and useful life until she was ninety-five years old. She died April 11, 1984 and is buried in the Linden, Texas cemetery where her husband is buried.

The above was written by one of her step-daughters. Pleasant Hope Church would like to acknowledge that her step-children were devoted to her as if she had been their own mother.

Service was held at Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder Loyd Wall.

JOHN L. HOUSTON

In loving memory of John L. Houston. John L. Houston was born June 27, 1909. He was the son of Chancy and Emma Jackson Houston. He was born in Duplin County where he spent all his life as a farmer.

He married Sudie Brown on December 21, 1930, from this union came five sons; Linwood, Wesley, Chesley, Sherwood, Johnny and eight grandchildren.

He joined Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church October 14, 1946, where he served as a faithful and dedicated mem-

ber. Brother John was elected as a Deacon to serve his church on March 13, 1947. He filled this position well and to the best of his ability for 37 years, until his death on February 17, 1984. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He would not want praise nor would he want to be lifted above his brethren. He loved all his brethren and showed it by visiting his sister churches.

We miss him as our song leader, by his vacant seat in the church and by the warm welcome he always greeted us with.

His funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder Oliver Allen. He was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers at Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, to awake the morning of the resurrection where all the Saints shall rise and their bodies change and be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ to be in the presence of God and at the right hand of God where there is peace forever more.

Written by Chesley and Linda Houston

MARY INEZ NASH

In my weak way, if God will bless me, I will write a few words in memory of our dear beloved Sister.

Sister Nash departed her life on earth at Union Memorial Hospital in El Dorado, Ark. on October 12, 1983. Making her stay here on earth 75 years, 9 months and 8 days. She joined the Smyrna Primitive Baptist Church near El Dorado, Ark. and lived her life there as a lovely and faithful member.

The Lord wrote all his elect family a letter about 2,000 years ago and I quote a portion of this letter.

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.”

She was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas Cleg Nash, whom she married on May 25, 1924. From this union God blessed them with four daughters: Melba Sullivan, Lois Snowden, Laverne Breazeal and Linda Means. Eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, also two brothers and two sisters.

Her funeral was conducted in Youngs Chapel in El Dorado, Ark. on October 15, 1983 by her pastor Elder David E. Turner. She was laid to rest by her husband beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of her Lord and final resurrection.

Written by the request of
her children and family
Elder David E. Turner

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