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1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Could we with ink the ocean
fill,*

*And were the skies of parch-
ment made;*

*Were every stalk on earth
a quill,*

*And every man a scribe by
trade.*

*To write the love of God
above,*

*Would drain the ocean
dry.*

*Nor could the scroll contain
the whole,*

*Though stretched from sky
to sky.*

*From the collection of
J. Burch Blaylock.*

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EDITORIAL

In the 25th verse of St. John, the 5th Chapter, you will find these words:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”



Elder Kenneth R. Key

He is speaking of that day—
 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when they that hear the voice of God shall live and we be-

lieve that it is this day, that now they are hearing the voice of the Son of God.

As you have sat here on this hillside throughout this day and throughout this meeting, you have been hearing the voice of the Son of God as He spake to you through his ministers that He has called and qualified and brought and filled their mouths with words that would be comforting unto your soul. The hour is coming, and now is that every heir of God will hear His voice. He speaks to his sheep, and they hear His voice and a stranger they will not follow. We know there are some who say that you don't hear the voice of God, but I believe with all of my heart that He speaks to his sheep and they hear his voice. It might not be an audible voice as you are hearing me this afternoon, but it could be a small still voice as He speaks to you. And when He speaks to you, I believe you know his voice. I believe you know the one that is speaking to you. I believe that every heir of promise, everyone whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that sometime between the cradle and the grave they shall hear His voice and will heed His call. We who were born in sin and trespasses, we who were lost in trespasses and sin, by nature children of wrath even as others; we who this day profess a hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is a reason that you have a profession of this hope. There is a reason that you come to

believe in Him. There is a reason that you look unto Him as your Shepherd. He has stirred up your pure minds, and manifested within you that spirit that has given you life, has given you to hunger and to thirst after righteousness here in this world, has caused you to drive for many miles to come and be with those of like precious faith that you might speak one to another, that you might hear the experiences of those of your brethren, that you might find that you have something in common with them, and know that you are not traveling this way alone, but find there are fellow travelers traveling along with you.

Dear beloved, the time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. I believe that every heir of promise does hear this voice and they do follow Him. You will leave whatever you are doing when He says, "*Take up thy cross and follow me.*"

If we are partakers of the Spirit of God, if we are one of the heirs of promise, we must partake of the suffering of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must take up the cross with Him, and suffer with Him here in this world if we are to reign with Him in that world to come. It is our precious hope, as we heard the dear Elder who stood before you, standing and trembling, coming as it were down to the end of the sunset of life, yet triumphant in that faith, speaking of how good that God has been to him, He has fought the battles for him.

Haven't you learned already that you don't have to fight these battles, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. He fights the battles for his children. We have worked out of tools and timbers, and have nothing to fight with, we stand as little children, come humble, being cast down sometimes, but thanks be unto God we are not destroyed. The precious hope is that He that has begun a work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. What a glorious way it is. How thankful we are for the blessed hope within our breast, that He has stirred up our pure mind, given us to feel that He is our heavenly Father, caused us to seek that which is food for our hungry souls, given us to hunger and thirst for something, that is better than this time world could ever give, given us to hunger and thirst for something that can only come from His storehouse of mercy. Aren't you glad that the provisions have already been made for you, stored up in His storehouse of mercy, His grace sufficient for all your needs while here in this world. He that has called you from nature's darkness, brought you into the fellowship and the light with those of like faith and taught you to know that He will supply every needed blessing.

Haven't you learned already, as He said unto the Apostle Paul, "*My grace is sufficient.*" Haven't you learned already these things? How

gracious and how good God is? And that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Through every trial you have ever had in this world, He has been there with you to comfort you: **A VERY PRESENT HELP IN THE TIME OF NEED.** What a gracious heavenly Father we have. How thankful we are that He has promised never to leave us, never to forsake us, but be with us always, even unto the end of the world. Isn't it a precious promise, dear mothers and fathers of Israel, that He has promised these things and you who have lived longer than some, how you have been made to know these precious truths, how comforting they are to you when you come to travel through the valleys and shadows of death, and to feel His presence with you. The power to lift you up when you come to the end of your way when you felt there was no way to turn, that you couldn't go on, the burden is too great, you just couldn't stand up. And yet, in some miraculous way you felt strength, you felt at ease, you felt that peace that passeth all understanding.

Yes, I believe the time is coming, and now is, when the children of God shall hear His voice and they know from whence it comes, and they will be given to trust in Him as they journey from day to day as One who will go with them. Oh, how wonderful it is. I want to tell you if you are His, you are not walking alone because He is with you. He ascended back to the Father. He said

it is necessary that I go away but if I go away, I will send the holy comforter and he shall abide with you always. Oh, what a blessing this is! As we journey along, and the older we get the more we realize that this world — as the dear brother said a moment ago, this world is not my home. Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble and we are journeying through a desert land while here. We are suffering with Him if we are to reign with him. As we journey on, as the trials and afflictions of life rain upon you, and as the times come when you feel you can't stand up and you can't go on, this God makes a way for you when it seems there is no way.

Mary and Martha as they went to the tomb to see the Saviour, they went along the journey no doubt they pondered in their minds, who shall roll the stone away? Sometimes the burden becomes so great that we wish we could roll the stone away, we wish we could roll the burden away, but when tomorrow comes we find the way has been opened up.

This God of heaven who promised never to leave you and never to forsake you, knows all of your circumstances. There's nothing that we can acquaint Him with that He doesn't already know. You, who may be feeling that surely there is none like you, that your trials and your afflictions and your sorrows are greater than any. And you begin to worry as Gideon of old, as he asked

of the Lord if indeed I have found grace in thy sight, why have these things befallen me? And yet we feel to know that if we are to reign with Him we must suffer with Him. And in this life He said, ye shall have trials and tribulations. I don't want to preach to you, I would love to, but the Bible doesn't teach it, and I haven't learned it from experience, that this would be an easy way for He said, in this world you shall have trials and tribulations. He said that your bread, the bread I will feed you is the bread of adversity, and ye shall drink the waters of affliction. That is your food, that is your drink as you journey here. But it is not all sorrow, it's not all down in the valley, there are times of being upon the mountain top. There are times when we want to sing praises unto His great and matchless name for the things that He has done for us. Oh, how good He is!

We heard this morning, He doesn't withhold any good thing from Israel. Sometimes our greatest blessings come in the trials of afflictions. If we are never brought down, if there is never a famine in our lives, I doubt if we would be here today, I doubt if we would know any of the joys of the fellowship and the love of God's children. But through these trials, through the afflictions, through the famine that we have to come through, we are brought down to the feet of Jesus and from there we can look up and praise His great and matchless name and know it's

from Him that every good and every perfect gift comes.

When you were cast down, He stirred up your pure minds. You didn't know what was the matter with you, you didn't know and you went from day to day, one brother, I believe he said he went for three years under the burden of the ministry.

I went for three years under the burden that some day I would have to come and to stand before God's people and it came to me in a dream at night and I could see myself standing before the pulpit speaking to God's people and the text that He gave me then was *"Fear not him that is able to destroy the body, but to fear Him who is able to destroy both the body and soul."* I woke up troubled. Troubled, troubled was I! Never was there anyone who felt as unworthy as I. I was so bashful in my boyhood days. I couldn't stand before my school class and speak unto them. It just scared me to death. And when this came unto me, I felt that I couldn't go. Surely this dream will pass and I can find relief. But it didn't pass. It was on my mind every day. Every hour! I tried to get involved in work. I tried to pass it away. I tried to think of everything else but it would come back again. It troubled me.

I can tell you this afternoon, I can fellowship some of the experiences of Jonah as I had to go down to the depths as he went. This went on for several months and the Lord,

I hope it was the Lord, visited me again in a dream and it stirred me up even more. And I began to get sick, I began to be so troubled. I began to go to doctors. I didn't seek the help of the Lord. I didn't cry unto Him. It seems that I was seeking the help of man. I went to many doctors. I went to a chiropractor doctor for nine months for three nights a week. Someone told me that they would be good for your nerves, that they could help you but the last trip I went, I left his office as miserable as ever before. As I found only temporary relief. I finally decided — I was going to a medical doctor and I told him, I have no physical pain, but I feel I am going to die. I feel that I can't live. He told me that this is something that you have inherited. You will just have to live with it.

How many nights I have had to rise from my bed and sit in the living room by myself in a chair, just sitting and waiting to die. This was a miserable condition and a horrible pit. As time passed on I got no relief, but got worse and worse. My wife would have to get up at night and carry me to the doctor. I hope you can bear with me, as I look back upon it. You have heard so much here today as the dear elders have looked back in their book of remembrances that the Lord has written for them to talk of these things, to tell you just a little bit of the journey and the way that we've come.

And as time went on and finally one night, after a period of three

years, I was awakened in another dream. But before this time — I felt that I didn't know the letter of the Bible. I didn't know anything about the Bible and I knew that our people didn't believe in seminaries. They didn't believe in going to school (to learn to preach). I just thought if I would slip out at night and attend this biblical college, I would learn the letter and if it pleased God He would reveal it to me.

And this time I awoke, my pillow was wet with tears, I had been crying. I saw myself again standing in this place. And the scripture that was given to me for a text that night was, they shall all be taught of the Lord.

I had been begging for more evidence as I went along in this trial of three years, I begged for more evidence and finally I went to my pastor, (Elder Curry King) I told him of my troubles and I told him of the experiences I had been having. He said, I appreciate your coming to me but I have been looking for this for a long time. He asked me if I would come and take a part in the next service. I told him I couldn't do that, I want more evidence, I want to be more sure of this. I don't want to do that yet. Let's just wait a while. And that's when the dream was given to me: *"They shall all be taught of the Lord,"* and the congregation was singing *"How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints Of The Lord."* When they came to the verse in the song: *"What more can he say than to you he hath said,"* it was

like a record stuck. It was over and over, What more can he say than to you he hath said? I awoke from my dream and it was then I was given to go talk to my pastor.

And a few months after that the deacons came to my home. They wanted me to open service next meeting. I said, no, no, I want more evidence and finally one Sunday when our pastor was away and we had a visiting elder, Elder Ingram was there, and they called on me again. They didn't ask me if I would take part, but the deacon asked me to open service. Elder Ingram invited me into the stand with him and I went and there attempted my first time to speak in public. From that time until now that burden, that feeling that I was dying, was taken away from me. My nerves were strengthened. I have had no more trouble with it until this day, but I don't thank the doctors because I believe I know from whence my help comes.

I believe I know that my help come from the Lord. Before this came to the end I was at an Association and the Elder was speaking from the 121st Psalm where David is saying, "*I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help*" and I believe if I've ever heard the voice of God, I believe it spoke to me and it was like a voice saying, you've been going to the wrong doctor and if I've ever tried to pray in my life, I tried to pray then, but it was to a different doctor. It was to the heavenly Physician. One that is able and

does heal all manner of sickness. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

If you hear these blessed truths, if you've been taught in your heart, and these things have been written in your mind, you shall live. Jesus said I give unto you everlasting life and ye shall never perish. You can be cast down but you are not destroyed. You are in a safe place as you've heard today, that our lives are hid with Christ, in God. It's in a safe place. And He knows your circumstances here in this life and He'll be with you all of the way. I believe I know from experience these things. I can testify to you, and if I had only read of these things or someone had told me of them I'd be a false witness as I stand before you. I believe these are some of the things that God has shown me, that God has taught me and I believe that they that hear the voice of the Son of God SHALL LIVE. The children of the world don't hear His voice. They are the ones that make fun when you try to tell them of your experience. They are the ones who these things have been hid from and it pleased the heavenly Father to do so. We don't understand it, we don't know why these things are hid from them, but Christ said, "*I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*"

Dear beloved, you have something precious, and is worth more to you than all the gold of Ophir or the cattle of a thousand hills. It's worth more than all of the money in this world. It's the only thing you've got that doesn't perish with the using.

This is everlasting life, this is something that is with you through this life, it is an anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. It's with you here for all of your needs. It's a stay, it's a rod, it's something to hold you up, it's something to keep you pressing on through all your trials and afflictions. It's something that's precious, it gives you fellowship one with the other, it gives you that love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast. Oh, what joy it is! Yea, it's not all in sorrow, it's not all in distress, it's not all cast down. There are times of joy, there are times when we can rejoice together as we talk of these blessed truths. This heavenly Father has called us with an heavenly calling and how precious it is. **AND THEY SHALL HEAR THE SON OF GOD AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE**, and then He says: *"Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."* Yes, the time is coming when they that are in the grave shall hear His voice. The graves shall not hold the children of God. If in this life only, you had hope, you would be of all men most miserable.

But dear beloved, there is something better awaiting you. Here you

have had only a little tast, it's been sweet to your taste and you desire more of it and you would get more of it if you could but He gives it to you daily, that daily bread — that which He would have you to have. He drops it down as handsfull of purpose. It's not accidently that you get it, but it's by purpose that you get it. Every heir of promise is going to get everything that God has in store for him. It's going to come down as handsfull of purpose.

I want to tell of a little experience that I had a few days ago as we stood one night in the bedroom of this loved one. He seemingly had a few days to live and is now passed on. He asked that we have prayer together. And while we were there in prayer in this room I witnessed there a light with my eyes closed — that room lit up brighter than any light I have ever seen. I asked my wife and those that were with me when we left his home, did you see any light? Was there a light turned on while I was bowed in prayer? There was none they said. But it was the brightest light that I've ever seen and I believe surely that the Lord was present there with us.

Oh, how these things humble us, how they cause us to fear and to tremble. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Just a few days after that, he was called home.

These blessed things, these little experiences we have, they are they which keep us pressing on

through all of the trials and all of the troubles that we have here, yet not to be compared with that joy God has in store for you. We wouldn't ask Him to change that which He has ordained or purposed. No, it's never been my prayer to ask Him to change that which he has purposed for me. I want to suffer with Him, I want to suffer with Him because I know we must if we are to reign with Him. And it is our precious hope that we some day shall see Him, be made like Him and there be satisfied.

The time is coming that they that are in the grave shall hear. One day He's going to call those from the sleeping dust wherever they are. The final end of time and when that resurrection day comes, He's going to call all of those and it's going to be the ones I believe John saw on the Isle of Patmos. He inquired who they were, and they were those that have come through great trials and tribulations. You have to go through them, there is no detour. There's no way around them. Those who have come through great trials and tribulations and their robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb and made white as snow. It is our hope and through the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that we do have this precious hope. If the grave had been able to hold Him, we would have no hope beyond the grave, **BUT HE AROSE FROM THE GRAVE.** He arose, ascended back to the Father and is there making intercession for you and He knows ev-

erything that you need and He will not withhold any good thing from you. May God bless you, may He give you encouragement to press on when your troubles come. Don't think it's because He has forsaken you because your Saviour suffered for you, He paid the redemption price, He suffered, He was acquainted with grief, and knew much sorrow. May we continue to journey in the oneness of faith, in that unity of the spirit, and may we continue to enjoy the sweet fellowship and have the desire that we might meet together from time to time, one with another.

A dear sister came to me at the lunch hour who I met probably some thirty years ago in this Association. She said, most of all I desired that I might see you today and that I might hear you, not that she was looking to me as a man but I hope it was because of the sweet fellowship that we had had in Christ in days gone by. She said, *"Now I'm blind, I can't see you, I wouldn't know who you are if someone hadn't lead me to you, and it's good to see you."* And there we talked of the things God had written in that book of Remembrance. That book of Remembrance has been so precious to me. We've heard so much of it here today as the old elders have gone back in their experiences. There's a Book of Remembrance – written in Malachi, I believe it is. He has written a Book of Remembrance for those who fear the Lord. There is a

book of Remembrance written for each of you. How many times we see dear mothers and fathers in Israel come down, maybe shut in, in the nursing home, places where they can't come out and have the privileges that we have enjoyed today. But there they can go back in their Book of Remembrance, still precious and sweet to them as they remember the good times they've had together with those of like precious faith. Some day we shall look back upon this meeting, and the joys we've received here today in our Book of Remembrance.

May God continue to record these blessed things that we might look back upon them when we travel through the barren lands. We have to look back to yesterday to those things. We have to go back and we find David, I believe it was, there were times when he felt to be in a barren land and he asked the Lord to *"Restore unto me the joys of Thy salvation."* Yes, we are made to cry unto Him from time to time that He might restore unto us again the joys of His salvation, not another, but His salvation. May God bless you is my prayer.

Transcribed from tapes of Sermon Preached by Elder Kenneth R. Key at Staunton River Association July 7, 1984.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

VOICES OF THE PAST



Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Rogers

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

My full name is Hiram Louis Rogers. I was named after my Uncle Hiram Ratcliff who is still living and getting about. He seems to be in good health and is 95 years old. He was one of the charter members of the Lost Creek Church and the only one still living.

I was born December 21, 1883. My father was George Washington Rogers; my mother was Elizabeth Rareliff Rogers. I was born in Carter County, Kentucky, and have lived within a few miles from my birth place all my life. My parents were very poor people. I was the second oldest one of ten children, one sister older than myself. So I was taken out of school at twelve or thirteen to

work on the farm. so I did not get much education. I married in 1904. January 29, to Martha Mullins. We celebrated our fifty-fifth wedding anniversary the 29th of last January. We have had thirteen children born to us of which are living 6 girls and 5 boys; 25 grandchildren living, 12 great grandchildren.

We had it very tough in our early married life when our children were small. I was baptized by Elder J. E. Thornbury the third Saturday in December, 1909 and received into the Lost Creek Church and I was appointed Clerk of the church the third Saturday in June 1910, which I have served as clerk continuously up to the present time. I was also ordained Deacon of the church September 18, 1915 and on December 5, 1953 I was ordained to the ministry and am at the present time Moderator, Deacon and Clerk of the said Lost Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Church. My wife was baptized by Elder J. S. Hunnicutt May the 6th. 1944 in the same church. All matters of business which has come before this church since it was organized. has been disposed of by a unanimous voice or vote. This we feel very thankful to God for. In all these many years since I have been a member, I have been blessed to attend the meetings almost perfectly. I have probably missed four or five meetings in the fifty years which I have been a member and that principally on account of sickness.

One more thing I would like to mention. When I was baptized, it was very cold. I went to church that Saturday evening with no thought of offering myself to the church. The brethren broke the ice and raked it back to baptize one of my younger brothers, after which the moderator asked if there were anyone who would like to unite with the church. So it seemed that I lost sight of myself and met him at the water's edge giving him my hand. He asked me when I wanted to be baptized. I told him that I was as ready now as I ever would be, not thinking that I had no change of clothing with me and about one and a half miles to walk home. But my uncle, Jim Ratcliff, who lived close to where I was baptized, took me to his home and gave me a change of clothing. He was a short man and heavier than I. I was tall and slim, so his clothes did not fit very well. The pants scarcely came to my shoe tops and much too large around the waist. It was laughable to the carnal minds of people who did not understand. When I got home to my young wife, she stared at me, but did not say a word, asked no questions, neither did I say anything; but I was full of rejoicing in my soul. Everything looked to be full of love, and giving praise to God. My burden which I had carried all my life since I could remember was all gone, and I felt I would be happy the rest of my life. It seemed that I was in a new world. I felt so light that it

seemed that I was scarcely walking on the ground, but soon doubts and fears began to come upon me, and I began to wonder if I might be mistaken about it all, and wondered if it might just be imagination of the carnal mind. I heard of Elder Thornbury telling some of the brethren that he had baptized a preacher. I wondered how or why he thought that, as I had never mentioned my feelings to anyone.

PREFACE EXPERIENCE AND GOSPEL TRUTH

This book contains articles written by me, H. L. Rogers, on different subjects of Bible doctrine. While I am fully aware that the writing is by no means perfect – probably contains many errors and mistakes, like the writer, of which I am full of – yet I feel that in a general way, it contains the scriptural truth. I hope the reader will read it with an open mind, and overlook the errors as it is my soul's desire to know and write nothing but the truth. I don't have much book education as you will see from my writings, but I hope that I have been taught in the school of spiritual experience. The things which I believe and preach, I received them not from man neither was I taught them, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. I have not written this book of articles for the purpose of displaying any eloquence or superior knowledge over the least and most humble brother,

for I do surely feel the least of them all.

If what I have written in this is in accord with spiritual truth, it is not because I have learned them by my reading and searching but because it has pleased God to reveal them to me through and by His Holy Spirit; so no credit is due me but all honor and praise belongs to our blessed Lord.

I feel to be less than the small dust of the balance – nothing and less than nothing and vanity. May He give us all, His elect, to see and feel our littleness before Him; that we may look to Him for His mercy and grace to preserve us through time into eternity where we shall always be able to praise His great and Holy name. If I have written anything in these articles that is not in accord with the true foundation which Jesus Christ has laid, it has been through ignorance of the carnal mind and will be burned up, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build up this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built there upon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

EXPERIENCE AND
CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Mrs. Annie Lawhead,
Amelia, Ohio.

Dear Sister Lawhead:

We received your card and were all pleased to hear from you all, and note your request that we write more often for publication. We very much appreciate your request, but we do not think it best to burden our editors too much, taking up time and space from better material and more able writers than myself. Nevertheless, I will write as often as I deem it expedient or as the blessed Lord gives me a mind and ability to do so. I have learned, as He says, *"Without Me ye can do nothing,"* and only by Him that *"We live, move and have our being,"* and so it is that we are daily and momentarily being saved and preserved by His grace. As the apostle Paul says, *"For by grace are ye saved,"* (notice he says are ye saved, in the present tense). *"Through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."* So when we hear men boasting, it is evidence of itself that they know but little about the grace of God, if indeed anything at all. While the Lord's people were chosen and eternally saved by grace in Christ before the world was, before they existed in person on the earth. That grace did not stop back there, but follows

them on through time and preserves them daily through time into the end of time, and finally houses them in eternal glory.

*"Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed."*

*"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days.
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."*

We do not receive grace as a reward because of volunteered obedience, but to the contrary, we are made obedient by grace. *"For by grace are ye saved and that not of yourself."* If we had to render volunteered obedience, or could render volunteered, that much would be of ourselves, and would lack that much being all of grace, and so we would have that much to boast of, but with me, I have nothing to boast of, except the blessings of my God, for with me it is grace first, grace last, and grace all the time.

*Through many sufferings,
toils and trials
I have already come,
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace I hope, will lead me home.*

*Grace taught my soul to pray,
And made eyes o'erflow,
'Twas grace that kept me to
this day,
And will not let me go.*

I have generally tried to stay away from my own experience or travels, but it seems that I have drifted into it, so I will mention some of my travels. The first serious thought that I recall, I must not have been more than four or five years old, when an old man died, one of our closest neighbors. Father and mother went to the burying and took us children, which was the first burying that I can recall ever being at. When they lowered the corpse in the grave, and began to shovel dirt in on him, serious thoughts began to run through my mind.

I began to wonder if that would be the end of that old man, who was very old, or would he live again some time. I began to become sensitive to the fact that everybody was going in the grave some time, so it gave me much concern. I thought of it for days and nights, in fact, it never did leave me, but thoughts would run through my mind, and I would ask my self questions such as, where will we all go then, after death. So such thoughts continued to bother me all through my childhood days.

It seemed that I was not allowed to enjoy the sports that other children enjoyed because of the fear that was always before me. I would

try to think at times that this fear was imaginary and try to throw it off, and it seemed that I could for a little while, but then it would seem to return with a greater force than ever. I would say to myself, "*Lord, what have I done?*" I would feel so wretched, and so condemned that I thought everyone knew it, so I would slip off to myself and try to pray and beg God to forgive me. I felt my time on earth was short, I thought I knew positively that I would never live to see manhood. As the year would pass I would think it would be the last one that I would live to see. Each birthday I would say to myself, this would be the last one that I will see, but many of them have past and I am here yet and today is my birthday, Dec. 21, 1951 and is the 68th one.

So I traveled on this way until I was 26 years old. I united with the Old School Baptist Church and was baptized December 21, 1909 and I thought my troubles were over; I felt so good for awhile. Then there came another that I had wrestled with for years. I had many dreams and visions which are too numerous to mention; in this letter I will mention one. I thought I was going to a little village and on my way I came to a palace of a king. It was up to the right above and I saw the king sitting on the throne, so I felt that he would require something of me and I realized what it would be, so I dropped my head and thought maybe I could slip by but just as I reached the foot of the beautiful stairs, he sent his waiter

to meet me there. She had in her hand a silver cup and it looked to me full of fine seed which looked as pure as gold.

She said, Here, take these seed and sow them. I dropped my head and paused for a moment, and thought of my plans. I had just bought a little farm and was in debt and had two or three small children. So I said, "I can't sow them now, but if you will wait until I get out of debt I will sow them." She said, "Well, you will have to sow them." She returned with the seed to the king. I went on my way feeling very much burdened, and thought that I had put the king off about sowing the seed. But nay I learned that he had just begun to school me; I must go through the lowest belly of hell and the sea weeds wrapped around my head, and made to cry from the belly of hell that salvation is all of the Lord, and every act of obedience is of grace and grace alone.

*'Twas grace that set me on
the mountain top,
Twas grace alone that
brought me low;
Grace alone is all my prop,
For grace alone is all I know.*

*'Twas grace in Christ that
gave me life.
By grace alone I persevere;
Grace alone is all my delight,
'Tis grace alone that I am
here.
Grace alone is all my theme,*

*And grace alone is all my
song;
Grace alone did my soul re-
deem
And grace alone has led me
along.*

*By grace alone I am what I am,
By grace alone I stand or fall;
By grace alone I have hope in
the Lamb,
For grace alone is my all and
all.*

*'Twas grace alone that saved
me from the fall,
And grace alone has housed
me in;
For grace alone is a solid
wall;
So grace alone will keep me
to the end.*

*By grace alone He made His
choice,
And sealed it in His Son;
By grace alone we are made
to rejoice,
That we were chosen in Him
before the world begun.*

*There is no end to the grace
story,
So I now shall come to a
cease,
And ascribe to Him all the
glory,
And hope by grace to lay
down in peace.*

I have just told my travels in part,

but it would take pages to tell in full. I do not recall the time when I did not have the impression to preach but fought and rebelled against it. I have been forty years in the wilderness of rebellion, making promises and breaking them and lying, saying that I can't preach and I will not try. At the same time preaching to the hills, rocks, trees, birds and the insects that fly and crawl on the earth, and in my sleep preach until I was entirely exhausted and could not speak above a whisper; yet I have tried all these many years to wear the impression out, but it has worn me out, so I give up; I have surrendered in full.

I am now willing by the power of God to do that which I feel is my duty to do. If I can do that which is pleasing to my God, that which will relieve my burden and give me peace,

I am not much concerned what man thinks about it. I feel that God will take care of that result. One planteth, another watereth, but God giveth the increase.

Your brother in tribulations,
H. L. ROGERS, Denton, Ky.

The Signs of the Times,
Dear Editor:

With Brother H. L. Rogers' permission, I am enclosing his letter to us, for publication, providing it meets with your approval. We enjoyed it so much we wish to share it with others.

We enjoy reading the Signs very

much. I have been a subscriber since 1922, but it has been in our family for many years and I hope I can still take it as long as I live.

May God's richest blessings uphold you to carry on with the Signs to His own honor and glory.

Yours in hope,
ANNIE LAWHEAD
Amelia, Ohio

"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. "
Ephesians 2:8-10.

All people receive what we may term a grace in a natural way, in having a being, a life, and the preservation of it with the mercies of life such as food and raiment, yea, even the very air that we breathe which man is unworthy of. But the special or particular grace of God which is applied to some people only such as electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, calling, and sanctifying grace is what we are, I hope, interested in.

May we now look at the grace of God as displayed in acts of goodness toward his people. The grace

of God when displayed toward his people is an act of love, mercy, and goodness bestowed upon them. It is no other than love unmerited and undeserved, exercising and communicating itself to them by Christ in a free and generous manner. The grace of God arises from the goodness of His nature and not from anything in the creature; and is exercised according to His own sovereign will and pleasure. *"I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy."* Exodus 33:19.

First, the grace of God appears in the election of His people to everlasting life and is therefore called the election of grace and is denied to be of works. *"Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work."* Romans 11:5-6. This act of the grace of God was passed on in His eternal mind before any works were done, good or evil, and without any consideration of them. *"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."* Romans 9:11.

May we at this time view some cases of God's dealings with His

people as recorded in the word of truth. First, let us view the case of Rahab, the harlot. *"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."* Joshua 2:1. I believe they were divinely directed to Rahab's house even though it was not likely the two spies were personally conscious of it, at least, until after they had arrived there. God's providence sometimes acts silently by working in us *"Both to will and to do of His good pleasure."* Phil. 2:13. The two spies may have thought they acted freely in going to Rahab's house, yet their steps were *"ordered by the Lord."*

It seems clear from the scriptures that Rahab was converted before the two spies entered her home, for she said unto the two men: *"I know that the Lord hath given you the land."* *"For the Lord, your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."* Joshua 2:9, 11. Surely the language is that of a believer. *"By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace."* Heb. 11:31. It is indeed a rare sight to see one stand alone for a righteous cause when surrounded by her own idolatrous people who believed not. This change in Rahab's heart came about only by the operation of God's di-

vine grace. Rahab, being a Canaanite was a complete *“stranger to the covenant of promise.”* There were no scriptures for her to read, no preachers so as to hear the gospel. She had been playing the role of a harlot, and was *“by nature a child of wrath, even as others.”* There was nothing in this poor sinful woman to commend her to God. By her own choice she was given up to the vilest of sins. But by the divine mercy of God, she was predestinated a chosen vessel in Christ Jesus from all eternity. *“Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”* Romans 5:20. *“But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)”* Ephesians 2:4-5. Do we not see in Rahab’s case (as well as our own) the wondrous workings of God’s power in His exercise of divine sovereignty and the manifestation of divine grace? God being the Supreme Judge is not bound by any law other than his own free will, and therefore he will *“have mercy on whom he will have mercy and on whom he will he hardeneth.”*

The great Apostle Paul whose name was changed from Saul to Paul is another example of *“By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”* *“Not of works.”* Saul was in authority when Stephen was stoned to death. *“And cast*

him out of the city and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul.” Acts 7:58. *“And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem.”* *“As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committing them to prison.”* Acts 8:1, 3. Saul was filled with fury against the church up to the very moment of his conversion, and believed that in persecuting them he was rendering the highest service to God. He did not seem to doubt that what he was doing was of a righteous nature. Saul was a religious man who believed in the works of the law as a means of his salvation. He fully despised the new sect and their crucified Messiah and regarded them as religiously dangerous. How many people in this world today, who profess to be religious, consider the blessed truth (as it is in Christ Jesus) to be dangerous? Paul was, by the grace of God, called from the darkness and ignorance which he was dead in, into the marvelous light of God’s grace.

After Paul’s conversion, he was a new man and was shown what he must do which was a spiritual work the ages would bless. He was *“baptized”* and was with the Lord’s disciples several days at Damascus. He became a member of a noble broth-

erhood of Christians. The lion had become a lamb. Why? Because of his good works? No, because he was a chosen vessel unto the Lord and was ordained for a great work unto the Lord. He bore the name of the Lord to the Gentiles. When we look at Paul's conversion, can we not say that it was from first to last the work of the Lord, the work of His grace and mercy toward Paul? *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."* Can we not look back on our own experience (if we have experienced a change and have been given a blessed hope) and say the same? Paul by his sudden transition was made to realize the impossibility of man saving himself or to have any part in his eternal salvation. He was given to see his total dependence upon the sovereign grace of God and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection. I trust we have all (by the grace of God) been shown the same.

The conversion of the thief upon the cross was indeed a great display of divine grace and mercy. The cross of Christ is to some a saviour of life unto life and to others death unto death. To them that perish it is foolishness, but to them that are saved, it is the wisdom of God and the power of God. Matthew and Mark both record that they who were crucified with Jesus, reviled him which seems that both may have reviled him at first while hanging on their crosses. But by the grace of

God, the heart of one was changed in a moment. The one changed when ready to fall into the hands of Satan was plucked as a brand out of the fire and made a monument of divine grace and mercy.

The thief was given faith to believe that the kingdom of Christ was of a spiritual nature and not of this world. He was also given faith to believe that Christ was the Messiah and was without doubt that Christ would enter into his kingdom and glory after death. The thief said to our Lord Jesus, *"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."* *Luke 23:42.* This was a prayer of a dying sinner to a dying saviour. Jesus grants a blessed favor to him. *"This day thou shalt be with me in paradise."* (verse 43) What a glorious display of God's grace, love, and mercy rendered to one of his elect vessels in the last few minutes of his natural life. *"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."*

"By grace are ye saved." This is a spiritual salvation contrived and secured in the covenant of grace for those who are of Christ's love. It is applied to His people by the Holy Spirit who applies it in faith and hope. Because of the certainty of it, they are said to be already saved through Christ their head. It is a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, its curse, justice, and from death and the wrath to come. It includes all the

blessings of grace and glory and is entirely owing to free and sovereign grace.

This grace involves all the three persons in the Godhead, for men are saved by the grace of the Father who drew the plan of salvation. The Father made a covenant with the Son, in which it is provided and secured, and sent him into the world to obtain it. By the grace of the Son it is provided and secured. The grace of the Holy Spirit makes his people sensible of the need of it and supplies it to them giving them faith to hope in it. For it says, *“through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.”* Salvation is through faith, not as a cause or condition of salvation, or as what adds anything to the blessing itself, but is the way, or means, or instrument which God has appointed for the receiving and enjoyment of it. Faith is not the product of man’s free will, but is the gift of God. Salvation through faith is consistent with salvation by grace.

The elect of God were chosen in Christ Jesus from all eternity. They were given to Christ as his bride, as his church. The death of Christ was the means set apart from before the foundation of the world for the saving of them. Christ died as a sponsor *“For when we were without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly.”* Romans 5:6. The grace of God toward his people is independent of all merit and worth in them. *“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling,*

not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 2 Tim. 1:9. Grace is not grace unless it is altogether free.

The very statement that we are saved by grace implies that we are fit subjects for grace; and who are fit subjects for grace but the guilty, the wretched, the condemned? When the law of God condemns us and brings us guilty before God and like an iron bolt, closes the gates of heaven against us in our feelings; yet this cannot be so if salvation be of grace. Whatever our many sins may be, their greatness will only serve to illustrate the greatness of God’s grace, for *“Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,”* Rom. 5:20. Undeserved mercy can pardon one sin as well as another. If God acted on the rule of merit with us, then no sin would be pardonable; but when God deals with us in a way of grace, he can pass by any offence as seeing us in Christ Jesus, for *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”* Rom. 8:1.

If salvation be of pure mercy only, why should not God forgive ten thousand sins as well as one? To blot out ten thousand sins is with him no effort of grace, for *“He is plenteous in mercy,”* Psa. 86:5. The Lord’s mercy is an ocean which cannot be filled though mountains of sins be cast into it. You may say, I

believe God can save me but my nature is so inclined to sin, especially inclined to certain kinds of sins; but remember God does not deal with his people according to nature. *“For we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”* God does not deal with us on the grounds of our nature, but upon the blood and righteousness of his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. Why should the harlot perish? Why should the thief perish? Why should the murderer perish? For thus saith the Lord, *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.”* Isa. 1:18.

You may feel as I so often do and say, why do my thoughts and even my acts be so involved in worldly things? O, Lord, teach me to pray, let me not pray as the Pharisee offering up a legal plea that is based upon self. There is nothing in me, O, Lord, but sins and corruption. My sins are laid before thy all seeing eyes as the grains of sand on the seashore. My words are laid bare before thee. Lord, save me from these black and foul things for thy infinite mercy's sake. Lord, thou art merciful, thy mercy will find ample scope in me. Lord, thou are the great physician, I'm sick through and through of my sins. Lord, is not thy mercy free? Come to me, O, Lord, for thy mercy will find a grievousness of misery in me. Lord, according to the multitude

of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgression. *“Have mercy upon me, O, God, according to thy lovingkindness. According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.”* Psa. 51: 1, 2.

“By grace are ye saved.” The statement of the text means that all his people need saving. Saving from our sins, and from the consequences of them: And if we are saved, it is not because of any works which we have already performed. Neither are we saved on account of any works foreseen which are yet to be performed by us. Who among his quickened children, upon looking back on his past life, would dare say that he deserves salvation? Thank God that *“Christ died for the ungodly”* and that *“He came into the world to save sinners. By grace are ye saved.”* This is true of every saint on earth and every saint in heaven. May God have mercy upon us all is my prayer.

In bonds of love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

PSALM 98:1.

O Sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

Dear Elder Williams:

Elder Burgess, served Camp Branch Church, in the Pigg River Association for a member of years. He died in 1963, at the age of 86 years. His daughter, Mrs. Louis (Nina) Koogler found this letter that he had written to brother Perdue. At the time of this writing his eye sight had failed and he was trembly, so he dictated this letter to his wife to write for him. Nina knowing that Jamie and I knew her daddy so well thought that we would enjoy his writing, we did as have some others, and thought that we would pass it along to you, and if you see fit to use it in the Signs for others to enjoy it is in agreement with his daughter.

Love to you and your family,
Frances M. Cooper

Elder J. A. Perdue:

Dear Brother, your good letter came as a surprise, but a most precious one. I fully endorsed every word you have written which is to the praise of God's glorious grace. My hope is, I have been taught by the same power you have. It seems to me we are sitting together in a heavenly place. I have been believing in a sovereign God that rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth in all events from the chigger to the elephant. To me He is God Almighty, none like Him, and

none beside Him. I hope my trust is in this God of power, it would be folly to trust in any other. I have preached the gospel as being the power of God unto salvation to the believers (if I have preached), with the ability my God has given me, not shunning to declare what my experience has taught me, I hope not to please man but to glorify God. My efforts began near forty years ago, some of the old brethren preachers told me it never would be popular, but to continue to contend for the doctrine and if I went down they would go down with me. They have gone to their reward, I have been feeling I was almost alone in believing in a Sovereign God over all worlds, principalities, and powers, yet I feel He will have some faithful witness here when He comes again, I deem you one of those witnesses, not afraid to declare the truth. The doctrine of absolute predestination of all things is the most glorious doctrine on earth to me. It certainly does not make God the author of sin. The testimony is sin entered the world by the transgression of Adam, just one man, the devil was the cause of that. God is under no law, and can not do wrong, man alone is the sinner and God is the only Savior, does not need the help of man. He is the salvation of the elect for time and eternity, He keeps them as the apple of His eye, all this great salvation came to us and the blessings we are recipients of through the mercy and grace of God.

Grace is a free favor, no worth or merit on the part of the creature. I have not written as I thought I would, I aimed to say in the beginning, you said too many good things about me, I am not worthy of such things, it humbles me. I fear I am mistaken, and that you are mistaken in me. We were at Rocky Mount last meeting and hope to be there next meeting and hope to see you there. Do hope your wife has fully recovered. May the Lord bless you and family. Come to see us and write often, I love you and your writing.

Your brother in hope,
Elder J. E. Burgess

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Betty Walker, VA	15.00
Douglas Hodges, VA	10.00
Tina Walker, MS	25.00
Jimmy Gray, NC	5.00
Gradie Strader, NC	5.00
Buford Thompson, VA	5.00
Thomas Nichols, VA	5.00
Earl Thurman, VA	5.00
Angie Cox, NC	3.00
Steven Terry, VA.....	15.00
Sheryl Jackson, TX	5.00
Bodie Lankford, LA	15.00
Kenneth Thompson, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

DEACON
JAMIE EVERETT COOPER

The "Signs" has lost another of its long-time pillars. Brother Jamie Cooper was born July 2, 1918, and died September 8, 2007, being 89 years of age. He had been a trustee of the "Signs" since 1985 and his wise counsel will be sorely missed. His counsel was that of a peacemaker and he was a staunch believer in sound doctrine and order. Over the years, he and Sister Frances traveled among the brethren throughout the states of the Southeast and Northeast and were widely known and loved.

Brother Jamie had been blessed with many precious dreams that comforted and edified him. These were crumbs from the Master's table that kept him pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. So many times we have witnessed the tears flowing down his face as he was touched by a sermon or rejoiced in relating an experience.

For over 69 years, Brother Jamie was blessed with a wife who supported him and always attended the "Signs" meetings with him. To Sister Frances, we extend our love and may the Lord comfort you in your loss. We also will miss our dear brother in Christ. *"Precious in the*

sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” Psalms 116:15.

Editors

ELDER WILLIAM HALE TERRY

With much sadness and heavy hearts, the staff of the “Signs” joins with the family, brethren and friends of Elder Hale Terry in mourning his death. He was co-editor, vice president, treasurer, circulation manager and trustee of the “Signs” and was blessed to perform all his responsibilities most ably. He had been a trustee since 1983 and co-editor since 2002. Brother Hale was born May 25, 1936, and passed away October 3, 2007, being 71 years of age.

Brother Hale was blessed with the gift of sound judgment and wisdom in business matters as well as matters of the church. He loved sound doctrine and order and unabashedly preached Christ the way, the truth and the life. Therefore, he could witness with the Apostle Paul in *II Timothy 4:6-8*, “*For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at*

that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” He said many times that he did not fear death, but he didn’t know what he must endure before death. What a blessing that we do not know that which we must experience before death!

We gratefully acknowledge, with much appreciation and love, the support and assistance of his dear wife, Sister Glenna, with all the duties involved with the “Signs.” *Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her” Proverbs 31:28.* Our hearts go out to her and to their children. Our loss is but his gain.

May the Lord of all grace and mercy comfort those who mourn.

Editors

Luke 2:9-11.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
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*There is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name:
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.*

*He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part:
No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.*

*His love before all time began,
Shall through all time the same remain
Though rods and frowns are sometimes brought,
And man may change, He changeth not,
His love abideth sure.*

*The law demanded blood for blood,
And out he poured his vital flood
To pay the mighty debt!
He toils through life, and pants through death,
And cries with his expiring breath,
"Tis finished," and complete.*

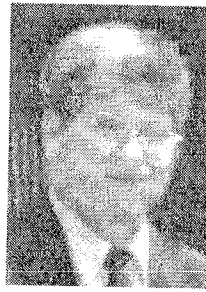
Berridge

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 EDITORIAL

“And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! How shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” II Kings 6:15-17.



Elder J.B. Farmer

Did you ever wonder about the angels of God, especially those angels who protect and preserve the elect children of God? We see pictures of what some think angels must look like. And we read of and hear of angels described as some kind of human-like beings with large snowy white wings. Many times they are depicted in the female form. But do those images really describe the angels of God, or are those kinds of thoughts purely fanciful? We desire that God should be merciful and show us the truth of the matter, that we should not be led about with every wind of doctrine and that we should be kept from error. May the Lord help us to see and to understand the truth to the praise of God’s mercy and grace, and for our comfort and strength.

Elisha and his servant dwelt in a city, which was compassed about by the Syrian army – a host of seemingly invincible military men with horses and chariots. They had come to conquer and to destroy that city. The servant of Elisha, upon seeing the host, greatly feared for his life and looked to Elisha for comfort and instruction about what they should do. When we are overwhelmed, our nature tells us to do something, and do it quick. We are told by the carnal mind either to stand and fight, or to flee for our lives. But the Spirit, in that small, still voice tells us, “Fear

ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." The Spirit calms us down and gives us a vision that we could not see on our own. He comforts us by again and again teaching us that our God rules and reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He shows us by God given faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, that our God is greater than all. He made the world and all that is in it, and He controls it and will surely bring glory and honor to Himself by keeping His children. When the servant's eyes were opened, he was blessed to see the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. There were more with them than there were with the enemy. He was in a safe place, because God had not forgotten him, and had made provision to keep him and to deliver him, even before the servant had any knowledge of God's powerful purpose to save. *"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."* *"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."*

Jacob, when fleeing from his angry brother Esau at the command of his mother and father, lighted on a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. Here is another child of God, afraid for his life, but still desiring to please his mother and father. He was out in the wilderness, seemingly alone, with

darkness coming on and not knowing how things would come forth. It seems that he had nothing of this world to comfort him, because we are told that he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. But Jacob was not alone. He was like David who said, *"Whither shall I go from thy 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. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."* God was with Jacob. Jacob dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Here is manifested the provision for one of God's little ones, even one in trouble. The angels, or messengers (for that is what the word angels means), were shown to Jacob in a dream ascending and descending on that ladder between earth and heaven. The messengers of God are continually coming down in that small, still voice bringing the good news, teaching, and encouragement from a far country. And the desires and prayers, sometimes in songs of praise and thanksgiving, and sometimes in groans, go up from God's children by way of those messengers to God. The apostle instructed

the children of God to pray without ceasing. This they do as freely as they breathe – as freely as those angels ascend and descend that ladder. And the Lord appeared to Jacob in that dream and said, among other things, *“Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again to this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”* God brought the sure word of comfort and strength to Jacob in time of need. And He made Jacob aware that His angels are continually ascending and descending for the benefit of God’s little ones.

On the way to Rome in a ship, the apostle Paul was comforted by the presence of the angel of God when all hope of being saved was about gone. They had been exceedingly tossed upon the stormy sea by a tempest for many days. The storm bore heavily upon them, and neither sun nor the stars appeared for many days. It must have been something like a hurricane, in which they were caught. Paul and the shipmen had fasted long, for they perceived that unless God intervened for them all was lost. They were in such distress that they cast overboard the tackling of the ship and finally even the cargo in the vain attempt to save themselves. *“After long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and*

to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.”

I cannot help believing that these things were written and preserved for the comfort and teaching of God’s little children. These are not just historical facts or exciting stories to entertain us, but these historical details, given by the Holy Spirit, also speak of our experience. Can you think back on times in your life when all about you seemed to be in chaos and confusion? Can you remember when you were in such great fear and doubting about the outcome of the trial you were in that you thought you must perish in it? Can you identify with the apostle and the men of old when they were brought to their wits end and said, *“Lord save us: we perish.”* It seems that this has been my lot time and again since being set in this way. Yes, there have been many long and peaceful seasons, but from time to time, if not deceived, I have been brought to the end of my strength

and made to look unto God, who only can deliver. There have been many sleepless nights and days of groaning and begging for mercy and wisdom. There have been times when I thought I would surely perish in the affliction. But God has been merciful through all. And many times, I believe He has sent His holy angel in that small, still voice speaking peace to my soul. In the midst of the trial, that voice speaks saying, all is well, God is in control, even this shall pass, *“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.”*

God has promised never to leave us or to forsake us, and that He will be with us even unto the end of the world. God cannot lie or fail in a promise. None who are given to believe His promises shall ever be disappointed. And all who are blessed to hear His word and to believe in Him whom God hath sent have everlasting life, and they have passed from death unto life. He has gone before us in all things, even in our afflictions. The way of salvation has been made. Christ suffered and died for our sins, and was raised up again the third day for our justification. God’s children are now in a safe place – they are in His hand and no one is able to pluck them out of the Father’s hand for He is greater than all. The Holy Spirit said through the prophet Isaiah, *“In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the*

angel of his presence saved them: in his love and pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” God is with us, and the angel of His presence is delivering us from moment to moment, and shall bring us to the end of our journey in peace. We are not alone. This is our hope and our confidence. We cling to it with all the faith and strength we are given.

Jesus said concerning the ones beloved of Him, *“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”* This is the extent of the care of God the Father for His children. He has appointed their angels in heaven to continually behold His face on their behalf. These messengers of God carry from you every burden, grief, sorrow, trouble, and joy directly into His presence always. And these same messengers return to you with assurances of His love and mercy for you. He pities you, and loves you, and cares for you. And He will deliver you out of your troubles and will bring you safe to heaven’s shore without fail. Jesus said, *“Fear not little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give to you the kingdom.”* God has loved His people with an everlasting love, and has determined to keep them while they are in the world. He has given them of His Spirit, which I be-

lieve is the messenger that continually communicates between them, while earth bound, and the throne of God. There is never a moment when they are out of His sight and care, though sometimes we doubt it. Now, we have need of the angels of God to protect and to preserve us. But soon, His people will all behold the Lord God of heaven face to face. They shall see Him with their own eyes. As Job said, *“Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.”*

This was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer 12-9-2007

PSALMS 77:12-13.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

Thy way, O God is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Key,

It is good to speak with you by phone last month. Sherry and I are sorry we were not able to be with you and the other faithful brethren in meetings last fifth weekend. We are feeling some better, but still are not fully recovered from the flu. We hope we will be blessed to visit with you again in the future, Lord willing. We hope you are well and able to attend your meetings.

I was overjoyed to read the last issue of the *Signs of the Times*. Several things seemed to have a great effect upon me. The poem on the first page is one of my favorites, not only because of the words given, but also because of the story behind them. I heard that this, was found written on the wall of an insane asylum many years ago. The author is not known, but must have been highly blessed to know God and His love, even in the midst of horrible circumstances. How I was also made to rejoice in the transcription of what you were given to preach during the Staunton River Association in 1984. The text you quoted from *John 5:25*, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”* was recently made pre-

cious to me. And in my weak way, I attempted to preach from it last month, and some time later I attempted to write down some of the thoughts I believe were given to me while speaking the things that seemed to be opened to me were much the same as those you brought forth, in your preaching, although I was unaware of your preaching from this text at the time of my speaking and writing.

I was also much moved by the account of your experience of grace and call to the ministry which, we have heard several times before each time with much power and grace. It seems so good that is now in print and hopefully preserved for the benefit of the faithful in Christ.

It was also very good to read a little of the life, experience, and doctrine of Elder Hiram L. Rogers. This wonderfully gifted servant of God was ordained an elder at age 70. As you know, he is also the father of faithful Deacon Grover A. Rogers, recently deceased, whom we already greatly miss. They were both members of the Lost Creek Church our home church. I am sending along with this an obituary of Brother Grover for publication in the *Signs*, at the request of Lost Creek Church. Also included is an article for you to do with as you please. If it seems unsuitable to be published, please feel to set it aside.

Elder Joe Hamrick was wonderfully blessed to preach grace for grace, and and the letter Sister Co-

per sent in from Elder J. E. Burgess was good news from a far country, setting forth the sovereign God and the absolute predestination of all things. The two obituaries - one of Brother Jamie Cooper and Elder Hale Terry were also precious to me.

It seems like this issue of the *Signs* was written just for me, but I suppose there may be many readers that feel the same way. Sherry joins me in sending our love to you.

Elder J. B. Farmer

4201 Willow Haven Ct.
Raleigh, NC 27616
December 18, 2007

Dear Tony,

I hope you and your family are well. I was very pleased that you agreed to be circulation Manager and Treasurer for the Signs of the Times. As you know, my father had that responsibility for about twenty years.

I hope you will find the contacts with subscribers as rewarding as my parents did. I often think of the many years of fellowship between my family and Elder Hale Terry and his family. We have a lot of good memories, yet I know he is greatly missed by his family and all who knew him.

I am renewing my subscription for two years. Use the remainder as needed. Give my regards to your family.

Sincerely,
Michael Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

SORROW UNTO DEATH

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. *"The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered."* Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind; what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter and hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God's judgments was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only

One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and prepared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in this mystery are *"unsearchable and past finding out."*

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death was passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness could not come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was as absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were *"preserved in him,"* as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not the place where extremity of sorrow brought

him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. *"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me."* But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this soul; yet now that it had come, *"he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy."* No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, *"Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."* And again, *"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath,"* (Lam. i. 12; iii. 1.) Now that the hour had come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of others' sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save

him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him if it were possible. So great was his suffering that *"an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him."* And even then, *"being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."* But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, *"Not as I will, but as thou wilt."* He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it *"was pitched within and without,"* so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from which the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die alone, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not with him, but in him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter iii. 20.) The water that drowned all flesh upon

the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jesus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sin. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of God, the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had all been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffetings of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it all was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ.

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the dear Savior can never be told to the understanding of anyone who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the

latter case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings never knows at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossing and shaking of the ark, not knowing what was going to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the ming of their strange experience.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and at every farther advance into an awful mystery the learner is alone. My people are led by a solitary way. *"They mourn apart; every family apart, and their wives apart."* Each one says to self, *"No one can be as vile in heart,"* Each one feels his own to be a special case of depravity. If he has been kept from out breaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, *"Behold, I am vile, I abhor self."* Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of

being alone in all our troubles on account of our special sinfulness attends all of the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear savior. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought come to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning "*for him whom they have pierced,*" then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are. Truly they are "*groanings that cannot be uttered.*" What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our souls when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our souls the blessed promise of the Lord that "*the waters*

shall no more go over the earth," and "*that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us.*" How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel, yet that promise has held good, and will be good unto the end, for it is "*Yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us.*"

"*As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*"-2 Cor. i. 5. So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are "*coming up out of the wilderness.*"

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you, my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness, but it is just what you feel of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinfulness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble con-

trition and self abasement before God when you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God, the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted, and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on the stormy sea; but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and rises to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the Spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religious works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek unto the Lord to be led by his holy Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the

Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God. We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that *"whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God."* The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help to encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, *"You ought to obey in order that you may feel better."* The Saviour's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of grace, *"You ought to be baptized; it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better."* But his reply may be, *"I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people."*

Now it is for us not to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show

to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your souls to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself and you have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declared, in the power of the spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But oh, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings

whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many a time you have said to yourself, "*Surely I must never undertake to preach again.*" Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which he has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down, for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul, who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church, and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who want them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: "*Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.*"—*Isa. lxvi. 10*. We must all wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, he always comes "right early." All our times are in his hand, and they can neither be hastened or delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands,

to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty; yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God; and if it is only to relieve ourselves of responsibility, and "*to feel better,*" that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quite go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He and not man, gives the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and

stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circumstances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) It is that salvation which the psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the apostle speaks when he says to Timothy. "*In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee,*" and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus "*saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins.*"

The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in time of darkness and distress, "*Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.*"

Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our Sun, and his salvation, like the sunlight, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. Who speaks of another salvation which is not of grace, but of works? That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost are edified and multiplied, (Acts ix. 3) and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Saviour visits his erring children, and restores them to the joys of his salvation. All our times are in his hand, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "*Behold, what wondrous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I.*" And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life, and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidences of a depraved

nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says, "*What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, but the grace of God which was with me.*" So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of and says, "*By the grace of God I am what I am,*" and there is no one left out of that heavenly, choir when they sing in perfect accord, "*Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.*"

Elder Silas H. Durand

Romans 1: 22-23.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

And changed the glory of the uncorruptible god into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

PSALM XXXI. 15

“My times are in thy hand.”

DEAR BRETHREN :-As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet has trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what yet lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what may lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pilgrim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future. But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, than it is true that he is equally sovereign in all the

providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with his Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a *“God of providence”* as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they believed that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, *“It is the Lord.”* Now it has

seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshiped had ordained all their paths for them, and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine rule I can rest. "*The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.*" - Psalm xcvi. I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence or grace toward me, but I am sure that his will, purpose, love and grace will be everywhere. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him"; and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for "*known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world.*" So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that

from the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforeseen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, "*My times are in thy hand,*" and they have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, over-ruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going.

Who can bind either leviathan or the sweet influences of Pleiades? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be remembered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he confessed and rejoiced in. Many of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exult that his times were in the hands of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that "*his times*" were in the hands of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah

are infinite. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, "*Many times are in thy hand.*" Right here I am reminded that another and a greater than David, "*he who was David's Lord,*" also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark), or "*as it was determined.*"— Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be, as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, "*Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born.*" Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and

tempt us after this fashion. David was a great man, and he had a great work to do in the world, and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said *“O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”* This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hands of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hands of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot when it could be said, This did not come from God? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for

or dread, that guardian has in his own control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidently and joyfully confesses, *“All my times are in his hand. He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him.”* So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that it is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's hands. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and salvation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, *“I was silent, because thou didst it.”* And Job said, *“Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”* *“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath*

taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." So we learn that our times of trial, in whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works "*all things after the counsel of his own will;*" all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, "*My times are in thy hand.*"

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently, "*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*" Paul here takes strong ground: "*We know.*" He takes broad ground: "*That all things.*" He takes comforting ground: "*Work together for good.*" He takes discriminating ground: "*To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*" I have just said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, "All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he says precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation,

distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, "*In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*" We are "*more than conquerors.*" That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; but his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, "*My times are in thy*

hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister, whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, "*it is the Lord.*" All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in her room, and said to her, "*Think who has done it.*" Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, "*The Lord has done it.*" This time of her trouble was in the hands of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as before. Our times are in the hands of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other accord-

ing to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that veil. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hands.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill, My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. Chick.
Reisterstown, Md.

(We enjoyed reading the above so much that we felt our brethren would enjoy it too. It was written by Elder Chick and published Feb. 1, 1888. - J.D.W.)

St. John 1: 6-13.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, not of the will of man, but of God.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2007

Wanda Brown, NC	5.00
T.R. Pullig, TX	5.00
Jim Jones, NC	5.00
Mabel Hedrick, VA.....	5.00
Glenia S. Shelton, VA	5.00
Ruby Dyer, VA	5.00
Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00
Michael Williams, NC	25.00

OBITUARIES

CARL LEONARD MOORE

Brother Carl Moore, 82 of 8391 N.C. 700 Hwy., Ruffin, N.C., departed this life on July 22, 2007 at Morehead Memorial Hospital in Eden, N.C.

Brother Carl was born on January 15, 1925 in Guilford County to the late Thomas and Pearlle Tedder Moore. He was a retired farmer and carpenter and was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II, having served in the Philippines. He was a self-taught man and was skilled in welding, plumbing, electrical wiring and masonry.

He is survived by his wife of over 61 years, Alease Pruitt Moore, of the home, daughters June Strader and husband Percy of Reidsville, N.C., and Debbie Mills and husband Allen of Ferrum, Virginia. Sons, Linton Moore and wife Rita of Ruffin, N.C., and Charles Moore and wife Pam of Roxboro, N.C., eight grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Sister, Grace Southern of Reidsville, N.C. and step-sister Judy Jacobs and husband Lee of Madison, N.C.

He spoke of his wish to join Dan River Church and be baptized, but he was very sick and was unable to return to church. The family asked Elder Key to come to the Veterans

Hospital in Durham, N.C. where Brother Carl was a patient. He and his wife, Sister Alease, joined the church there that day. That was July 16 and he died on July 22, 2007 before he was baptized, but the Bible says his people were baptized with Jesus In the River of Jordan.

Brother Carl suffered much, as he was sick for several years. The Bible says if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. There remaineth, therefore, a rest for God's people. For the sufferings of this world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 24, 2007, with Elder Kenneth R. Key officiating, with burial in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We shall miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain.

Gradie H. Strader

SISTER NANNIE PHILLIPS

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sis. Nannie Phillips home on Nov. 20, 2007 just past her 91st birthday, Sis. Nannie was born Sept. 25, 1916 and lived in Floyd Co., Va. her entire life. She was preceded in death by her parents and other family members, also her husband Victor C. Phillips, and son Joe F. Phillips. She leaves three sons and

daughters-in-laws, Wayne Phillips, Nelson and Gelia Phillips, Tobias and Kathy Phillips, and one sister and brother-in-law, Helen and Elza Cox and 6 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great grandchildren.

Sis. Nannie united with Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Sunday Oct. 24, 1948 and was baptized the same afternoon by her Pastor, L. A. Harris. She was a faithful member for 59 years.

Sis. Nannie related many times that the day she was baptized was the happiest day of her life and felt she had obeyed her Lord and Savior. She was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God. She traveled many miles with her companion to Sister Churches of like faith and order and would welcome those who attended her church to her home.

Sis. Nannie's funeral service was held, at her home church, Indian Creek on Friday Nov. 23, 2007, by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Elder Thomas Pegram, Elder Eugene Gunter. She was laid to rest in her home church cemetery beside her husband to await the calling of our Lord and Master on that final day, which all days were made for. We live in Hope to hear the same calling. Done by order of Indian Creek Church in conference on Nov. 22, 2007.

Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Moderator
J. B. & Jean Mitchell, Committee

DEACON GROVER ARLEN ROGERS

On November 12, 2007, it pleased our heavenly Father to call Brother Grover Arlen Rogers from the walks of men at 78 years of age. He never married but cared for his family and made kind provisions for them as long as they lived. Brother Grover was the son of the late Elder Hiram Lewis Rogers and the late Martha Mullins Rogers. He was born August 21, 1929, at Denton, Kentucky and lived there all his life except for the time he spent in the U.S. Army from 1950 until 1952. He was Private First Class and served in Texas and in Germany. He retired from the Columbia Gas Company. Brother Grover was the youngest of eleven children. All his siblings preceded him in death except for Harmie Rogers of Grayson, Kentucky. Those gone before are brothers Clayton, Clifton, Homer and Hubert Rogers; and sisters Delphia Black, Irene Watson, Lorain Bellew, Madgel Rogers, Mary Waugh, and Mavie Cooksey. His other survivors include several nieces and nephews and many friends.

Brother Grover was blessed to be a good and faithful man. He asked for a home with the Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Church of the old absolute predestinarian order on August 1, 1993 and was received on his profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. On September 5, 1993 he was baptized. Elder J.B. Farmer officiated with Elder W.

P. O'Neal assisting. Brother Grover was ordained to the office of deacon on August 24, 1996. He was a very quiet and soft-spoken person, but was wonderfully blessed to set forth the truth in the power of the Spirit. He was sound in the doctrine and order, which Christ gave to His church. He was faithful in attendance at home, and also visited other churches at some distance as much as he was enabled. He was also blessed to utter some of the sweetest, most humble prayers in the closing of our meetings. We always trusted his judgment, and could always depend on his word. He took good care of the meeting-house and grounds, and greatly helped in carrying out the business at our associations. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. This fruit was abundantly evident in Brother Grover. A tree is known by its fruit. We already greatly miss him, but must submit to the loving will of the Father in taking him home.

The Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Church requested in her December, 2007 conference that the Moderator and Clerk write this obituary and present it to the *Signs of the Times* for publication and have one copy entered into the church's minutes. This was written in love and in hope of eternal life. 12-10-07

Elder J.B. Farmer, Moderator
Sister Sherry Farmer, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my
Lord;
All the vain things that charm me
most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.*

*See from his head his hands, his
feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled
down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow
meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a
crown?*

*His dying crimson like a robe
Spreads o'er his body on the tree,
Then I am dead to all the globe,
And all the globe is dead to me.*

*Were the whole realm of nature
mine,
That were an offering far too
small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, how long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed me not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any

man pluck them out of my Father's hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. (John 10:24-31)



Elder R. H. Campbell

Many times, in the past, I have read scriptures that at that particular time, seemed to contain the fullness of the doctrine of God our Savior, and other times they do not, and the other day as I read the above verses they seemed to do that very thing for me. The Jews were gathered around Jesus, and they asked him to tell them plainly if he was the Christ; which he had already done. He said, I told you and ye believed me not, now the question arises, why are they following him, and why do they ask the same question, over and over again, if they are not going to believe what he says anyway? They were just seeking an occasion against him and a desire to draw attention to their own belief, and are not really concerned with what the truth of the matter is, but rather a desire to further the spread of their own doctrine, and authority. Then Jesus answered, as candidly as it can be stated, the reason that they did not believe, which was simply because they are not his sheep: end of conversation on the

subject, at least it should have been.

Jesus had told them who he was, and what his mission was; and yet they respond by asking him the same question again. *“If thou be the Christ tell us plainly.”* This is the normal response that you will get from those who are in this same position, and that position is the same one that the apostle Paul said he was in, prior to his meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus, he was in a state of ignorance and unbelief, and giving them the answer again and again will not change that position of ignorance. This is where all men are born, and where they shall ever remain, unless the truth is revealed unto them, by the Holy Ghost. They will not hear and understand the truth, even when it is explained unto them in great detail, and they will not believe it, even when it is shown unto them, by the mighty works of God. It is even as the incident of Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead; the Jews, on this occasion were not concerned about the fact that it was a work of God, but rather, what effect the truth would have on their own position in the world. Jesus told them in the above scripture, that the works that he did, in his Father's name, bore witness of him, and although they did not believe his words, they should believe him for the very works sake, for they were not the works of mortal men.

Jesus told them very plainly, ye believe me not because ye are not my sheep. My sheep hear my voice,

and they follow me, but, as the scriptures declare there have always been two different types of people upon the earth, those that see, hear and believe him and those who do not. They were each designated, in the book of Genesis, as the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, the seed of the serpent would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, and the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the seed of the serpent. This is prophesying the death of Christ for the sins of the seed of the woman, and by which the seed of the woman would overcome the seed of the serpent. This caused enmity between the two peoples, and will continue to do so, as long as the world stands, and they will never agree on the things of the spirit, because the seed of the serpent is unaware of its existence. It is even as the scriptures said of Pharaoh in, *(Rom 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 all the earth.”* Each of these groups of people were created, to make manifest the power and glory of God, in his working his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, in making a distinction between those he loved, and those that he hated, as in the case of Jacob and Esau.

He told those who believed not

on him, on one occasion, (*John 8:44*) "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth ye believe me not.*" These are those who are the seed of the devil, and they shall show forth their true character, by their rejecting all things that are good and righteous, and their whole desire is to mislead and confuse the sheep, and to resist God, and there can be no reconciliation between them.

The scriptures are written only to those who are his sheep: those who have been made a new creature in Christ, and who worship God and have no confidence in the flesh. It is through the experience of having been called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel that they have been spared, as Paul said, (*Rom 8:20*) "*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" It is only then that they are given hearing ears, seeing eyes and a heart which understands the prophecies such as the one made by Ezekiel, and claim it as being unto them. (*Eze 37:24-27*) "*For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather ye out of the*

countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh, and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." All of this was accomplished in the death burial and resurrection of Christ, when he made an atonement for the sins of those under the law: in his taking away the law for those who will live in the gospel day, who have been blessed to experience this miraculous transformation and will understand the mystery of godliness. Those who, even though dead in trespasses and sin, were quickened into spiritual life, and who will hear and know the voice of the shepherd who called them, and sent them forth worshipping God in Spirit and in truth.

This is all the sovereign work of an all wise God, who predestinated it from the beginning, and did not leave it to the will of the creature, or to the whims of the natural man, but rather, to the good pleasure of his own will, who created them to this

end. It is a permanent work that is for time and eternity, and will culminate in their eternal salvation, where they shall dwell in the presence of God and the heavenly host, in that world of love, joy, peace, happiness and rest that shall never end. There has been much writing, and lots of discussion on this subject, of just what the glory world will be like. No man knows for sure just how it will be, but, I sure hope that I find out, for it is as my daddy always said regarding the resurrection, he did not know how it was going to be, but, however it is, that is the way that he wanted it.

There was a time when all of the people in the world were of one language, dwelling together and were, of one consent, and feeling that they were in control of their own destiny and planning to build their own means of getting into heaven. (*Gen 11:3-4*) "*And said they one to another, go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly, and they had brick for stone, and slime for mortar. Go to and let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.*" Does this not sound familiar to you, for that same manner of people dwells among us even today, a people who are still attempting to work out their own salvation, endeavoring to earn it by their own efforts, and therefore bypassing the

redemptive work of God, in Christ. It was not successful in that day, and it will not be successful today, for God has before declared, (*Isa 42:8*) "*I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.*" He had declared before by the mouth of the prophets how this *would be*, as *Isaiah* said, (*Isa 42:1*) "*Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*" The plan of salvation, of all of the elect, was already in place, before time began, nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it, and it covered every heir of grace that will ever exist in this time world, and will absolutely assure their place in that heavenly abode. This is the glory that he was referring to when he said he would not give it to others, but reserved it unto himself.

The Lord also insured that the plan of these would not prosper by, (*Gen 11:-6-7*) "*And the Lord said, behold, the people is one, and they have one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*" God, by this means dispersed the builders of the tower of Babel, when they all spoke the same language, and gave

them confusion instead, so that they gave up on building their tower, for they could not understand their language, when speaking it one to the other. This caused them to be scattered abroad, upon the face of the whole earth, speaking diverse languages, and becoming separate nations. This was one of the main reasons that they had for building the tower in the beginning, that they not be scattered upon the face of all the earth, but that they should remain one people, with the combined ability to accomplish anything that their hearts desired, but where the word of the King is, there is power: power to overcome any other powers or the devices of men.

The children of God have a very special language, in this day, one of which the world is not even aware. It is their very own spiritual language which was given unto them, to regroup God's people into that one union and fellowship in which they now exist, one which causes them to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, with all of those others of like precious faith and calling and who speak that language. The precious truths expressed above, are only communicated in that pure language, (*Zeph 3:9*) "*For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.*" This pure language is given unto them in the new birth, and is God's way of bringing his sheep together, in

peace, love and harmony as a chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation and peculiar people, that they may all worship God of one mind. The other people are made to wonder just what it is that binds them together in such a close knit and loving relationship, which is evident even to strangers, and even they are made to realize that the saints have something that is not to be found elsewhere. When God's children come together to worship God, in Spirit and in truth, they are in the Spirit, and are separated from the world, because the world cannot understand their speech, and they certainly do not have the experience, or the precious heritage that stirs in the bosom of all of the saints of God.

The separation between the people of this world, is caused by the fact that they have nothing in common: the one is of the earth, earthy, and the other is of that spiritual realm and walk after the things of the spirit. This is a permanent state of separation because it was determined a long time ago, by God. (*Deut 32:8-9*) "*When the Most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.*" This will ever remain because Paul reaffirmed it when he said, (*1 Cor 3:11*) "*For other foun-*

dition can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.” and since the foundation is laid, in Christ Jesus, it shall never change,, (Mal 3:6) “For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” The very foundation of the salvation of the saints rests in the fact that God never makes a mistake, his wisdom is infinite, and he cannot err in judgment, for all things are ever open before him, and his determinate counsel will ever be the same.

I am ever amazed as I read the scriptures, such as those quoted above and many others, which declare the sovereignty of God as being the author and finisher of the salvation of the sheep, to then see the world try to use the same scriptures as evidence to deny it. I have always been of the opinion that the natural man does not believe what he reads in the bible, but rather, he reads into the bible what he believes from a natural heart. He will never arrive at the correct understanding of the truth that way, for Paul said, (1 Cor. 1:21) *“For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knows not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them*

which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” The difference is in the calling of God, for it carries with it, the understanding of the truth, which is written in the heart in that pure language, which only his sheep know and understand. That is why they can never come to a mutual agreement of the truth that is taught in the scriptures, as Jesus said above, (John 9:43) *“Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word”* That would be like Americans trying to understand a Japanese person, speaking in his own language, which they could not understand. There is no communication possible there, and neither is there between the chosen generation, and the children of wrath.

The most comforting thought in the above scripture is, *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Father’s hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”* There is no safer or more secure place that the sheep can dwell than in the hand of God, and if you believe the scriptures above, feel to have experienced that calling, heard the shepherd’s voice and are following along in the footsteps of the flock, then this last promise that no man

is able to pluck the sheep out of his hand is talking about you. It is as sure and certain as the fact that Jesus himself came into the world to seek and to save the lost sheep, finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and returned triumphant, over death hell and the grave for your salvation. and is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

You know, by your experience that you were lost in sin, because the Spirit made you aware of this in the new birth, and you believe that you have been called out of that horrible pit into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, because of the change that was wrought in your heart and soul, and you began immediately to understand the scriptures in a way that you had never done before. The first comment usually received to this statement is, but, I don't know if this applies to me, or not. Well, you don't know, and never will know, for sure in this life, but you will always live in the hope that you have, and this hope is not as fragile as we sometimes tend to think that it is. This hope is actually an earnest expectation that has been placed in the heart of every child of God that he cannot lay it down, nor pick it up, of his own volition, but must wait until the time appointed of the Father to proceed further. It is based on evidence that you have received which causes you to believe these words are to you, as improbable as it may seem, seeing yourself as you know yourself to be. God is the only

source of power which can enable you to come to this conclusion, and it was given to you for this purpose, that you may realize that it is not of the flesh and it must therefore be of the Spirit. This is one of the first evidences that you see and hear from one newly being brought to this faith, is that they do not feel worthy and fear that they are mistaken.

As a Sister said, last night at our Monday night meeting, sometimes I am so amazed that we can have such doubts regarding our salvation, seeing that we have so great a cloud of witnessing from the testimony of those who have gone before, who left on record the footsteps of the flock, and we will all freely admit that the love that we have for these things is greater than for anything that the world has to offer. We therefore believe this to be indisputable evidence that these things are our meat and drink spiritually, and will sustain that spiritual connection that has been established between us, because, if it be of God, the scriptures says that he that has begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, at his second coming.

The apostle John, in his desire to comfort and strengthen his brethren in the ages to come, seeing that they were not eyewitnesses to these things, penned some of the most precious scriptures to be found in the bible. (1 John 1-4) *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have*

seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and which our hands have handled, of the word of life; (For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.) 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. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." This testimony was not left on record for the benefit of those in his day, for they were all eye witnesses of these same things, but rather, for those who are to follow in the ages to come, that they may understand their own precious travels and experiences, for they may seem mysterious at times, but, then to hear from one who lived in that time, over 2000 years ago, it gives them strength and courage to continue to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, believing God is still on his throne, insuring the eternal salvation unto all that he chose as his own peculiar people, before the foundation of the world. This journey is by faith, and faith is not by sight, so it is a uneven journey for the traveler, but sure and certain in the mind of the shepherd.

May God bless all who believe and understand these precious

truths, and may we ever be found contending for and claiming those promises as our own, because of the way in which these things were made known unto us. (1 Tim 3:16) *"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received into glory."* These things are a mystery to the natural man, and must be discerned by the Spirit which prints them in the heart and mind of the sheep whereby they receive the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba Father, and go on their way rejoicing in their new found love, and fellowship for the brethren, believing that there in no other name under heaven or given among men whereby this knowledge can be known. This grand and glorious truth is settled, once and for all when Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life and no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

PROVERBS 10:25.

As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.

Dec. 22, 07

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan. 9, 2008

Mr. Tony Horton
 Circulation Manager:
 Signs of the Times
 202 Carousel Ln.
 Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

I am enclosing my check for \$100.00.

The remaining funds are for the use of and expenses of Signs of the Times.

Just an old sinner, but a believer in the blessed truth in Hope, that not of myself, but by the Grace of God.

Bryant Huff

January 7, 2008

Dear Bro. Tony,

Enclosed is a check for \$30.00 to renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for another two years. Use the extra as you see fit.

I appreciate the interest and commitment you have shown in the publication, and wish you the very best in your endeavors.

Look forward to receiving each issue.

In bonds of love,
 John Collie
 1620 Hampton Rd.
 Reidsville, NC 27320

Brother Tony,

I'm sending \$30.00 for the next two years use the other as you see fit.

Hope you're well and your family good. We look forward to the Signs of the Times. May God Bless You. Regards,

J.B. Mitchell, Jr.
 Clerk - New River Assoc.

Mr. Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
 1429 Howlett St.
 Hillsville, Va. 24343

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed you will find my check in the amount of \$50.00; I would like for \$15.00 to be used for one years subscription to the Signs of the Times paper and the rest to be used as you see fit. I enjoy reading this so much. We are blessed to have it.

I was very saddened to read of Elder Terry's death. I only heard him once or twice, but what a blessing it was !!!

May you be blessed in your work as Circulation Manager and Treasurer.

Sincerely,
 Bille G. (Dunn) Speir

1-9-08

Dear Mr. Horton:

Enclosed is a check for \$50.00 to assist in the publication of the Signs. Please use the money as you see fit.

I hope that it will be the will and purpose of the Almighty that the Signs be continued for those that enjoy it.

Sincerely yours,
Charles Alders

1-20-08

Dear Brother Horton,

I see it is time to renew, enclosed is \$20 dollars for the Signs, and the rest whatever you see fit. Feb. 4th. I will be 94, since I don't get out to church much any more. I love to read the new ones, and reread the old ones. The Editorials and The Voices of the Past, are like reading a sermon. Which I greatly rejoice, and try to thank the Good Lord for the Signs.

Yours in Hope,
Sarah Barker

JUDE 1:2.

*Mercy unto you, and peace,
and love, be multiplied.*

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE HEBRON MEETING.

Dear Brother Thompson:- There were three additions by experience and baptism to the church at Hebron, Ohio, last Sunday, it being their regular meeting in November. They all were received in the sweetest bond of fellowship, with rejoicing. The church is much revived on account of the manifestation of God's mercy to them, in showering upon them his divine blessing with such glorious results. We are made to pray and to hope that the good work will go on in this place. I have been the unworthy pastor of this church for sixteen years and I am made to praise God for thus blessing my weak labors in his service.

I had the pleasure of baptizing a precious young brother at our last meeting at Thompson, also. O that God would remember Zion, and may all her children turn from every false way and walk humbly before him in the narrow way which leads to life!

Adam F. Dove
Van Buren, Ohio, Nov. 9, 1915.

PREPARATIONS FOR DEATH

The remark is often made when preaching on funeral occasions, that the departed one made pre-

parations for death. This is a question that should be considered carefully and prayerfully, because each one of us must die; Are we ready to step into the vast unknown future? To be sure, we have what God has recorded for our instruction, but, after all, we know but very little about eternity. A great many seem to be satisfied that what they have decided was necessary to do is sufficient to prepare them for that happy home hereafter. This step is not, however, for a day or a year, but it is for eternity and we should consider it well. It is argued that this is a matter that should be left to the option of each one, but there seems to be so many different opinions. It cannot be that all are right. We must have some other guide.

We find that the Savior tells us that in preparing his sheep for death and eternity, he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Again, he calls it passage from death unto life. *“He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”* Here the Savior makes the safety of his people depend, not on that which may seem right to them, but on passing from death unto life. Then, none have true Bible evidence that they are truly prepared for death unless they have the evidence that they have passed from death unto life. From a natural standpoint, it would not do to say that one

who is a corpse can do something that may seem right to him that will restore the natural life and enable him to walk and talk and enjoy the company of his dear friends again. There is nothing that the friend can do, or help him do, that can restore the life and cause the pulse to beat and the lips to smile. “O,” says one, *“I do not believe that the alien sinner is dead.”* But, my kind friend, does that change the matter? The apostle says they are; the Savior so teaches, and if we do not believe what the Bible says, where can we get our starting point. This should no longer be a question in our minds. The statement of the Lord should forever decide this matter.

What evidence have we that we have passed from death unto life? While looking at the lives of our dear departed brethren and sisters in the Lord, who spent their lives in service for God, we have no doubt about their case, and we feel that if we should reach that happy home, we shall most assuredly meet them again, and unite with them in singing the sweet song of redemption. But are the external evidences, as we see them in others, all we have by which to determine this matter? John tells us, *“He that believeth hath the witness in himself.”* This most surely tells us that there is inward evidence. *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”* This can only be that we

feel to know, or, I might say, as the Spirit makes us to *feel* to know that this is true. How sweet it is when the burden of gloomy doubts, which lay so heavily on the soul, are made to disappear by the light of the Spirit of truth, which breaks in on the soul with a sweet heavenly message! It is through this spirit of worship that we are enabled to say, "*Abba, Father.*" It is this light, or evidence, that the soul desires to see. That which we can view as evidence in others we cannot always take as a certain evidence in ourselves. When, by experience, we see how prone we are to do that which we had resolved we would not do, and which we readily concluded that a Christian would not do, doubts even arise as to the principle that has prompted us in doing that which we have already done. We see so much self, which is of the flesh, that we wonder whether or not the Spirit of Christ is in us.

However, the apostle Peter would admonish us to make our calling and election sure. He tells us several things to do: "*Add to your faith virtue; to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*" He tells us in doing these things we shall be fruitful. Faith is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Then in doing these things we shall have more faith or evidence that we

have passed from death unto life. The one who knows what the Bible would require of him can never be fully satisfied until he feels that he has done his duty. However, all this will not fully fit us for this great ordeal. Jesus said to Paul, "*My grace is sufficient for thee.*" It takes dying grace to fully prepare us for death, which shall not be withheld from any of his trembling children.

J. HARVEY DAILY,

Thanks to Brother Keith Hiatt for sending us many of The Voices of the Past that we republish.

LIVING WATER

Jesus told the Samaritan woman who had come to Jacob's Well to draw water, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, "*Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee LIVING WATER.*" (John 4:10) The woman evidently did not know either the gift of God or who He was because she began to reason with Him on procuring natural water from a deep natural well. Her reasoning and questions were based on the same principles as that of Nicodemus as recorded in the first part of the third chapter of John relative to being born again. Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of being born again. Nicodemus thought Jesus was speaking of being born

again naturally. The woman thought He was speaking of natural water. Our natural finite minds can not conceive that which is spiritual. I am thoroughly convinced that when Jesus told Nicodemus, "*Except a man be born of WATER and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;*" He was speaking of this same LIVING WATER that was under consideration in His conversation with the Samaritan woman. What is this LIVING WATER? What is its source? Through Whom does it come? What does this LIVING WATER do for its beneficiaries? These are a few of the questions in my mind. May God give us the answer in sweet meditations while we work through this treatise.

Jesus said, "*The water that I shall give him shall be in him a WELL OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE.*" (John 4:14) This well of water is placed in the individual. It springs up. Sometimes in our experience we may feel that it has dried up to the extent that our hopes are blasted – then, it SPRINGS UP to revive us again, which strengthens our faith, and our hope is renewed. Have you not experienced many times the SPRINGING UP of this well of water?

We read in Isaiah 12:3 "*Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the WELLS OF SALVATION.*" This LIVING WATER comes from the wells of salvation. It brings joy and gladness to those who drink it. The Psalmist said, "*There is a*

river, the streams whereof, shall make GLAD the City of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." (Ps. 46:4) "*This LIVING WATER makes glad the grieved heart and brings joy to those who mourn because of their sins. It save us from despair and gives relief to our parched soul. This water is soothing and enlivening. It is that Fountain that is opened to the Lord's people for sin and uncleanness.*" (See Zechariah 13:1) It proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Has God ever showed you what He showed to John as recorded in Revelations 22:1-2? Have you seen this pure river of water of life flowing from the Throne of God through the Tree of Life? If this Tree of Life stood in the midst of the street of that River and on either side of it – surely, the river flowed through the tree. Every stream of mercy that has ever reached you came through Jesus Christ who is our Life. Yes, this LIVING WATER, or water of life, comes from Heaven. These gifts of His grace come down from the Father through the Son to us. Every comfort received by the child of God is because of this LIVING WATER.

We have concluded from our meditations upon this subject thus far that this LIVING WATER gives to us the glorious and joyous portion of our experiences of grace. Many of the Lord's people who have been born of the Spirit have not yet re-

joiced in these wonderful revelations. The first experiences of those born of the Spirit are grievous and condemning. Jesus cited two facts that must be revealed to an individual before they would ask Him to give them to drink. These two facts are that the person must know what is the gift of God and that Jesus Christ is His Son and Saviour of His people. A person learns much through tribulations after He is born of the Spirit, before he experiences these joyful experiences. A child of God must be born of the Spirit before he can SEE the kingdom of God. He must be born of the WATER before he can ENTER into the kingdom of God – before he can really experience the joys of Eternal Life. Jesus said, *“Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”* (Matt. 7:14) It is a painful entrance into life. It is through many tribulations that we enter the kingdom. As the new-born babe comes forth into the natural realm crying; so, the new-born spiritual babe comes crying that lamenting into the spiritual realm. What does it require to constitute ETERNAL LIFE? Let us ask Jesus what is Life Eternal and listen at His answer as recorded in His prayer to the Father in St. John 17:4 – *“And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they might know Thee the only true god, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”* There are two lessons to be learned in this ordeal of ETERNAL

LIFE. The first lesson brings the bitter experiences; the second lesson reveals the sweet. We learn the vengeance of a Holy God upon an unholy creature in the first lesson; we learn of His mercy and grace in the second lesson. We stand condemned creatures before a righteous judge in the first lesson; we are freed from this just condemnation in the second lesson. We learn in the first experience that we are unable to lift ourselves from the pitfalls of sin into which we have fallen; we see Jesus lifting us out without any effort of our own in the second experience. We are tried in the fiery furnace and suffer great tribulations before we come to the position to ask Him, *“GIVE US TO DRINK?”*

Our first lesson has been such an ordeal that we are indeed THIRSTY. WE HAVE BEEN MADE WILLING TO BE A BEGGAR AT His footstool and plead to Him for mercy and grace – for LIVING WATER to cool the fiery indignation! Hungry and THIRSTY our soul faints in us. Then, we CRY to the Lord in our troubles, and He delivers us from our distresses! (See Psalms 107:5-6) How soothing is that first LIVING WATER experienced by a parched soul! Do you not remember when you pleaded with Him, *“GIVE ME TO DRINK?”* Do you recall the first time you experienced that sweet inviting command, *“Ho, every one that thirsteth, COME YE TO THE WATERS, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat;*

yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price?" We learn in the first lesson that we have nothing with which to buy, barter, or trade. The imputed righteousness of Christ becomes that with which we buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Let us turn to Isaiah 40:6-7 for a scriptural explanation of the effect of the Spirit so that we might better understand the need for this LIVING WATER. *"All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass WITHERETH, the Flower FAD-ETH: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."* The Spirit of the Lord causes our flesh to wither and our goodness to fade away. There is exceeding dryness experienced by everyone upon which the spirit of the Lord comes. It withers the works of the flesh to such extent that we have no confidence in it. Our faith in our merits is so withered that we can see no evidence of life. Our righteousness fades to such degree that instead of righteousness the very best becomes as filthy rags. This is the proper and appointed time for us to beg of Jesus, **"GIVE ME TO DRINK."**

Have you ever looked upon grass and pronounced it dead because of its withered condition? A shower of rain comes and you behold greenness and see its drooping blades begin to raise up. Life is

manifested in that which YOU thought and considered to be dead. This LIVING WATER enables you to lift up arms that hang down. It steadies at the feeble knees. It causes the lame to walk. This LIVING WATER gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might, it increaseth strength. It causes His people to run and not be weary; to walk and not faint.

When we are blessed to drink His righteousness it revives our drooping spirits. What a blessing to drink down greedily the streams of the Lord's mercies and to realize that the fountain can never run dry but endures forever! Yes, we drink His blood to cleanse our sin-sick soul. We drink the wine of the kingdom which stimulates to press forward regardless of difficulties, and run with patience the race set before us. We desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. Drinking from this fountain of LIVING WATER causes us to GROW in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. It saves us from despair and from sinking into oblivion.

Never shall I forget the hour that I was made to vehemently cry, *"Give me to drink."* My faith in self was shattered and my hopes were all blasted. I felt that I was forever doomed with the off casts of the earth. I felt that hell was my eternal abiding place. One night God was pleased to bless one of His ministers to give me just one small ray of hope when he was blessed to

preach Jesus as a complete saviour. I immediately grasped at the straw and began to plead to the Lord to have mercy upon me. I began crying, GIVE ME TO DRINK. The Lord had mercy upon me and showed me that His Holy arm was so mighty that it could reach down into the terrible pitfalls of sins and rescue a vile sinner like me, make him holy, and safely secure his final abode with redeemed sinners! He showed me that His right hand was sufficient to keep secure from all harm so that nothing could pluck me from His hand. His minister was blessed to WATER so that my hope became anchored in that which was sure and steadfast. I trust that I drank many times from that Fountain through His ministers while they were being blessed to preach the comforting doctrine of the Love and amazing grace of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We read in 1 Corinthians 3:6, that "*Apollos watered.*" Seeing that it is God that gives the increase through the minister it must be this LIVING WATER coming from the throne of God and the Lamb. Your thirst has been quenched many times under the dripping of the sanctuary while feasting upon the preaching of a God-called minister. Were it not for the grand experience of drinking this LIVING WATER while speaking from the pulpit, I feel, I would die in despair. It is an unspeakable wonder to see Heaven opened, to hear the Voice of the Son, and to feel the soothing ef-

fect of this LIVING WATER as it is calmly and sweetly applied to your soul. Oh how it does lift our drooping spirits and encourages us to persevere on our journey. Even though we feel to be lone pilgrims trotting in a desert land where there is no water – the Lord is gracious to us sometimes in directing us to an oasis where there is LIVING WATER for us. Could we enjoy these precious drinks as much as we do if this water could be at our command each and every step of our pilgrimage? It is glorious when all of us can drink of the same spiritual drink – when we can drink of that spiritual Rock, Christ Jesus.

I am persuaded that it has pleased the Lord to bless us often with this LIVING WATER when we are congregated together in church capacity to worship God. Could that be the reason the Lord's people are so anxious to meet together regularly with one another in their church meetings? I have seen them from several states convened together in associations eagerly drinking that LIVING WATER as it flowed from the mouths of His ministers in such grand meetings. Such love and joy can only be experienced by the Lord's humble poor who are made to depend upon Grace for salvation to be experienced here and for eternity. I praise God that He has so arranged that His children can meet together from the different parts of the United States and worship together the King in

such a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God in these associations. God forbid that anything shall come among us to mar the chain of correspondence that exists with our people interlinking them together with the whole of the United States and the British Isles. It is my trust that before the end of our sojourn here that this LIVING WATER will draw together all the nations of the earth in such unity that it can indeed be said of us, *“The Lord has done great things for them! The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad.”*

I appreciate very much the love manifested for me by the Lord’s children from the rivers to the ends of the earth. My interest is in the remote places from Canada to Florida – from Washington to California – All over the globe where those of like faith and order resides.

Please pray that this LIVING WATER will be enjoyed by me and mine as the Lord sees fit to distribute it to us. My wife asks an interest in your prayers. The churches of my pastorate need your prayers. If you could stoop so low as to remember an insignificant thing like me – remember me when you are at the throne of God’s Grace from which this LIVING WATER flows!!

E. J. Lambert

Dear Elder Spangler:

I should have complied with my promise to write for the Signs, but many duties have prevented. First, I would like to say that I greatly enjoyed my recent visit to Reidsville and Greensboro Churches, and the spiritual association with those people. All were so very kind to me in many ways that shall remain as fond memories in spiritual paths. I trust that I was added to Mt. Gilead Church in the Western Primitive Baptist Association, of Alabama, forty-one years ago last September, and began speaking there in my feeble manner in March, 1918. It has fallen my lot to try to serve as pastor at Mt. Gilead, Mt. Moriah, Mt. Carmel, Wrights Creek, New Hope, Hopeful, Ramah and Bethlehem Churches. Several years I went to six of these churches regularly, and now to five. I am thankful that there has been little trouble in any of them while I was pastor, and may the Lord continue to direct us in the paths of peace. I am so glad that He has added four able young ministers to these churches during my pastorate, and that they are seeking the peace and welfare of Zion. First, there was Elder W. A. Williams of Mt. Carmel, Coffee Springs, Alabama. He is now the pastor, a prominent teacher, Clerk of the Claybank Association, and pastor of several of its churches. Next, Elder A. B. Chumney, of Madrid, Alabama; pastor of some churches in the Chipola Association. Then, Elder

William H. Smith, Graceville, Florida; also pastor in the Chipola Association, and an able teacher in our schools. Last June I baptized Brother John F. Tisdale, of Ozark, Alabama; and he has since been licensed to speak at Hopeful Church, and is proving a blessing to the church. May each of these continue in the paths opened by the Lamb and trodden by the apostles and succeeding ministers of the true church of the ages.

Among the principles I believe to be paramount in the church is sovereignty. I humbly believe that each member of the vine should have sovereign rights, and keep its house in order, watching over each other for good. I feel that God called ministers should obey the heavenly edict, "*Go ye into all the world preaching the gospel to every creature,*" and cry aloud unto Zion that her warfare is accomplished, her strife over. Such ministers should study to show themselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth, and feeding sheep and lambs. All should preach the word, be instant in season out of season, reproving, rebuking and instructing in righteousness. Great and mysterious is thy way and past finding out. "*I have loved thee with an everlasting love,*" saith Jeremiah, and he surely meant it. May such love abound everywhere in Zion today. It is pitiful to see brethren divided over minor issues. May peace be restored and brethren dwell together in unity.

It fell to my lot, along with Mr. J. P. Davis, and Elder E. R. Sorrells and F. A. Collins, to conduct the funeral of Elder J. J. Smith, who was truly a gospel minister. Elder Smith went quietly home on March 6, 1955. He was eighty-eight years of age, and has been active in the church for about sixty-five years; and served as minister for about fifty years. His wife preceeded him in death about ten years. Both lived model lives. Final services were conducted at Ephesus, his home church, Slocumb, Alabama, on March 7, with interment in Pleasant Hill Cemetery. He served as pastor at Mt. Carmel, Mt. Gilead, New Hope and Ephesus, and perhaps other churches. Truly a good shepherd has gone to his home.

On Saturday, as the evening shadows were falling, the writer spoke in memory of Sister Ida F. Thomley, a devoted member of Mt. Gilead Church for some fifty-five years. She reached the age of four score years and two, but the noblest act of her life was when she followed the Lamb of God in Jordan's stormy billows. Jesus said, "*Suffer it to be so, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness;*" and your Lord and mine was buried beneath the turbulent waters. It is precious to the believer to follow Jesus in baptism.

Brother Spangler, I remember quite well meeting you at the Staunton River Association, at Springfield Church, in 1940; and

then two weeks later at Bush Arbor Church, in the Upper Country Line Association. It seemed that glory shone around and that peace and unity abounded in Zion. May the Lord lead us in the paths of peace and love, and may all wounds be healed *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them."* I believe that I love my Saviour Lord because he first loved me.

May the Signs seek peace and order everywhere in Zion. May love always abound. I hope to meet you somewhere soon, and the dear saints in your section.

Yours in bonds of love,
(Elder) J. J. Collins

MY FLOCK

Elder R. W. Thompson: - The question: "When are we his sheep?" is one of deep interest to the saints of God. "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God;" Ezek. Xxxiv, 34. Were the sheep created for the pasture or the pasture for the sheep? God in his wisdom foreknew a people, his sheep. His all-seeing eye beheld their substance, yet being unperfect; and in his book all the members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, while as yet there were none of them (Ps. Cxxxix, 16). They were in his vision an afflicted people (his sheep). And in all their afflictions he was af-

flicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. God bless you, dear saints, you were his sheep before the hills were formed. You are God's elect - chosen in Christ Jesus, redeemed by his blood, called from darkness and sin into his marvelous light, that you might sing to praise of his glory while in the world, and ultimately around his eternal throne in Heaven.

Hear the words of your dear Savior: *"He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. * * * And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him;"* John x, 2, 4, 5. In the wisdom of God the precious lambs were always his. And this blessed truth is revealed unto all his precious sons and daughters by the Spirit of God in the fullness of time.

In love to all the saints.
J.V. Noblitt.

PSALM 12 5-6.

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.” -- 1 John ii.27.

Have you ever had a solitary drop of this holy anointing oil fall upon your heart? One drop, if it be but a drop, will sanctify you for ever to the service of God. There was not much of the holy anointing oil used for the service of the tabernacle, when we consider the size and quantity of what had to be consecrated, for Moses had to anoint therewith the whole of the tabernacle of the congregation, as well as all the vessels, with all their various appurtenances. When he went through the sacred work, he touched one vessel after another with a drop of oil; for one drop sanctified the vessel to the service of the tabernacle. There was no repetition of the consecration wanted; it abode. So if you ever had a drop of God’s love shed abroad in your heart, -- a drop of the anointing to teach you the truth as it is in Jesus; a drop to penetrate, to soften, to heal, to feed and give light, life, and power to your soul, -- you have the unction from the Holy One; you know all things which are for your salvation, and by that same holy oil you have been sanctified and made meet for an eternal inheritance.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETING

LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday Only, March 30th, 2008. We hope to start singing at 10:30 a.m. and preaching at 11:00. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek meeting house. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border on Moorefield Store Road #631.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2008

J.B. Mitchell, VA	5.00
G. Hyslip, TN	15.00
J. Collie, NC	5.00
W.T. Conner, VA	5.00
B.L. Abernathy, NC	5.00
C. Alders, TX	50.00
B. Speis, LA,	35.00
B. Huff, GA	50.00
S. Barker, NC	5.00
N. Dalton, TX	5.00

OBITUARIES

**SISTER BETTY
DISHMON SOUTHARD**

It was the will of the Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Betty Southard on December 28, 2006. Sister Betty was born August 24, 1931. Left to mourn her are her son, Steve Southard and wife Amanda and five grandsons, three great grandchildren and her sister Velva Rakes in addition to all of us who loved her for Christ's sake. Her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key conducted her funeral on December 31, 2006 at Wilkerson Funeral Home Chapel after which her body was laid to rest in the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the Resurrection morn. Sister Betty asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on November 11, 1981, was received, and baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. Her journey through this life was marked by many trials and tribulations, but she was blessed with an abiding faith in God, who promised his children, *"that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear"* as voiced through the prophet, Isaiah. We miss so much her lovely smile and warm embrace. The Lord blessed her greatly with the fruit of the spirit most especially with gentleness and

meeekness. Her love for her God, her church, and her family was manifested in her walk. She was always enquiring into the welfare of the brethren and visiting the sick as God worked in her *"both to will and to do of his own good pleasure."* *Philippians 2:13.*

On my last visit with her she was unable to get out of bed and was visibly very physically ill. She was sleeping when I entered her room. When I gently touched her shoulder, she opened her eyes, smiled and asked how I was and how my family was. This was so like her. The Lord blessed her to put others needs and welfare above her own. She would often say to those of like precious faith, "I love all of you, but I can't see how anyone would love me." As is the experience of the Lord's little ones, they can see the light of the countenance of the heavenly Master in the faces of their brethren but not in themselves. I'm sure she felt as the hymn writer penned:

*Marks of grace I cannot show;
All polluted is my breast;
Yet I weary am, I know,
And the weary long for rest!*

There are no words to express how much we miss her. Yet we know that our loss is her eternal gain. We're instructed in first Thessalonians 4:13-14 *"to sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them*

also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." We believe that our precious Sister is asleep in Jesus and what better place could there be as the hymn writer described it, *"Asleep in Jesus blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep!"* May the Lord bless her family and those of us who were blessed to walk with her in love and fellowship to bow in humble submission to His most Holy will and to witness with Job *"the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."*

Humbly submitted by one
who loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

GLADSTON THOMAS NEWMAN

Gladston T. Newman 84, beloved Deacon of the First Primitive Baptist Church, of Memphis, died December 12, 2007. He was born October 17, 1923, in Lauderdale County, near Ripley Tennessee. He died in his home, near Stanton, Tennessee, lovingly cared for by his large family, which was the pride and joy of his life, and his many friends. This love and respect for Brother Newman was evidenced by over 500 people attending his funeral.

Gladston, was born in 1923 to Joseph and Nealy Ann Newman. He

was a longtime farmer and cattleman in the area, served in the U. S, Navy in WW II, aboard an aircraft carrier, and was a lifetime member of the Fayette County V.F.W Post #5013.

He was the husband of Birdie Marie Leath Newman, who preceded him in death in 1972. He is survived by his wife, Jotty Esey Newman, five children, Diane Newman Graves, Ronnie Gene Newman Sr, and Thomas Glenn Newman, all of near Stanton, Tennessee and Sandra Newman Dowdy, Judy Newman Patton, both of Somerville, Tennessee his sister Mary Forsythe of Ripley, Tennessee, his stepchildren; Danny and Jimmy Leath both of Stanton, Tennessee and Faye Leath Howse, of Brownsville, eight grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted by: Elders Richard H. Campbell, Wayman G. Chapell and Kenneth Adams, at the Peebles West Funeral Chapel on Highway 64 near Oakland, Tennessee.

Gladston and Jotty, were greatly loved and respected by the members of the, First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, where both of their memberships were, and also among the Primitive Baptists in Tennessee and the many neighboring states, which they visited, as long as he was able to travel. They were sadly missed, when his health prevented his traveling among them as

he had previously.

The following poem (Author Unknown) states, my feelings about Brother Newman, and I believe that it expresses the feelings among his many friends, both inside and outside of his church.

*God looked around his garden,
And found an empty place.
He then looked down upon the earth,
And saw your tired face.*

*He put his arms around you,
and lifted you to rest.
God's garden must be beautiful,
He only takes the best.
He knew that you were suffering,
He knew you were in pain.
He knew that you would never be,
Well on earth again.*

*He saw the road was getting rough,
So he closed your weary eyelids,
And whispered, "Peace be thine".*

*It broke our hearts to lose you,
But you didn't go alone.*

*For a part of us went with you,
The day God called you home.*

Be it resolved: That a copy of this letter be sent to the members of his family, one to the Signs of the Times and one to be recorded in our church minutes as a memorial to a very precious Brother and Deacon. He will be greatly missed by the little flock of the Memphis Church, and all who knew him.

Written per family's request,
His Pastor, and devoted friend,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

2 John: 1-4.

The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*My God, my portion, and my love,
My everlasting all,
I've none but thee in heaven above,
Or on this earthly ball.*

*In vain the bright, the burning sun
Scatters his feeble light ;
'Tis thy sweet beams create my noon;
If thou withdraw 'tis night.*

*And whilst upon my restless bed,
Among the shades I roll,
If my Redeemer shows his head,
'Tis morning with my soul.*

*Were I possessor of the earth,
And called the stars my own,
Without thy graces and thyself
I were a wretch undone.*

*Let others stretch their arms like seas,
And grasp in all the shore,
Grant me the visits of thy face,
And I desire no more.*

Watt.

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EDITORIAL

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” 2 Corinthians 4:7.



Elder J.B. Farmer

The children of God are great mysteries, even unto themselves. But God is merciful to show each one of them a little about themselves and about the kingdom of God, that they might not be utterly perplexed and totally cast down. If God had not shown us some things about ourselves and about the things of the Spirit of God, we

would be in complete confusion, because spiritual things cannot be understood by the natural mind. Can you think back to your earliest days, when your troubles came upon you like a powerful and overwhelming army? You were given a love toward God, and a desire to please Him, but everything seemed to be against you. Your sins rose up like a mountain and you had no ability to remove them, even though you tried everything in your strength to make things better. You tried to read the scriptures, but they only condemned you. You were too embarrassed to tell even your closest friend of your troubles, because you thought you were the most miserable sinner on the face of the earth. You tried to pray for relief, but felt to be too hypocritical even to make the attempt. After many long and grief filled days and nights of groaning, you were brought completely to the end of your wisdom and strength and felt to be too exhausted to go on. You thought you were all alone in your desperation. You were about to give up and concede that death, hell, and destruction surely and deservedly would be your end, when the Lord appeared to you with a word of mercy. Have you ever been brought through things similar to these? If so, I believe you have been blessed with some of the experience of all the saints that have ever lived.

There is a reason for all these trials and tribulations, and God is merciful to explain some of it to His

people, out of love and pity for them. The Lord said by His apostle, "*The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*" The creature under consideration, I am made to believe, is the little child of grace. He is subject to all the vain things of this world and of this life. He is familiar with sin, sorrow, suffering, pain and death. He was made this way from the very beginning in order to experience these things. He was made of the dust of the ground, and shown that he must return to the dust from which he was made. He was made first a natural man, and second a spiritual man. The creature, who was made subject to the vanity of this world, was put here in this condition that he might be delivered by God from this miserable state unto the freedom of the Spirit and to the hope of glory, which shall be manifest fully in the last time at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. And through all these things a great mystery is presented. How can a person be natural and spiritual at the same time?

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" This great mystery was far too great for Nicodemus and also for us to un-

derstand without revelation from God. Jesus made it plain that the little children of grace are born of nature and also born of the Spirit from above. They have a fleshly nature by their natural birth and a spiritual nature resulting from being born from above. These natures are contrary to one another, to the extent that the little child of grace is not able, by himself, to do that which he most desires -to walk in the light and to speak the truth in love. Aren't you glad the apostle Paul said, according to his experience and according to the wisdom of God, "*When I would do good, evil is present with me.*" And aren't you glad he was blessed to say, "*How to perform that which is good, I find not.*" And thankfully he also was given to say, "*He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*" He was shown these truths by grace that he might relate them to the saints of God for their comfort and edification. The child of God was made subject to vanity according to nature, and by grace he was blessed to hope and trust in the good works of God.

There is an inward man, the new spiritual man, Christ in you the hope of glory, who is not subject to vanity. And there is the outward man, which is the old natural man, who is subject to all the vanity of the flesh. In the opening verse of scripture, the children of God are likened to earthen vessels, having a spiritual

treasure stored inside. The outward part is of the earth earthy, and the inward part is of the Holy Spirit. But all vessels are not the same. Although all men are made up of one lump of clay, only those vessels that have been chosen of God and sanctified for holy use receive holy things and are preserved for glory. Those vessels not chosen and not sanctified receive only the base things of this world, and are therefore fitted for destruction. By Wisdom the apostle said, *"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much 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, even us, whom he hath called, not of Jews only, but also of the gentiles?"* The earthly vessel, or body of the child of God, is sanctified and made holy and is shown to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. The inspired apostle said, *"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."*

It appears to be evident from the scriptures that the vessel, or the outward man of the child of grace, is highly favored above the vessel of the child of the devil. The vessels of mercy are made up unto honor and glory, even eternal life. The vessels of the wicked ones are made up unto dishonor and wrath, even eternal destruction. It is manifest that the earthly vessels of the children of God shall be preserved forever and that the vessels of the wicked ones shall be destroyed. The beloved apostle Paul was empowered to say, *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Here is another mystery. How can the body be preserved, seeing that it must return to the dust from which it was made? God is merciful and kind to make known to His little ones what they need to know concerning these things. God spoke through his apostle concerning this earthen vessel saying, *"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a*

quickenings spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy: the second 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. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 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 I 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. Therefore, my be-

loved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." This flesh and blood body cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It must be changed and made a spiritual body.

So we understand from all these scriptures, believing they have been opened a little for our edification, that although the body of the saint is corrupt because of sin, it has been sanctified and cleansed by the Spirit and made holy unto God. And God shall preserve that body, even though it goes down in corruption to the grave. According to the scriptures, God shall raise and change these corruptible bodies into bodies of incorruption. According to the scripture, which cannot be broken, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." This is the earnest expectation of the creature. He

yearns for the redemption of his body. According to the understanding given to me, if not deceived, when we die the body returns to the dust and the spirit returns to God who gave it. The spirit is joined to the soul, which Jesus said no man is able to kill. As it was with the poor beggar Lazarus, so it is with the child of God. After he dies, the spirit joined with the soul of the child of God shall be carried to the bosom of Abraham by the angels of God, where Lazarus is now being comforted. There, he, and all that die in the Lord, shall remain at rest and at peace until the Lord returns to gather His elect from the four corners of the earth. This includes both those living at that time and those dead in Christ. According to the Holy Scriptures, the Lord in His glorious appearing shall bring with Him the spirits of just men (the elect that have already died in Christ). And at the resurrection of the dead, by the power of the living God, the bodies of the dead in Christ shall be raised and changed, and the bodies of those who are alive and remain at His coming shall be changed, and each one of their bodies shall be made like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall the earnest expectation of the creature be fulfilled, all things shall be brought into subjection unto God, and forever and ever all shall be praise and glory and honor to God, who alone is worthy. The body shall

be redeemed from the grave, changed and united with its soul and spirit, and together with those alive at His coming and changed, each child of God then shall be a complete spiritual man in body, soul, and spirit. In this wondrous spiritual state each shall be blessed to look upon the face of the living God and not die, but live, and each shall have full enjoyment of heaven and immortal glory world without end.

He shall sing the song with all saints that none other than the redeemed of the Lord may sing. John heard them singing during *the revelation that he was given*. *“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and*

under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."

Yes, the sanctified earthen vessel, the body of the child of God, shall be preserved and shall not be destroyed with the wicked. It shall be changed and made a glorious vessel by the power of God at His coming. This shall be to the praise and honor and glory of His grace and mercy toward the poor sinners that He foreknew and loved with an everlasting love, to the extent that He laid down His life for them. This is my hope and my trust, as I desire to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is also my constant desire that I should be blessed with all saints to be faithful unto death that I might receive the crown of life, although I know I am not worthy of the least of the mercies of God.

This was written, I trust, in love toward God and all saints, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer.
8-7-2007.

CORRESPONDENCE

Obucholu, Fl. 34974
1590 SW 28th St.
Jan. 28, 2008

Dear Brothers,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times and accept this small donation. I enjoy reading the "Signs" and read it over and over. May God bless you.

Freida Wise-Dennis

1052 Middle View Drive
Forest, Virginia 24551
Feb. 8, 2008

Dear Brother Tony,

Iwould like to renew my subscription for 2 years. The remainder you may use for the ongoing of the "Signs" as you see fit. I am thankful and I hope grateful that "The Signs of the Times" has been a standard in my home for nearly all my life. May the Lord continue to bless you in all your efforts to keep this fine Primitive Baptist paper in publication.

A friend in hope,
Steve A. Everett.

February 4, 2008

Feb. 2, 2008

Dear Brother Tony:

Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is a check to cover a two year subscription to the Signs for a friend and member who attends the Newfound Church in W. Va. Information will follow: (name, address, etc.)

Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family as you continue the work of circulation manager and treasurer of Signs of the Times. May all things necessary to this service be provided by the grace and mercy of our dear Lord.

Jerry joins me in sending our love and best wishes to you and your family.

Yours in hope,
Sherry Farmer.

2-16-08

Dear Tony,

It's time to renew my subscription. Attached is a \$30.00 check to cover 2 years and use the balance as you deem necessary.

I enjoy the "Signs" and look forward to receiving it each month.

May God continue to bless you and everyone connected to this great publication.

In hope,
M.L. Richardson
6907 Jolee Rd.
Panama City, FL 32404

I'm renewing this paper because you have so faithfully continued to send it even though it has been expired nearly a year. My husband read it faithfully before his illness. He is unable to even understand if I read it to him. My time is so consumed with his care I hardly ever get to look at it. But today I sat down to go through the mail and I just opened the cover and started to read Elder Farmer's article about angels. I couldn't lay it down. I thank God he was blessed to pen it down and I opened and read it. It was such a blessing to me. I'm in such a struggle physically and emotionally and it brought peace to me. May God continue his blessings on the paper and I will try to do better about renewing it. I owe for the year past and I'm sending enough for two more years. Thank you for your patience with me.

Gracy R. Goodman
281 Reece Drive
Carrollton, Ala. 35447

PSALM 134: 1-3.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE

Dora Ellen, my dear child, As I can't get my mind on my work today, I will try to do what you asked me to do for you some time back. I feel just as unworthy now to attempt to write as I did years ago when I tried to write and would end up burning what I had written. I hope the God of all power will give me strength and guide my hand to write only what is the truth for your sake as well as mine.

Dora Ellen, I don't know hardly how to begin, but I do know nearly as far back as I can remember I felt that I knew there was a power stronger than man's power. I would have serious feelings about myself and would want to get by myself and cry. I would not even know why I was crying and I didn't seem to have fun playing with other children. These feelings stayed with me off and on after I was in my teenage. Sometimes the feelings were worse than others. I went on in this way until a few years before I was married. My burden would get so heavy at times that I wondered what was going to happen. I felt to be one to myself and didn't care for the good times other young people seem to enjoy. I tried to think it was because I was left at home with no one except one brother and my father. My mother

passed away when I was very young and then my brothers and sisters were all married and gone except one brother who was younger than me. Most of my time was spent at home alone and I thought this had something to do with my feelings. There would be times I could see my way brighter, but those dark and lonely days would come back.

A few months before your Daddy and I were married I seemed to feel better. I felt that I had found one person on earth who cared for me. I was hoping that my life would be more at ease and for a short time it was. Soon these feelings began to come back and I tried in every way I could to keep them hid. When I went to bed at night I would lie for hours shedding tears and trying to ask God to have mercy on me. This went on for years. Every time these unworthy feelings came back they would be worse.

In the year 1936 my burden was so heavy at times that I thought my time to leave this world was close by. I could hardly sleep and had a desire to talk to someone, but felt that no one would want to listen to me. I could only beg God for mercy. One night it seemed I had stood about all I could without telling someone how I felt. I spoke to your Daddy about how I felt. He tried to tell me how wrong I was for feeling that my friends had forsaken me and that our friends were good to us. I told him they were his friends and that no one cared for me and in spite

of all I could do, I began to shed tears. He asked me if the church was worrying me. I told him no, that I was not fit to even think of the church. We had been going to church when we could and I enjoyed going, but I never thought I would join. I lay awake for a long time that night after everyone was asleep. I was thinking about what Leland said and I tried to pray to God if the church had anything to do with my feelings, if He would let me sleep I would go to church the following Sunday and ask for a home.

God knew I was telling a story, but I really thought I was telling the truth. He blessed me with a good nights sleep. I don't even remember hearing my baby cry during the night. Next morning I felt better and did for the rest of the week. It was the week before the fourth Sunday. I thought I would go to church at Upper Black Creek on Sunday and join if they would have me in the church and be baptized Sunday evening. That was my plan; not God's. I went to church Sunday feeling the best I had for a long time. I enjoyed the preaching and singing and got along fine until the doors of the church were open and they began to sing. The feelings that came over me, I can't tell you or anyone else. It just seemed to me if I stayed in the house I would die. I got up and went out and waited for Leland to come out after church was over. *later* that Sunday my burden was worse. I decided that anybody that could lie

to God as I had was not fit to even go to church and I decided to stay away from the church and live the best I could at home. So I stopped saying anything about my feelings. This went on for a year or longer.

We moved from where we were living and I thought the change would help me. I did feel some better for a while, but soon my troubles were worse than ever. My health grew from bad to worse. Some of the children were sick nearly all of the time. I just felt that all of this was put on me because I was so full of sin. I felt that I was the biggest sinner on earth; not fit to live and less fit to die. Finally I had the greatest desire to go to church I had ever had, but then we didn't have any way to go nor any money to pay anyone to take us. No one lived close to us who I thought would want to go to a Primitive Baptist Church and that was the only church I wanted to go to. The burden I was carrying was getting heavier all the time, but the worst was still ahead. I got where I didn't care to live and begged God to take me out of my troubles.

Dora Ellen, please don't let what I'm about to write upset you for it's not because I didn't want you, it was a thing I couldn't help. I feel it was a very sinful thought for me to have. You ask me to write this for you and I want only to write the truth as far as I can remember and I can remember the things that happened during those years better than I can things that happen now. This was a few

days before you were born. I tried to pray that God would take both of us. I didn't want to live and didn't want to leave a baby for someone else to bring up. I guess I thought the rest of the children and Leland would be better off without me. To tell the truth, I don't know what I was thinking, but I do know that it was not God's will for either one of us to die. As for me, I thought my prayers were being answered. Everyone around me thought I was dying. I thought I was too and I was not the least bit afraid. I could feel death coming on and I couldn't talk or get a long breath. I was just weakning away. The doctor came back and with God's help I was soon better. God was showing me what a power He has. Then there I was seeing myself a bigger sinner than ever before.

Before you were a year old, you were taken sick. I was afraid this would be the way God would punish me for the many sins I had committed. This time my prayers were for you to live; not to die. you got well, but my troubles stayed with me. I was always afraid something would happen to you. This went on for over a year. I was taken sick again and thought I wanted to die. There seemed to be nothing ahead for me but troubles and they were getting worse all the time. I got seriously sick and the doctor had me sent to the hospital. I was so sick that I don't remember leaving home and don't remember getting to the hospital. I was unconscious for three or four days.

When I regained consciousness, I was told that my baby was dead and had been buried. The thoughts of all that had happened were almost more than I could bear. What I went through lying on that hospital bed no one but God and me will ever know. I can't tell it all. While I was there I had a dream; I guess it was a dream. I don't know whether it was day or night, but I saw myself lying on a high bed. It was as white as snow. There seemed to be two of me. I could see myself on this bed and down below us were all you children running around trying to get to me. When I woke up I lay for a long time wondering: what it meant and it came to me as plain as if someone spoke these words, "*you children needed me*". Before then I didn't much care if I lived or died, but from then on I wanted to live and go back home to Leland and you children. I couldn't get back fast enough. After I got home my burden was heavier than ever to think how I wanted to be taken away from my family and then to see how much it meant to them to have me back.

After I came home I found out that my brother died while I was in the hospital. They were afraid to tell me about it until after I got well. It just looked like trouble at home was piling up again. This was in September of 1939.

I went on with this burden till the spring of 1940. I felt if I couldn't get to church I would go crazy. By this time we had moved again and no

one in that neighborhood went to church and we still had no way of our own to go. I would speak about going to church, but that was as far as I got. I would dream of starting to church but would never get there. Then one night I dreamed I went to church. It was night and I had a lantern for a light. I had to go a long way through the woods, but I wasn't afraid. I went until I found this church. It was in the woods. I walked up to the door steps and didn't see anybody. There was a light inside. I stood for awhile not knowing whether to go in or not. A voice said, *"Pull off your shoes and go in."* I pulled off my shoes and left them on the steps and went in. I saw only one person inside. It was a man sitting as if he was asleep. He didn't speak or notice me. I sat down on a seat near the door and began looking around. The lights were very dim. A second voice said, "If you come to this church you will have to bring such as this if you don't have any money ." Looking the way the voice came from, I didn't see anyone, but I saw a lot of canned food. This thought came to me -if I have got to pay to come to church I won't come. I got up and went out. Then I woke up and lay for a long time thinking and wondering about the dream.

My burden got so heavy that I could neither eat or sleep. It just seemed like I was forsaking my God and friends. I felt to be one to myself and had the same feelings I had before going to the hospital. I felt

that my family had forsaken me, oh, I was so alone. All I could do was beg God to have mercy on a lost sinner, for that was what I felt to be. One night I had another dream. This time I found myself in a big house by myself and I was the happiest I had ever been. There was a hall in the house and I looked and saw Leland standing in the door. I was overjoyed at seeing him. I met him at the door and he took me in his arms and said it won't be long now. He didn't say what he meant by those words, but I believe I know what they meant. Then we both walked out into the hall and down at the end of this hall was the whitest bed I have ever seen. Dora Ellen, you were out there playing on that bed and you were the prettiest little angel. You were just as white as snow and you would rise and fly and fall on that bed and it was like down and would cover you when you fell on it. I stood there watching you for awhile and I felt so happy for you. Then I missed Leland and went outside to see if I could find him. I found him working on a new building and he seemed to be happy. He was whistling a hymn. I don't know the name of the hymn but I know it was one. I thought that was the prettiest place I had ever seen. The ground was as white as snow and out a little way from the building that Leland was working on was a great place of water as blue as the sky. Out in the water were places that looked like white stone with the prettiest

flowers around the edges of the water. I walked up to the edge of the water, and was standing there thinking how pretty it was when I heard someone speak. I turned and looked. It was L.C. He asked me if he could get some of the flowers that were out in the water. I told him he might get wet and he said, "no, I won't." Then I heard someone crying and I looked and it was Celion coming to me. I went to meet him and put my arms around him and he stopped crying. Then I turned to look for L.C. He was way out in the water. The water was up over his knees and he had his arms full of flowers. He came where I was and said, "*Mama, I told you I wouldn't get wet.*" I felt of his clothes and they were dry. Then I woke up and lay there a long time thinking how good it would be if I could be as happy always as I was in my dream. I couldn't believe anyone could be that happy here on this earth.

In another dream, I was going to a brick church. When I went in there was a woman sitting holding a little child. I wondered about that dream and where that church was. I couldn't remember going to a brick church except Lower Black Creek. I couldn't believe that was the church I dreamed about. It had been so long since I had gone to church, if I had heard that they had taken Pittman's School for a church I had forgotten it. However, I felt that the church I had seen in my dreams was somewhere and I would see it.

When Leland came in from work one evening, he said he had thought of a way I could go to church. I don't think he could have said anything that would have pleased me more. I asked him how I was to go and he said to catch the school bus to Mr. Leroy Jackson's and see if they would take me. I got ready the next morning, which was Friday before the second weekend. I got on the school bus and went to Mr. Jackson's. When I spoke to Sister Jackson about going to church, I thought my trip was for nothing. When the boys came in for dinner she asked them if they would take us. They promised to take us on Sunday.

On Sunday when I got to church there was the brick church I saw in my dream. I don't remember ever seeing Brother Turner before, but I thought he preached the sweetest sermon I had ever heard. When the doors of the church were opened I don't remember getting out of my seat. When I came to realize what I was doing, I was on my way to the stand. I was received into the church. I experienced part of the happiness I saw in my dream. I put off being baptized until the next second Sunday which I regretted for the next month was a miserable one for me. I had never wanted to do anything as badly as I wanted to be baptized. It seemed the time would never come and when Brother Turner brought me up out of the water I felt the same happiness I had felt in my

dream. It seemed I had left all my troubles and fears in the water. I wanted to shake everyone's hand. When I got back to the church and went in, there sat the woman with the child in her lap as I saw in my dream. I have had more pleasure since my name has been on the church book than I had ever had in all my life before. It's a different kind of joy and pleasure than I had ever known before and that's why that dream stays with me. I feel like it showed me the joy there was ahead for me. I think the words Leland spoke to me had something to do with the joy I have found, but I can't explain how I feel about it all.

The dear brothers and sisters have been more than kind to me. They treat me better than I feel to deserve when they took me in among them. I wonder sometimes after going through all I have if I had any right to go before the church and ask for a home. Then I wonder what would have become of me if I had stayed away.

Dora Ellen, I don't know if this is a true experience of a child of grace or not. All I know is it's just a part of what I have felt and seen, but so much of the time I feel the way these hymns go:

*"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am tis hard to
know.*

*I am so vile, so prone to sin.
I fear that I'm not born
again."*

"O for a closer walk with

God."

Experience of grace as felt and written by Mrs. Peircy D. Holland.

REPLY.

Among the hundreds of dear brethren and sisters whom we had the pleasure of meeting for the first time, at the Pigg River Association, in August last, it would not be expected that we could distinctly recollect but few, but this one thing we shall not soon forget, that we were most affectionally greeted in love and Christian fellowship by the whole assembly of the saints who all appeared to be truly of one heart and one spirit, joyfully mingling in the worship of our God and Savior. Of the multitude assembled, there was not a face that we had ever before to our knowledge seen, except that of brother Leachman, who accompanied us in our journey to visit them. Our preaching, imperfect as it certainly was, seemed to be warmly received, and heartily indorsed by all the brethren and sisters, without one dissenting voice, and the preaching of the brethren of that vicinity was as cordially received and indorsed by us.

But we were admonished by faithful brethren, that the enemy was close upon our heels to scatter arrows, fire-brand and death, insinu-

ating that we were abolitionists, arians, non-regenerationists, non-resurrectionists, and almost anything but what we profess to be. Being thus advised we were the more explicit in avowing our sentiments on all subjects on which we were assailed, and were happy to learn that our views on every point were in perfect harmony with the doctrine constantly proclaimed by the brethren of that section of the country, as well as in harmony with what has always distinguished the Old School Baptists from the days of John the Baptist.

Soon after our return, we were informed by a beloved brother, and highly esteemed minister of the Pigg River Association, that we had been assailed by one of Zion's adversaries, and a rehash of the stereotyped slanders which had been so frequently made by our enemy, met, denied, and refuted by us, for years past, were reiterated and as boldly reaffirmed, as though they had never been contradicted by us, and garbled sentences collected from the files of the Signs, to fasten the base slanders upon us. Although we have so frequently replied to substantially the same questions many times within the last few years, we cheerfully re-assert our views on the subjects embraced in the inquiries of our correspondent, in the order in which they are stated:

First. *"On the dying with Christ, lying in the grave with him arising and ascending with*

him to glory." Or in other words, our views of the vital, or life union of Christ as the spiritual Head, and his church as the mystical body of our Redeemer. That such was the identity of spiritual, immortal and eternal life of the Head and body; that when the members of the body of Christ had in their earthly nature transgressed the law of God, under which we were created in the earthly Adam, and the law of God demanded that we should die. Christ, who is the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven, came into this world, and took on him the seed of Abraham; was made of woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and in his own person laid down that life which the law required for our transgressions, suffered the very death which was due to his people, "was delivered up to death for our offences, and raised from the dead for our justification. And thus were all his people *"buried with him, by baptism into death,"* including as many and all who were baptized into Jesus Christ, they were baptized into his death. (Rom. vi. 3-4.) Also Col. ii. 11-14, *"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried WITH HIM in baptism, wherein also ye are risen WITH HIM, through the faith of the operation of God,*

who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances," & c. "For the love of God constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, them were all dead." – 2 Cor. v. 14. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved, and that raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." – Eph. ii. 4. "If ye then be risen with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." – Eph. ii. 4-6. "If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." – Col. iii. 1. These passages embrace all that we know, all that we believe, and all that we contend for, upon the subject of the first question proposed by our correspondent. If this amounts to heresy, we cannot see how the apostles of the Lamb can escape the charge, or what defence the Old Baptists can make for singing,

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,

One when he triumphed o'er his foes,

One when in heaven he took his seat,

While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

If there ever was a period in time or eternity when Christ was not the Life of his church, when the church was not one with him, even as he is one with the Father, we desire that some one more enlightened than we, should tell us when and where it was. We have thought it safe to believe just what the Bible says on the subject. But if Paul must be denounced as an heretic for what he was inspired by the Holy Ghost to write, it will not be the first time he has been so charged. See Acts xxiv. 14.

Second. The second point suggested, is an article written by us on the doctrine of predestination, in answer to questions proposed by a brother Howard. We have reviewed the article, and can see nothing in it to recall. We certainly now believe, as we did in 1855, that the power, government and decrees of God extend to all beings, all things, and all events, and think we should feel quite miserable, were we compelled to believe otherwise. If to believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, be heresy, then Paul, as well as the humble editor of this paper, must lie under the imputation, for Paul has asserted it, Eph. i. 11. And with all our heart we do believe it.

Third. We are called on to say whether we believe that Christ is a created being. We answer, as we have often answered the same interrogatory before, most emphatically, We do not. We never have either believed or asserted any such thing. We have often made the same interrogatory before, most emphatically, We do not. We never have either believed or asserted any such thing. We have often made the same protestation., but still there are some who persist in charging us with that belief, and without paying the least regard to our disavowal, have labored with indefatigable zeal to garble something from the past volumes of the Signs to prove either that they know better than we do what we believe, or that we are insincere and false in our protestations. We envy not the disposition of those who can make it their business from year to year to vainly endeavor to elevate themselves by scandalizing those who can find better business.

Fourth. Next comes the extracts, said to be copied from the past files of the Signs. The design of which seems to be to show that we have both affirmed and denied that we hold that Christ is a created being. Take the extracts as we wrote and published them, (and not as they have garbled and misquoted them,) and take them in their connection with the articles in which they are found, and we still indorse each of those which are copied from our own

writings. But the one which charges us with saying in number 16 of volume 17, and page 121, that "*the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence,*" we positively deny that we ever wrote, published or indorsed that sentence, as our own. The words are contained in an article written by Elder Trott, in the volume, number and page referred to, and were written by him, in a controversy upon the precise meaning of the word made as applied to the "last Adam being made a quickening Spirit." It was not said by brother Trott that Christ was a created existence, for brother Trott has always contended, if we have understood him, that Christ is the self-existent god, One with the eternal Father. But in these passages, in which it is said, He is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit, that as such he is the beginning of the creation of God, and firstborn among many brethren, whether the words created and made are in those and other passages synonymous was the point in controversy, as we understood it. But we have no recollection that we have ever even expressed an opinion in the affirmative, but upon mature deliberation we have repeatedly said in our published articles on the subject that we do not believe the term created is admissible in that place, especially if by creation we mean the origination of something that did not before ex-

ist, as in the creation of the world.

Is it not strange that the brother, in searching the old files of the Signs, should entirely overlook, should find but one disclaimer, and then put the words of another writer into our month, in order to give it the appearance of a contradiction of ours? In all the other extracts he copies from us, (but not correctly in the first,) and then, in the second extract, writes, "*He says, I will in all candor answer the question they put to me; the first is, whether the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence? I answer decidedly, Yes.*" Did not the brother who copied these extracts know that in his use of the pronoun he, in "He says," that the writer of the other extracts would, according to the rules of our language, be the antecedent and implicated as saying what he never said? Was this done through ignorance of the rules of our language, or was it done to convey the idea that the editor, who is charged with saying the other things, also said what is contained in that extract? Whatever caused him to make the misrepresentation, it is no less a misrepresentation and an untruth, for we never said it, we never thought it, and we have not been slow to disclaim it from time to time.

The extract purporting to be from volume 17, page 87, should read, if copied correctly, "*Christ as the Life and seminal Head of his own church or body, dwelt in the*

bosom of the Father, was the begotten, and the only begotten of the Father, and the begetting and setting up of that Head was the begetting and setting up of the body of which he is the Head and Life." Is there anything wrong in this? If he is not the seminal Head of his church, how are they his seed? (Psa. Xxii. 30; Isa. liii. 10; Gal. iii. 29, and 1 Cor. xv. 45-49.) Does he not dwell in the bosom of the Father? Read John i. 18. Was he the begotten and only begotten of the Father? See John i. 18. Was the Head and body both born of God? Read Heb. ii. 11. Or is it more scriptural to believe that the Head was set up without the body? When Christ died for his members, were they buried with him by baptism into death? If not, when were they so baptized? Were they, his members, quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places, or not? If they were, what is wrong in the extract? And if they were not, why did the inspired Paul say they were? (Eph. ii. 6, and Col. iii. 1.) But we will copy the rest of the extract: "*And when that Head was put to death in the flesh, the life of the body or church was taken away.*" We hope this is not heresy, seeing that it is Bible doctrine. "*For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if Christ died for all, then were all dead.*" – 2 Cor. v 14. And all her members were dead, so long as he remained

in the grace, but when he was raised up, together with his dead body did they arise from death, and were quickened together with him.

Now we have given the whole of the first extract; it is nearly all of it in Bible language, and all that is not in the very words of Scripture may be wrong, as it is only the view entertained by one who is, to say the least, quite as likely to err in his judgment as any of his brethren are. Of course we do not intend to be understood that the children of God were literally dead while Christ was in the grave, for many of them were not born, but all who were redeemed by his blood were legally dead, the death to which they were sentenced was met and canceled, and when he arose from the dead he raised up his church from sin, and death, and hell, so as to justify the express declaration, that *"God hath us raised up with him."*

In conclusion, we hope our brethren will examine our views, and take what we have written as we have written it, and not run over the volume of the Signs for twenty-eight years to garble and detach passages, and by unfair, uncandid and unchristian constructions of our words, labor to make us an offender for a word, or even without a word by us, uttered to justify them.

We have been hunted like a partridge in the wilderness, for years, and we have been charged with the most awful heresies, but when our volumes are searched for years, we

are glad that so little can be found to justify the charges, and we submit to our brethren whether anything has been found that when fairly construed can be refuted by the Scriptures.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, NY,
November 15, 1806.

January 23.

"Man's goings are of the Lord ...how can a man then understand his own way;" - PROVERBS xx. 24.

DOES not your heart sometimes quake with fear lest you have nothing but a nominal profession, lest the god of this world be blinding you, and lest your conscience be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin? It is good to have such fears. He who feareth not, who has no solemn apprehensions, no anxious inquiries, who is never exercised with some internal trepidation of soul, it is much to be feared has never known what it is to have *"the candle of the Lord searching the inward parts of the belly."* But if God has quickened your soul into spiritual life, and you have ears to hear, I would just put two questions to you: Have you obtained righteousness by a manifestation of Christ's righteousness;

July 25.

pardon by the application of Christ's blood; love by a shedding abroad of love; deliverance by a discovery of God's outstretched hand? My other question is this - If you have not, and let conscience bear its honest testimony-if you have never experienced righteousness, pardon, love, and deliverance, is there a cry in your soul after them? Is there anything like fervent supplication that God would bestow them? Is there anything of a groan in the depth of your spirit that the Lord would reveal them? These are marks of life; and he that has these marks will have the blessing, because God has quickened him into spiritual life. It may be long delayed, but it will come at last; *"it will surely come, it will not tarry."* It may be withheld for wise purposes, and you may have to travel through many a dark season and many an anxious hour, but deliverance is sure; it is reserved for you in Christ, and you are reserved for it, kept by God himself unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Elder J. C. Philpot

ST. JOHN 9: 38-39.

*And he said, Lord, I believe.
And he worshipped him.*

*And Jesus said, For judgment
I am come into this world, that
they which see not might see; and
that they which see might be
made blind.*

*"He that hath received his
testimony hath set to his seal
that God is true."- JOHN iii. 33.*

WE can only set to our seal that God is true in any one point of doctrine, experience, or precept when we feel an inward witness that God indeed has declared it. Thus, upon every manifestation of God's goodness to the soul, every application of Christ's blood to the conscience, and every revelation of God's distinguishing grace, it is only as we receive Christ's testimony, experience the inward approbation of it, and feel its sweetness and blessedness that we can set to our seal that God is true. This, we may be well assured, is the only way to know the power and reality of true religion, to understand the Scriptures, and enjoy a convincing testimony that God is our God, Christ our Saviour, the Holy Ghost our Teacher, heaven our eternal home, and that our soul is saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation.

And with what divine certainty can such a soul sometimes speak. Sometimes, indeed, we cannot believe anything; it seems as if there were nothing in God's word that we could set our seal to. All seems a mass of confusion, and our ignorance appears so great that we cannot set our seal to any vital truth. But when the blessed Spirit is

pleased to testify of the things of God, and we, receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ, walk in the light of that testimony, then there is a holy certainty of and heavenly acquiescence with God's truth. This divine faith will bring us through all our trials and sorrows, and though we may be dragged through a very hell of temptation, yet shall we know God is true.

Here, then, is the grand trial of faith; first to receive Christ's testimony, and then to hang upon that testimony, in spite of all opposition from within and without, from feeling its weight, power, and sweetness.

Elder J. C. Philpot

PSALM 129

MANY a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say:

Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.

The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

The Lord is righteous: he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

Let them be as the grass upon the house tops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the 5th Sunday in March at Big Meadows Church.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, NC. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing Cane Creek bridge take first road to right at top of hill - go 4 miles to a cross-road and turn left - go 1 mile to church on right.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Sister JoAnn Self, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2008

Freida Wise, FL	20.00
Herbert Dodson, VA	5.00
Milton Houston, NC	5.00
Steve Everett, VA	75.00
James Knight, NC	10.00
Phil Pittman, TX	10.00
Dorothy Holley, VA	5.00
M. L. Richardson, FL	5.00

OBITUARIES

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF SISTER
EMILY ADAMS DALTON**

Our beloved Sister Emily Adams Dalton was born October 21, 1923 in Pittsylvania County and passed away November 6, 2007 at the age of 84. She was married to the late Noel Gatewood Dalton and to this union they were blessed with one son, Garith Dalton, of Gretna and one daughter, Joyce Clay, of Gretna. She was predeceased by her husband, a brother, Vincen Adams, and a sister, Madaline Shelton.

Sister Emily is survived by her son, daughter, four sisters, Jacaline Shelton of Altavista, Rose Johnston of Lynchburg, Linda Thacker of Forest and Agnes Brumfield of Dublin, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Her strong faith carried her through her total blindness for ten years, along with other trials and tribulations and she had many.

I was blessed to visit her and she always greeted me with a smile and said she believed in everything, even going blind, happened for a reason and a time to every purpose under the heaven. Her family did all human hands could do for her. Sister Emily's daughter, Joyce, was there when she needed her. But Sis-

ter Emily said all her family was there when she needed them also. Her funeral was held at Colbert Moran Chapel at 11:00 a.m. November 8, 2007 by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Carl O. Moran Memorial Garden awaiting that day when God will come in a cloud with great power and glory to receive his elect from the four winds of the earth, be like him and be satisfied without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. May we all be reconciled to her death and be able to look back on what we had and not what we have lost.

Written I hope in love,
Elder Marvin Brumfield
Elder Raymond Goad - Mod.
Sister Pam Betterton - Clerk

**IN MEMORY OF
SISTER REBA DALTON MYERS**

It has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister Reba Dalton Myers, Monday, January 14, 2008 at the age of 88.

Sister Myers was born July 6, 1920 and was the wife of the late James Louis Myers. She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church July 24, 1949 and was baptized Aug. 28, 1949. She was the daughter of the late Charlie Ander-

son Dalton and Mary Yeatts Dalton. Sister Myers was predeceased by her husband, a grandson, Kenneth Phelps, one brother, Carroll Dalton, and seven sisters, Sister Irene Myers, Vivian Dalton, Pearl McCracken, Frances Marsh, Sister Gertrude Myers, Gillie May Dalton and Gillie Ida Dalton.

Sister Myers is survived by one son, Gary L. Myers and wife, Sabrina of Dry Fork, two daughters, Faye M. Phelps and husband, Carl of Rustburg, and Emily M. Jacobs and husband G. W. of Gretna; a foster son, David Myers and wife, Carmen, of Petersburg; five grandchildren Sheila Callahan, Sandra Williams, Vickie Johnston, Dixie Cummings and Davy Myers; eight great-grandchildren; and seven great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral Services were conducted at 2 p.m. on Thursday, January 17 at Weatherford Primitive Baptist church by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

May all that mourn her be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things well and never makes a mistake, for it is He that gives and He that takes away.

Written by,
Elder Marvin Brumfield
Elder Raymond Goad - Mod.
Pam Betterton - Clerk

SIS. AMANDA SNOW SAUNDERS

On May 20, 2007 our precious Sister Mandy was called from this vain world of sin and sorrow. She was born on July 15, 1923 in Wilkes County, North Carolina. Elder Kenneth Key, her pastor, conducted her funeral service at Fair Funeral Home Chapel on May 23, 2007 after which her body was laid to rest in Woodlawn Cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord. Her loved ones who preceded her in death include her husband, Roy Saunders, her son, Russell, her brothers George and Russell, and sisters Ruby and Jo. Her beloved daughter, Rebecca Warf, in addition to many nieces and nephews as well as her beloved church family are left to mourn her passing.

Sister Mandy asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on November 11, 1969, was received, and baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. She was so blessed to walk humbly and softly before her brethren and as blessed as anyone I've ever known in manifesting the fruit of the spirit most particularly that of love. I simply have no words to express what she has meant to me for the last 35 years. She has truly been a dear, precious mother in Israel to me, and I could never be thankful enough for the wonderful blessing of her love and fellowship. Over the years we've often talked of how good the Lord has been to us, and reminisced

about the lovely, precious brethren and sisters whom we've been privileged to know through this journey of life. I miss that so very much. Since her passing, so many of the little flock at Dan River have spoken of how much they miss her. The Lord blessed her so in visiting and calling to check on the sick and in letting us all know how they fared. Sister Mandy wouldn't want us to praise her, but rather the God of love who took up His abode in her earthen vessel, and that treasure was evident in her countenance and her love for those of like precious faith.

The last time I was blessed to visit with her was on Mother's Day before she was called home. Her dear daughter was kind enough to allow me to visit her in intensive care that day. I will always be grateful that I was blessed to see her then. She said, "*This is my cup*". We had often talked of the cup that is appointed to each of the little children of God to drink. I believe that she was blessed to not fear death but rather to look forward with joy and anticipation to that day when she would fall asleep in Christ. Though our sorrow in the loss of this precious Sister is great, we would not wish her back for we know that she is at rest. Sister Mandy, I'm sure, could witness with Paul in second Timothy 4:6-8:

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight.

I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

May the Lord bless her family, most especially her daughter, Becky, and all of us, who loved her so dearly as a beloved Sister in Christ, with the comfort that only He can give. May we all be blessed with that love of God and of our brethren that the Lord so bountifully displayed in the life of Sister Mandy.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her greatly,

Mary Hawkins

CORINTHIANS 12: 1-5.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*I THERE is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,
And Jesus is his name:
An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.*

*He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part:
No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.*

*His love before all time began,
Shall through all time the same remain,
And evermore endure:
Though rods and frowns are sometimes brought,
And man may change, He changeth not,
His love abideth sure.*

*The law demanded blood for blood,
And out he poured his vital flood
To pay the mighty debt!
He toils through life, and pants through death,
And cries with his expiring breath,
"Tis finished," and complete.*

Berridge.

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 EDITORIAL

"...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 unto us." Romans 5:3-5.



Elder J.B. Farmer

Once again, at the outset, I must acknowledge my great fear because of the weakness and inability of my flesh to perform anything good. If anything

worthwhile is to be written, it must be by the grace and mercy of God. I am made to believe that writing spiritual things is much like preaching. One must wait upon the Lord until power comes down from above, and only then may any spiritual preaching or writing be done. God has fixed it this way so that no man is able to take God's glory to himself. Any one attempting to write or to speak apart from the power of God will always err from the truth and manifest his own carnality. Is it any wonder that we fear and tremble at the prospect of coming before God and His people in the way of writing or of preaching the gospel? Without Him, we can do nothing.

It is altogether against nature to willingly enter into troubles or tribulations. We flee from them as one would run away from a raging fire or from a wild beast. But the things of God are opposite to the things of nature. Jesus said, *"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted the prophets which were before you."* There is a wonderful blessedness in partaking of a measure of the sufferings of Christ.

Who, in a natural mind, wants to

be persecuted and reviled and lied against? It appears that none do. But the blessed apostle said that he gloried in tribulations. He must have been out of his natural mind to say such a thing - and no doubt he was. I believe he was caught up above this world in a spiritual mind which is contrary to nature. Instead of hating the troubles which he endured, he was made to embrace them and even to glory in them. The apostle has not been alone in these things. The Lord's people all through the ages, even until now have suffered for the truth's sake and have been made to rejoice in the blessedness of it.

God mercifully has made known, through the apostles, that tribulations are necessary in order that the faith of each little one must be tried. And when that little one is tried, by the mercy, grace and power of God, he is brought forth as gold, purified by the fire, to the glory of God. The apostle Peter said, *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you..."* It is a needful part of our experience for us to suffer with Him if we are to reign with Him.

There is a golden chain of events that is in store for each of the children of God each time one is tried. The links are tribulation, patience, experience, hope, and love. The tribulation that shakes to pieces the world of the believer leaves him in fear and trembling at the end of his wits, and at the end of his strength. He is brought to the place of the publican, who had no place to go or to look except unto God. He was in great tribulation because he was made to see his corruption and his inability to do anything about it. He thought he must surely perish unless God should intervene for him. He was like the disciples in the little ship in the great tempest in the sea, who said, *"Lord save us: we perish."* Daniel found himself in that case in the den of lions. The three Hebrew children also had to cast all their cares upon Him, since they could not deliver themselves from the fiery furnace. And this is where we sometimes find ourselves, if we are His.

Instead of running from the trial of faith, the child of God is made to endure it for Christ's sake. This is the patience, or longsuffering or endurance of the saints, which is part of the fruit of the Spirit. By being given grace to endure the trial, and seeing the manifestation of patience in his life, each of God's children is given some of the experience of a child of grace. Without God given patience there would be no experience. But God's little ones are given grace to

wait upon the Lord and to trust in Him.

When one is brought through a difficult and trying experience, he is given to compare his journey to that of the saints who went before him. And when one is blessed to see and identify his experience with those that God loved and protected and delivered through the ages, he begins to have hope that he may be among the family of God that has been misunderstood and abused by the world. Without this experience there would be no reason even to think one might have a part with God's people. But this experience causes one to hope, even though he feels so unworthy of the least of the mercies of God.

And this hope makes not ashamed. The child of God who has suffered for the sake of Christ and the gospel, and has patiently endured it, and has been given the experience of grace, and has been made to hope he is a part of the finished work of Christ: this one shall not be made ashamed or disappointed at His appearing. The disciples, when they had forsaken all and had followed Jesus, asked what they should receive in return. Jesus told them that if they had forsaken father, mother, brother, sister, houses and lands, that they would be given in this life, fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and houses and lands an hundred fold, and in the world to come, eternal life. God's little ones find that

when they have been made to turn away from the world and its false doctrine and to suffer reproach with God's children, they are given the abundant life here with the elect family of God, and are given the promise of eternal life in glory. These are the sure mercies of David. David was blessed to say, "*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*" This is our hope and our trust.

This hope is Christ in you the hope of glory. And God's little ones have no place to run, except to Him, for help in time of need. The world is not our home, and it has nothing to give us in the way of spiritual help. All our help must come from Him. In the book of Hebrews we are reminded of those, "*...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.*" This is the Hope that will not let you go. He is the anchor of the soul, which holds the ship fast against all storms and danger. And all within that ship shall be preserved unto the day of Jesus Christ. He is the secure anchor; He is the strong threefold cord or cable (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) that is not

quickly broken, or snapped; and He is the ark or ship in whom the family of God is kept safe. He is all in all to His people.

What is it that affirms all this? What is it that gives assurance to God's little ones that they are truly being kept in the true Hope, and are not deceived? How may we have assurance that we are born of God and have passed from death unto life? How do we know that we have really suffered tribulations with patience, and had some of the experience of God's children, and have a true hope of eternal life, and that we will not be ashamed or disappointed when the Lord comes to separate the sheep from the goats? The inspired apostle Paul said, "*...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*" And the blessed apostle John, by the Holy Spirit of God tells us, "*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*" The love of God, which He shed abroad in the hearts of His people, is sufficient to assure them of their part in the kingdom, to keep and to carry them to the end of their journey in faith and hope, and to deliver them beyond this life into heaven and immortal glory.

Thanks be unto God for the unspeakable gift of His Son by Whom we are saved. Thanks be unto God, Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own

purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Thanks be unto God, Who has promised that He would never leave us or forsake us but that He would be with us unto the end of the world. He has loved us with an everlasting love, which cannot fail. Everlasting praise be unto God from Whom all blessings flow.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life, unworthy as I am.

Elder J. B. Farmer

1st CORINTHIANS

CHAPTER 2: 1-5.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, "but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

CORRESPONDENCE

Exeter, CA
March 21, 2008

March 10, 2008
Anacoco, La.

Signs of the Times,

I don't have a way to go to church,
so I especially enjoy the Signs.

Enclosed is payment for two
years and the rest to use as needed.

With my love,

Armedia Taylor
1298 Marion Taylor Rd.
Anacoco, La.

Dear Sir:

I would like to subscribe to the
Signs of the Times for 1 yr.

Carol R. Lansaw
P.O. Box 787
Gretna, Va. 24557

I am a member of Spingfield
Primitive Baptist Church. My mom
was a member also. She passed
away from this life July 28th. Her
obituary has been submitted.

Thanking you in advance,

A sister in Hope,
Carol R. Lansaw

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find my check
in the amount of \$15.00 to renew my
subscription for another year. I con-
tinue to enjoy reading each issue.
The March issue arrived in the mail
yesterday, and I see that it is time to
once again send in my renewal pay-
ment.

Last summer we had the pleasure
of visiting our friends in North Caro-
lina. Had not been back there since
1997. Enjoyed our stay with Brother
and Sister Mewborn of Coats, N.C. I
joined his church at Snow Hill, N.C.
in June and was baptized several
days later.

We drove up into Virginia to
Mabry Mill near Floyd, Va. to see this
beautiful spot that I love to take pic-
tures of with my camera.

I was very sorry to learn of Elder
Hale Terry's death, and wish I could
have met him.

In bonds of love,
Bill Clinton

*A believer's affections are,
too often, like a cascade, or
waterfall, that flows down-
ward; instead of being like a
fountain, which rises and
shoots upward toward heaven.*

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

MATTHEWS 1:20, 21.

“And while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.”

Recently, while seemingly, at the point of death, and after some unkind attempts upon my life in the church, and while feeling already the approach of the grim monster that has never asked leave of any victim, there appeared to me in my irregular thinking as I was slowly being engulfed in the steam of death, there was a still small voice that spake as no man has ever spoke, said to me, the time is not yet. Then and there was an invisible, yet a power that was effectual and sovereign and inevitably coming down from God out of heaven turning me in an eddy of water from the stream which I was drifting into, and into this peaceful, restful, gift of life giving and life restoring waters, wherein no galley with helpful oars went by, nor no gallant ship sailed by (Isa. 33:21). *That restful “not yet” restored my desire to live*

and, as I have hoped and believed that I had testified before this to the goodness and mercy of God, that I yet would be blessed “also” (Acts 21:11).

How singularly blessed art thou O Israel, anointed of God, for thou, O Lord are the Comforter of thy blood bought children. His promises are yea and amen to the glory of God. If His promises are fulfilled in Him to His name’s honor and glory, then, by all means, and to all dying (even though they think they can give life) men and women, is, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. The old time worn expression of man that men and women are masters of their own destiny, is with Babylon fallen, fallen!

Ministering angels are from the Lord. All of them are given to those that need ministering to. Certainly this truth is clearly substantiated in the episode in which our text takes and finds its background. All of the writings of heaven sent men are to those that need comforting. Let us apply the text. Was Joseph in a condition where he *could* have comforted God or man? Are the afflicted and poor people of God in a fit condition for imparting comfort and instruction to the Lord Jesus Christ, or to any of His elect family? When life is ebbing out of you, and it seems that man and God has forsaken you, are you qualified to comfort and instruct the lamenting children of God? If you are, then by all means, I write to you in a singular manner. I

could never bring anything to you worthwhile. I am reminiscing from a recent sick bed, and it was doubtful if I would ever leave it or not. What little of life was left me, certainly I could not have mustered up a revival of that life to where my advice, my instruction, my handling of the things of God, would have meant anything to you. That able character does not desire, and does not need what a dying man would have to offer. I feel a lingering desire to write to those that have been in darkness for a long, long time and in the shadow of death that I have been looking for and seeking the rays of a new day dawning, even the appearance of the lovely Saviour of sinners. Perhaps the greatest news that the Gentile believers ever heard was when the herald voice of mercy said unto these that were not a people, behold thou art now my people. Individually, as well as collectively, was when the Lord said, "*Say unto Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh*" (Isa. 62:11). When the time came for the Lord's people to know a thing, the Lord taught it to them by signs and wonders, by ways past finding out by his people, as well as those not His people (Rom. 11:33, I Cor. 2:8). No man, by seeking or researching can find out God, equally so, can no man, nor set of men, find any excuse for making an exception to this divine rule, for God does not ever come to creatures for an increase in His wisdom. If any of my readers have ever

thought that He stood in need of their help, or have thought that general principles would devolve upon creatures to be instant ready to teach him to reach a helping hand or to ladle out wisdom to him, then that person has not been taught how frail that he is before God. If any have a notion that this is treason to the cause of Christ, or that I am guilty of blasphemy, then by all means say so. God willing, I will notice your case. However, dear readers, one and all, the needy, the destitute, those that are afflicted, that are poor, that oftimes are made to see your needy and lost condition, that you need instruction, that you need the guiding hand of the Lord to lead, to beckon, to point out to you the Way, then, this is sent forth to you hoping that it may be a heavenly breeze sent your way to ease your burdened soul.

This has been, as I humbly trust, my lot for more than fifty-five years. O, how good and merciful He has been through these trying and soul searching years. I have been of times afraid that I am deceived in it all, and yet, for what I hope in, and what I hope for and that which has been taught me in part, here a little and there a little, a line here, another one there, and it all woven into a glowing fabric into a covering for my naked soul, how precious it has been, and how precious it still is to a poor sinner.

Oh, it is admitted that I have, as I hope, sent two disciples to the Sav-

our to know if he was what my longing heart and soul desires, or should I look for another. I long to know more, for being weak, the evil one often inveigles my soul and my spirit into a troubled dream.

The dream is from the Lord, those that dream or are lulled to false dreaming are under the influence of the evil one, but they that are given dreams of warning or of good tidings, are under the divine care. How little is known of Israel's God, and what a great favor and blessing it is to be taught in dreams. God's children (all of His children) are taught salvation is of the Lord; they are taught of the Lord, not about Him. Every dream sent by the Lord has had the intended effects upon the dreamer. There is not any loose or broken links in the teachings of the Lord. The text at the head of this little epistle condemns such an interpretation. Filthy dreamers may interpret their dreams, giving them the bent that suits their preconceived doctrines, but the God given dreams carry weight, conviction, teaching, satisfaction, encouragement. (Acts 4:12).

I must urge about the sufficiency of what the Lord teaches in the dreams given to His saints. Let me repeat the text. It is the voice of an angel speaking words of instruction to one of the Lord's precious saints. It was a time of great trouble to that saint. He was in the same condition as all those to whom I write. He could not solve the trouble with

which he was being assailed. He was not going about seeking to put to the front his prowess as a follower of the Lord; he was not looking for something to do wherein he might do the works of God. Tossed to and fro, tossed about in mind, seeking guidance, at a loss as what to do. It was a tedious question. It was a question that concerned he and his wife. No man had answered him; no man had suggested a number of plans whereby he could do any one of them and do very well by himself and his wife.

Please allow me to digress. If you are walking on your own highway; if you are travelling where the saints have trod, you have indeed been loved with an everlasting love. God indeed has set His love on you in His eternal mind, even before the world ever had a beginning.

At the manifestation of this distinctive love upon you, God has given to you His Son with all of the glorious benefits that comes to sinners. In giving you His Son, he likewise freely and unequivocally gives you all things. Gives you all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus before morning stars sang together.

What support to the text. What corroboration of one truth by another. What more can God say to you than what He has already said. He set aside all time. Nothing that has occurred in the time state to undo that which God, out of His own will, and for a purpose of His own declarative glory, placed His love on

His people. This love of God was solemnized between God and you when Jesus died. No man-made love was mixed in this solemn work, nor was any of it mixed in the solemn work when the Man that has His way with a maid takes you and presents you unto himself in the holy bonds of wedded bliss: (Pro. 30:19; Eph. 5:27).

This is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ with His chosen people. As the tiny helpless infant out in a cold field was noticed by its lover as He passed its way, even so, each of God's chosen people are ever before Him in love. I would, yea, I must insist, that the love of God never ceases for one of His little ones. What a deplorable condition was this little one in. In our relationship with earthly matters it would call for a turning away for such a polluted one as was this. As deplorable as the description gives us to see the babe, yet to this glorious Benefactor, it was a time of love, and it was given to live instead of perishing. (See Ezek. 16:4-8)

Joseph was thrown out on his own resources. He did not know what to do about his wife Mary. Wearily and desperate, he went to sleep. What a great blessing to go to sleep. I have heard it so much of late coming out of the mouths of those that have professed to be taught of the Lord, that so and so sure was lucky. In the face of God's great love and mercy, the use of the word luck is the most misplaced word that is ever

heard from the lips of a professed believer in God. The Lord gives His beloved sleep; this He does to one and all. In addition to that, He is the maker of their bed in all of their sickness (Psa. 41:3; 127:3). In addition to these glorious promises, he loved (and He loves) His church, His people, His bride. He gave Himself for her that He might redeem her from all iniquity, and present her unto Himself without spot or blemish or wrinkle or any such thing. There were not any exceptions; there were no ifs or conditions or strings attached to His promise. His blood cleanses from all sin, or, to be explicit, from all sins. This gives me place to mention the piece that is often talked about as peace is talked between brethren. There are no exceptions. Peace does not have a set of qualifying terms for peace, that is, it does not, unless I have missed the true import of the Saviour's salvation. If He made an "if" or set a condition for sinners to be housed in heaven, only then do we have the right to limit fellowship to those that will meet a set of rules for fellowship. Where fellowship is, peace is there; where peace is, there is fellowship.

All the peace that is peace, is that which is wrought in us by His Spirit. He always takes the initiative in bringing this about. He comes to us, He crosses the sea to get where the Gaderene is at in his awful condition. (Mk. 5:1) In all of the approaches of a man towards a maid, it is He that makes the first approach,

although this world (and unless we, as a people, are preserved in Christ Jesus, we are apt to catch it) has gone mad in reversing heaven's order, and is wooing and beseeching the maid to take the initiative and have her way with Him.

He gives His people sleep. He gave Joseph a sweet rest in sleep. In no sense of the word could Joseph wake up of himself and say, Now I have found out what to do. No sir, not that. Joseph was as much at a loss as to what to do when he went to sleep as he had been at anytime. If salvation had been in the power of the Jews, there would not have been any need for Christ to have come. If those things attributed to Christ could have been as easily done without Him having come, then by all means God the Father, certainly would not have made a mockery, a travesty, on His darling Son as that would have been. Manifestly, to Joseph, the Prophet prophesied of did come (Deut. 18:18).

That prophesy not only was devoid of conditions as to His work, but the reaction of those to whom He was sent was likewise devoid of conditions. He comes, they hear. I like that, don't you? Isn't that heaven's language to poor sinners? And isn't our example fitting for that kind of doctrine? Isn't Joseph showing forth, even before Christ's arrival, that His Spirit was dwelling in him?

Let us remember that Christ loved (loves) the church, and gave himself for it, and that we are com-

manded to love our wives as He loved His wife, and that Joseph shows that he was a follower of Christ and indeed a doer of the word. His concern was for his wife. What to do about her? Whether to do this or to do the other. There is not a theologian on God's green earth that can prove that Joseph met God in sleep with a plan half way concocted as to how to take care of the situation. Nor was Joseph about to complete a plan, and that God builded on his scheme. That is a doctrine that is part from below, and a part from above, and my soul abhors it. That is part of grace and part of works, and my soul abhors that also. Maybe I am mistaken, but I think not.

Only that which is from above saves sinners; only that name given under heaven and among men is today, or ever has saved men. This is what was taught Joseph when he was asleep, when he was not able to think, to concoct, to perform. Every unanswered question was answered from heaven. The answers were all baffling to nature-bred sinners, and was enlightening to heaven born sinners. With all the sophists in the universe, from time immemorial until the glorious and final coming of the blessed Redeemer berating and lamenting sound doctrine, they will never set aside the doctrine that satisfied Joseph, and not only he, but all the true Israel of God forever and forever. One thing is sure, Joseph would have waved

an Arminian flag and would have solved the dilemma that he was in without having to wait. Yet, how great the lesson taught him in God's way and in God's time. David waited and yet longed for that salvation that comes from the Lord. This longing and yearning and waiting after and for the Lord, is for a display of His saving hand. This is the history of God's people without exception. There isn't, nor cannot be such a thing as a saved sinner satisfied with his own righteousness or his accomplishments. In our text, when applied to us by His Spirit, is the history of us all, without exception. It causes anxiety and a longing after and for, and Joseph did not know where to turn nor what to do. In that time, in just such a time as that, it was and is made manifest that He loves His own, and that He giveth His own sleep. Joseph was put to sleep by Him that gives sleep.

God's care continued after sleep was given. Joseph did not have a nightmare in order to scare him into activity, but he had a dream. In all the universe that there is not one that can give a dream. (If I have overlooked something or somebody that can, please feel free to communicate with me, and I will be glad to retract this). Again, angels are messengers to comfort to instruct, and this is not an exception. He was given sleep with the problem unsolved, and he was awakened with it solved. The union is solemnized, the coming together of man and wife is given

heaven's approval, all of the gossip talk about Mary's being with child is stilled and she was made honorable before God and His children.

The question of the virgin Mary, to wit "*How shall I know this?*" shall be to every querist of like import, answered by the angel of mercy to she, and the question of Joseph is answered in the same way, and that from heaven, to wit, this is the work of God wherein He shall save His people from their sins. And, like all solved problems, great joy is always felt in Zion the city of our God, whether it is an anxious Mary or a perplexed Joseph.

Elder W. D. Griffin

LAZARUS, COME FORTH

Dearest beloved brethern, if the Lord will bless me to do so, I will share with you a few of the precious thoughts that have lingered with me for several days concerning that glorious command from the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, found in the eleventh chapter of John.

At the time Jesus gave this command, Lazarus had been dead four days, and buried. Who else could have given such a command, and know that it would be obeyed? On another occasion he touched the bier of a dead man and said, "*Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.*" And he that was dead sat up and began

to speak. And again: he spake to the dead daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, saying, "Maid, arise." And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Jesus is the resurrection and the life. *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."*

Every born-again child of God has heard the voice of Jesus speaking to his soul; though he was dead in trespasses and sin. *"Lazarus, come forth."* *"Young man, arise."* *"Maid, arise."* The very moment you heard this majestic command, you came forth; from a state of death, sin and darkness you came forth into the marvelous light of Jesus Christ: you passed from death unto life. The world knows nothing of this passing from death unto life, for they have never heard his word. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* Death means, to be separated from or cut off. When Adam transgressed the law of God he died a spiritual death: he was cut off or separated from fellowship with God. Adam was the federal head of all men; and

when he fell, all his posterity fell with him. In Adam they all died: they were separated from God. As surely as death separates loved ones here on earth, were they separated from God.

Now let us carefully examine what Jesus said in the 24th verse of John, fifth chapter. *"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* He did not say *"if he will hear my word"* and *"if he will believe"* I will give him everlasting life, etc. No, he definitely did not say that: but that the ones who hear his word and believe on him hath everlasting life. That life is eternal; it has ever been with the Father. That life is in Jesus Christ: but no one knows anything about that eternal life until Jesus speaks to his soul. Birth does not give life; it only makes manifest the life that already is.

"Lazarus, come forth." And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Lazarus came out of the grave still bound by the law and his eyes were covered so that he could not see the end thereof. What advantage would it be to a child of grace if he came forth, but was still under the law that he could in no wise keep, and could not see Jesus thru the eye of faith? None that I can see; but the One who gave the commandment to

come forth also said, *“Loose him, and let him go.”*

What a marvelous command! Jesus is the end of the law; he completely fulfilled it to a jot and tittle, and paid to justice all her due; therefore he could justly command, *“Loose him, and let him go.”* He is now free from the law thru faith, and the vail has been taken away. He can see Jesus thru the eye of faith, and walk in the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ which has made him free from the law of sin and death. As Paul wrote: *“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God thru Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. Therefore there is now no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”*

“Maid, arise.” And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. Every living thing must have food to survive. Natural food sustains the flesh, but spiritual food must be the diet of the spiritual. Jesus is that spiritual food. *“I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I give*

is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” Natural man cannot eat the flesh of Christ nor drink his blood, for *“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.”* Only the ones who have spiritual life need spiritual food and drink, and, *“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day .”* Those who hear his command to come forth, those who believe in him, those who eat his flesh and drink his blood, are those who have eternal life; and shall never come into condemnation, and are passed from death unto life. *“Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.”*

And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. Jesus hath called you forth from your dead estate; he hath set you free; he hath fed you manna from heaven; and he delivers you to your mother. Who is your mother? Is she not the church of God; and Paul says, *“Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.”* And when Jesus delivers you to the church, you begin to speak and tell your friends what great things God has done for you.

I do not know for a certainty that

I have heard the voice of Christ; but I do believe I have been given a good hope, however small and weak it may seem at times. I am certain of this however, all who have heard that majestic voice have eternal life; and shall be called home on that great day when Christ shall come again and say, "*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*"

Beloved brethren, cast a mantle of charity over my mistakes. I beg an interest in your prayers of faith for this poor worm of the dust.

Clifford Wilbanks

BENNING, D. C., April 17, 1909.

DEAR EDITORS:- With much love for the glorious doctrine of salvation by grace I make the attempt to write a few lines, knowing full well that if it were not for grace this poor, helpless worm of the dust would be forever lost. My mind of late has been on Christ's sermon on the mount. (Matthew v.) He taught his disciples, saying, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*" Throughout that whole chapter what comforting words to those who know the joyful sound, having been taught of the Lord, for

we cannot know any other way. Christ said, "*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*" The servants who testify of him today are they who are born of the Spirit; no others can testify of him. Dear brethren, if we love this doctrine then we are the poor in spirit and certainly are blessed. He speaks to those who know the joyful sound. I feel to thank the Father in heaven that he has "*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.*" When we feel in our hearts that we are the children of God, then we can say,

"Come, happy souls, approach your God

*With new melodious songs;
Come, render to almighty grace
The tribute of your tongues.
So strange, so boundless was
the love*

*That pitied dying man,
The Father sent his equal Son
To give them life again."*

We know our lost and ruined condition before the just and holy God, and those who know are "*born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*" "*If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*" "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are*

the sons of God.” *“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect’ It is God that justifieth.”* *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”* Now, dear brethren, knowing these things, what manner of love we should have toward one another, for God is love; he loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, living in open rebellion against him, as Saul was. We should not let trifles prevent us from attending the meetings of the church. Christ told his disciples to love one another as he had loved them, and to forsake all and follow him, and said, *“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”* What wonderful love, to suffer and die for his people, his church, his bride; such love is past our natural understanding; his ways are as high above our ways as the heavens are above the earth.

Please pardon me for intruding on your time and patience with my poor letter. May God’s richest blessings abide with you both, and all the readers of the SIGNS. It is a welcome visitor to my house. If you see anything in this you can publish it, if not, it will be all right with me.

Your unworthy brother, if one,
THOMAS ALDEN.

REPENTANCE AND A BROKEN AND CONTRITE HEART.

People talk about believing, about faith and hope, and loving the brethren, but how seldom do we hear a word about repentance, confession of sin unto God, godly sorrow for sin, a broken and contrite heart. Have all such experiences been removed from the lives of God’s children now in the world. Can it be that there is gospel faith and hope and love in the soul and that person never to have known repentance, godly sorrow for sin, mourning over iniquity, never experienced in them a broken and a contrite heart. Surely all these things are now wrought in the souls of God’s elect as verily as they have been in the ages that are past, and as verily as faith, and hope, and love. The apostle Paul testified, both to Jews and also to the Gentiles, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts :xx:v.21.) Christ has gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us, and he is exalted a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins. It is through his all-gracious mediation in our behalf that we are granted repentance unto life. (Acts xi. 18.) According to the everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, the heirs of promise are so wrought by the Holy Ghost that they not only see themselves vile transgressors, and feel that they are con-

demned, and under the curse of the law, and their heart meditates terror, but they are so taught, the things of Christ are so revealed to them, that they are moved to mourn every one of them over their sins. The Holy Spirit dissolves their hard, stubborn hearts into sighs and moans, and they are abased and loathe themselves for their iniquities, and they crave the mercy of God; they sigh and yearn for the forgiveness of their Sins through Jesus' precious blood. It is not in our early experiences alone that these things are known, but all our lifelong pilgrimage we are frail, sinful beings, needing mercy, and therefore God in covenant faithfulness and love performs the good work which he has begun until the day of Jesus Christ, and we often find within us, under the ministered kindness of our God, a broken and contrite heart.

"Law and terrors do not harden,

All the while they work alone;

But a sense of blood-bought pardon Soon dissolves a heart of stone."

There are with the people of God times of depression and grief and times of refreshing and relief. The Lord healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. *"Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble*

spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."-Isa. lvii. 15. Christ crucified is a blessed, sacred balm such as the world knows nothing of. For that professor who in his very heart does not know Christ, and him crucified, knows him not. That believers in Christ have peace with God by the blood of his cross, that they are reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, that they are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, are matters not only testified of in the Scriptures, but they are matters of faith wrought in the hearts of the taught of the Lord. They are vital, comforting experiences, in which poor sinners live unto their God.

"Emmanuel for me hath died, My Lord, my Love, was crucified."

His flesh is meat indeed, his blood is drink indeed. It is in our intimacy with Jesus our hearts thrive, and everlasting consolation and a good hope through his grace abound in us. Grace comes unto us by our dear Savior. He declares the Father unto us. *He says, and it is blessedly true, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."*- Heb. ii. 12. Blessed are we to know the joyful sound of our beloved Savior's voice. We shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Truly blessed are the renewings of the Holy Ghost, who in his communion with our souls takes of the things of

Christ and shows them unto us. "*He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*" We are at periods of our sojourn in the world tempted and plagued by sin and Satan, and so burdened by the afflictions and perplexities of life that it appears a task to get through the day.

"See every day new straits attend,

And wonders where the scene will end."

O at such times I have gone down as into a dismal valley, where murmurings, rebellion, hard thoughts and a hardened heart have made my life wretched indeed. The promises come into my mind, but they only appear to mock my case they are only in the letter, and my perverse heart says, How can they be for you? I am not persuaded of them, and have no arms to embrace them. What I need, and what many times has very graciously been given me, is a word of reconciliation, in power, in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. This will break my hard heart and subdue me and bring me down a suppliant at Jesus' feet. There I lie in penitence, in meekness, in all affection, and I am then all acquiescence to all the providences of our God, and I then truly believe that as my days so shall my strength be.

"He shows me that all shall end well,

His blood is my prevalent plea,

And through his rich grace I believe.

He saved a sinner like me."

It is our precious Christ who has reconciled us unto God by his blood, and in our union and communion with him he says in our hearts, "*Be ye reconciled to God.*"-2 Cor. v. 20. How softening, how reconciling it is to see by faith Jesus the man of sorrows, to have glimpses of his sorrows in Gethsemane and on Calvary.

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely,

My Jesus hath loved me, I cannot tell why,

But this I can tell, he hath loved me so well

As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

HEBREWS 4: 1-3.

LET a us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

THE FREE GIFT.

“FOR the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.”- Romans v. 16.

How grand is the bountiful mercy and far-reaching power of God declared through the above Scripture! Sinners with a multitude of sins are rescued from the power of death and justified, notwithstanding their mountains of sin. To human minds this seems unreasonable and outlandish. Finite minds cannot comprehend the great condescension of our God to his chosen people, or the disparity shown in the text: that for one single offence, and that offence somewhat mitigated in favor of man because of Satan's interference with the affections of the woman, all the unborn nations should fall under the curse of death, without a single exception, and that the free gift should fall upon many whose offences were many and great, displaying the mighty power of grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Briefly stated, just one transgression sunk a world of unborn human beings into the pit of death, but the free gift is given unto millions irrespective of their numerous transgressions. Though your *“sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”- Isaiah i. 18.* Though death holds a firm grip over all the sons of

Adam, yet how much more shall the blood of Christ deliver the chosen vessels from the grasp of Satan unto the glorious liberty of the children of God. When mortals are led to behold the manifold beneficence of God to unborn, undeserving sinners, dead in sins, the cry of grace, grace, looms up in their hearts, and they are made to taste of the wonders of the free gift and the powers of the world to come. It is always supposed that a gift is free; that is, not in exchange for something valuable, but altogether one-sided. A gift bestowed upon a person often signifies that the donor has love for the receiver, which would indicate that the gift was free. The apostle uses the phrase, *“free gift,”* clearing all doubt from our minds of any meritorious work on our part. No carnal reason can be given why God loved sinners when they were dead in sins. The fact is that God did love his people when they were dead in sins, and did quicken them together with Christ, and did raise them up together and made them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, for the very purpose *“that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”* Surely the *“free gift”* manifests the exceeding riches of his grace. No saint moved by the Spirit of Christ can crave anything better than redemption through the blood of Jesus, and no better way to receive the knowledge of the free

gift than through the channel of faith and grace. Having faith and grace we have hope, the free gift, and all things belonging to the household of faith. Love and mercy were stronger than death, the work of the devil, so that many offences, as it were, brought complete justification. Just so, according to Scripture, the wrath of man and the work of the devil shall all finally praise the Lord Jehovah.

All for the saints,
J.F. Beeman

Tiawah, Okla., August 13, 1917.

MEMORY.

Of all *"the manifold grace of God"* there is nothing more wonderful to me than the memory of man. In fancy I go back thirty-three years in time to the hallowed spot where I first experienced the consoling influence of the Spirit, assuring me that I had found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write—Jesus of Nazareth.

"Hard was my toil to reach the shore, Long tossed upon the ocean;

Above me was the thunderous roar,

Beneath the waves' commotion.

Darkly the pall of night was thrown Around me, faint with terror;

In that dark hour how did my groans Ascend for years of error."

The poet has told my story in fewer words, if less in detail, than I can hope to do at this time, but standing on an eminence of a third of a century, during which I have enjoyed a precious hope, I cannot refrain from repeating a story that is especially precious to me at this time when

*"Memory to her duty true,
Bring back those
precious scenes to view."*

The hallowed spot in my case was the northeast corner of a sod school, near the present site of Mason City, Custer County, Nebraska, where I first my Savior found and felt my sins forgiven. For some time previous to this date, December 1st, 1884, I had felt that my hope to attain to a good hope in Christ was forever lost. I had left my native home, at Southside, Mason County, West Virginia, in April 1883, feeling sure that I would go west and get so mixed up with worldly affairs that I never would find Him for whom I sought. Gradually I sank lower and lower in the miry sinks of sin, until all hope was lost. I had earnestly asked the Lord to deliver me out of the snares of the evil one—that of profanity, having lost all hope of that balm in Gilead, which is now my chief joy, but, in this dark hour, when I surely thought mercy could never reach my case, as quick as thought I felt him mine. My Savior stood before me, I saw his brightness round me shine and shouted, Glory, glory. A protracted meeting had been in progress at the schoolhouse for sev-

eral weeks, and I had gone night after night, mainly to be in the company of a young lady with whom I was keeping company at that time. She was a consistent member of the Missionary Baptists, and being much in my company she is a living witness to what I now believe to have been my spiritual birth.

*“O sacred hour, O hallowed spot,
Where love divine first found me;
Wherever falls my distant lot
My heart shall linger round thee.
And when from earth I rise to
soar
Up to my home in heaven,
Down will I cast my eyes once
more
Where I was first forgiven.”*

J. M. AMSBERRY.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2008

Elder Carl Terry, VA	5.00
Elder Gene Lupton, NC.....	5.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	5.00
Connie Franco, TX	2.00
Betty Lovitte, NC.....	5.00
Maxey Delp, VA	5.00
Carol Lansaw, VA.....	5.00
Armedia Taylor, LA.....	25.00
The Fergusons, VA	5.00
J.D. Neely, AR	5.00
Banks Conner, VA	10.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	50.00
Bruce Smith, VA	25.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00

OBITUARIES

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
SIS. CLARA BRUMFIELD PAYNE

Our beloved Sister Clara Payne was born September 28, 1926, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and departed this life on Saturday, February 16, 2008 at the age of 81.

Sister Payne was daughter of the late Bradley Newman Vasser and Sister Bessie Dalton Vasser. She was first married to the late George Newman Brumfield and to this union they were blessed with three children and she later married Brother Silas A. Payne.

In addition to her husband, of the residence, she is survived by two sons, Eddie Dean Brumfield of Gretna and James Newman Brumfield of Blairs; one daughter, Alice Myers of Gretna; two stepsons Andy Payne and Harry Payne of Chatham; two brothers, Felix Vasser of Gretna and George Vasser of Pawley's Island, SC; one sister, Odessa Hill of Timberlake, NC; three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Sister Payne was given hope and joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 26, 1993 and was baptized by Elder Marvin Brumfield on October 24, She always greeted her brethren and friends with a smile on her face and was faithful to attend her meetings as long as her and her dear companion's health permitted.

After Sister Payne was unable to be cared for at her home she went to stay with her daughter and she and her brothers did all human hands could do to care for her.

Her funeral was held at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, February 19, 2008 at the Colbert-Moran Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, Elder Marvin Brumfield and Rev. Bert Johnson and was laid to rest in the Brumfield Family Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord.

She will be greatly missed by her family, friends and church and may we all that mourn her be reconciled to God's will, he never makes a mistake.

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
 Elder Marvin Brumfield - Assistant
 Moderator
 Pam Betterton - Clerk

SISTER NORA LEE ROWLAND

Our hearts are saddened by the loss of one so dear to us by spiritual and natural ties. Sister Nora Lee Rowland passed from this life July 28, 2007 at Autumn Care of Altavista, Va.

Born March 11, 1912, she was a daughter of Silas L. Rowland and Ruby Shields Rowland. Sister Rowland was predeceased by her husband Laughton Talmages Rowland Sr., a son Reubin C.

Rowland, two brothers, Sonny Rowland and Eugene Rowland, four sisters Lillian Thompson, Odell Wallace, Addie B. Angel and Inez Rowland, two grandsons, Reubin C. Rowland Jr., and Christopher Scott Harmon. She was a member of the Springfield Primitive Baptist Church.

She was received by experience October 10, 2004. Sister Rowland loved visits from her pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield. Sister Nora loved to hear him talk of the goodness of her God. As long as her mind was good, she never failed to thank the Lord for his blessings and for taking care of her.

Those left to mourn her are three sons Wesley B. Rowland of Fredericksburg, Frank W. Rowland of Chatham, and Laughton (Tootie) Rowland of Chatham, one daughter Carol R. Lansaw of Gretna, two brothers George D. Rowland of Columbus, Ga., and Bernard L. Rowland of Gretna, 15 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

Sister Rowland's funeral was conducted at 1:00 pm, July 31, 2007 by her pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park, to await the coming of our Lord and Savior.

Sister Nora will be sadly missed, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May each one of us be reconciled to God's will.

Written in Love and Hope,
 Carol R. Lansaw

ELDER WILLIAM HALE TERRY

It is with a saddened but humbled heart that I write the obituary of our beloved brother, Elder William Hale Terry. Our Father in Heaven saw fit to make brother Terry a peaceful resting place to await his calling. *“Come yea blest of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the world.”*

Elder Terry was born May 25, 1936, a son of the late Willam Hugh Terry and sister Ilene Terry Clifton who survives him. He ended his suffering on October 3, 2007 in the early hours of the morning. The Lord blessed his loving wife, sister Glenna Terry, and his loving family, to be at his side when he took his last breaths and ended many months of pain and suffering. Elder Terry loved the fall of the year and did most of his medical treatments with his family on every Wednesday. It only seemed so fitting the Lord took from his sufferings on this day in October, a Wednesday.

Brother Hale and Sister Glenna Turman Terry were blessed to be married 48 years. They both were baptized by Elder Amos Hash on the third Sunday in April, in the year 1969. Brother Terry was ordained October 30, 1971, to the ministry, at New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church. Surviving brother Terry, is his beloved wife and Sister in the Lord, Glenna Terry, three daughters

and husbands, Jennifer and Jon Coleman, Carla and Tony Horton, Gina and Frank Fleming, one son and wife, Marcus and Mary Ann Terry. Four grandchildren, Joshua Coleman, Austin Horton, Megan Fleming and Makayla Terry. Two great-grandchildren survive, Skylar and Benjamin Coleman. Elder Terry was preceded in death by his dad, William Hugh Terry, brother Lee Terry and a granddaughter Hannah Marie Fleming.

Elder Terry loved the churches he was blessed to serve, and went as long as his health would allow. He firmly believed in predestination and God's will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Elder Terry told me he was not afraid of death itself, but was afraid of the suffering. He was blessed until he could not speak to us anymore to give the Glory to God, for His Will Be Done. I feel in my heart if I know anything of the spirit, the Lord was merciful unto my dad, my brother in the Lord to allow him a peaceful passing. So many times I can still hear his comforting voice say, *“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* He loved this scripture and believed it, for not my will but thy will be done.

Brother Terry's funeral was conducted by Elder Alan Terry, Elder Kenneth Key, Elder Larry Hollandsworth, and Elder Carl Terry on October 6, 2007 at 11:00 a.m. The body was laid to rest in the New Bell Spur Church Cemetery. Family and friends will miss him so much. Elder Terry being my dad in the flesh, beloved pastor, brother and dear friend will finally have that long sought rest which he most desired. When I was growing up, he never wanted us kids to call him father, he always wanted to be called dad because there is only one Father, he would say, our Heavenly Father. He is to have all the Honor, Praise and Glory. May he be merciful unto us, that we be submissive to his Holy Will.

Written in love and hope,
Carla T. Horton

IN MEMORY OF
SISTER LERA HARDY VASSER

It has pleased God to call from our midst Sister Lera Hardy Vasser. Born December 18, 1912, she was the daughter of the late Haney L. (Tommy) Hardy and Cora Mae Dalton Hardy. Sister Vasser was predeceased by her husband, Willie Owen Vasser, a grandson, Brian Vasser, two brothers, Herman Hardy and Harold Hardy; and two sisters Alice Gibson and Belva Gibson.

Both sisters were members of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church.

She is survived by two sons Sherril Vasser and wife, Vinnie, of Winston-Salem, NC and Bill Vasser and wife, Ellen, of Virginia Beach, one sister, Sister Larrie Bowler and husband, William of Gretna; three grandchildren, Dana, April and Scott and five great-great grandchildren.

Sister Vasser asked for a home in the church and was received by experience August 23, 1964 always filling her seat as long as her health permitted. She believed in a God with all power. I can hear her say time and time again "*The truth will make you free, free indeed.*" She loved to sing.

Funeral services were conducted at 3:30 p.m. January 29, 2008 at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her dear pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. Buried in the church cemetery.

Written in love and
with humbleness,
By her niece,
Sister Christine Payne

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Assistant
Moderator
Pam Betterton - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Tis winter in my soul; my sins
Like clouds o'erspread the sky;
While wailing winds and dreary
rains
To me all joys deny.*

*My heart lies hopeless of relief,
And filled with deep alarm,
Like the cold earth, benumbed
with grief,
Under the pelting storm.*

*I try to look to God, but sin
Forbids to lift my eyes;
My cries and prayers are all in
vain,
Guilt will not let them rise.*

*O weary winter of the soul,
How sad and full of gloom!
The heavy hours, how slow they
roll
While griefs my heart consume.*

*And must I thus fore'er remain?
Will the sun shine no more?
May I not hope that yet again
His beams will warmth restore?*

*Turn my captivity, O Lord!
Once more to thee I call;
And let thy sweet forgiving word
Make summer in my soul.*

*Then shall the streams of joyful
praise,
Loosed by thy gracious hand,
To thy blessed name flow all my
days,*

In my heart's southern land.

Silas H Durand.

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EDITORIAL

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 54:17)



Elder R.H. Campbell

salvation by the sov-

The prophet was blessed in this one verse of scripture to condense into a very few words a truth that is as basic to the doctrine of

ciful God as is to be found in the printed word. It sets forth the complete security of the servants of the Lord and the absolute assurance that their righteousness before a just and holy God will ever remain sure and steadfast. The Apostle Paul expressed the same sentiment this way, *"If God be for us, who can be against us."* Just think for a moment of the awesome majesty and power of these statements: who is making them and to whom the statements are directed. They are from the infinite wisdom and power of a loving and merciful Heavenly Father and they are directed to a specific people who are the objects of His love and care that He created for Himself to show forth His glory.

The scripture does not say that no weapon shall be formed against His servants, but that *"No weapon that shall be formed against thee shall prosper or be successful in overcoming them and separating them from their Father's care."* Actually the servants of God are confronted daily by weapons that are formed against them and tongues that rise up against them in judgment, and this has been true since the beginning of time. This began in the Garden of Eden when the serpent beguiled Eve and the judgment was pronounced. God said, *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head and thou shall bruise his heel."* Ever since that time the seed of the serpent has

been making war against the seed of the woman and is continually forming weapons against the seed of the woman but the scripture above promises that the seed of the serpent shall never overcome. It will continue to attack because it hates everything that the servants of the Lord stand for and uses every weapon it can devise to hurt them.

The beautiful and comforting thought in the above scripture is the fact that there is no possibility that these weapons and tongues can prosper. If they could prosper or the promise and power supporting the promise could fail, then the children of Israel would have perished at the Red Sea; the three Hebrew children would have burned in the fiery furnace; Daniel would have been eaten by the lions; Isaac would have been slain by Abraham, and Joseph would have been killed by his brethren. If any of these could have happened, it would have changed the entire course of the world. The certainty of all things in the future rests in the hands of the same power that has determined all things in the past and not one in either category did or can fail. The hope of all who declare that if they have any righteousness it can only be by the imputed righteousness of Christ, acknowledge that all of their salvation depends upon the fact that the adversary cannot prosper in his attacks on them by the same power that has supported those in ages past. They realize that but for promises such as the one above, and the continuous

demonstration of this care and lovingkindness in their lives that they could not stand for a moment.

The prophet says that the fact that God is fighting their battles for them and that their righteousness is of Him is the heritage of all of those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. In the song that God gave to Moses to teach to the people, He refers to this choosing of His people as a separation of the sons of Adam and a setting of the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. *"For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance."*

These and many other scriptures speak of the way and manner in which the Lord's people were called out from among the nations of the earth. They are given a knowledge of God through faith, which is the sovereign gift of God, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The song of Moses began, *"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."* This is the solemn and mysterious way in which the truth is instilled into the heart and soul of man. It is the gracious and majestic work of the God who created the world by the word of His power, the One who speaks and it is done; the One who commands and it stands fast. Oh, the

beauty and the glory of this God and all His work, and the comfort to those who have been exercised and can claim these promises as their own because of a work of grace in their heart.

Man who will declare that God wants things a certain way but must have the cooperation of the creatures has never known God; has never been changed from the natural into which he was born; has never been born of the Spirit of which all must be born before they can see God and the glories of His kingdom. He is the one that raised up His voice in judgment against the Lord's servants and is condemned by them because they realize where the judgment is coming from, for they were also once in that condition. He is in the same place that the Apostle Paul was before the light shined around him and Jesus revealed Himself to the Apostle. This experience is a part of the lives of all of the children of the Almighty God of heaven and of earth and regardless of how and when it happens, it is sufficient. They then have fellowship for the Apostle Paul when he said, *"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God."* It is a wonderful and glorious heritage to live among and enjoy the fellowship of a people who have been made to acknowledge that their righteousness is of God because they are not sufficient of themselves.

Jude is speaking of this heritage when he said, *"To them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called."* This is declaring the absolute safety and security of the salvation of all the saints of God and it involves all of the Godhead. God the Father sanctified them, before the world was, unto His glory; Jesus the Son preserved them, His death atoning for all of their sins and making them accepted in the Beloved and the Holy Spirit calls them in this life and reveals to them that they are indeed a chosen vessel of the Most High God and heirs of the fulness of His kingdom.

Speak of a heritage! Can you imagine a more grand and glorious heritage that could belong to a people and all because it was their Father's good pleasure to give it to them. It seems that they would never doubt or question their experience or fear anything that might confront them in this life with such evidence that cannot be denied. The Apostle Paul must have been thinking on these things when he wrote, *"Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."* There is a race that is set and it includes every weapon that shall be formed against them and every tongue that shall be raised against them in judg-

ment. They are all for a specific purpose and they shall fulfill that purpose, but Isaiah says they shall not prosper. The cloud of witnesses that encompasses the children of God are their brethren from former generations who have left on record their travels that those that were to follow would be encouraged as they learn that the trials and afflictions that they are suffering have ever been the footsteps that the redeemed of the Lord have walked in. They will see and bear witness that these truths are eternal and are a heritage that all of creation does not possess. They strengthen the hope of the weary pilgrim that theirs is the journey of the people that are called *"A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people."* They witness with David who said, *"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage."*

In Bonds of love,
Elder Richard Campbell

PSALM 85:9-11.

Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall spring out of earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE

March 29, 2008

Mr. Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Dear Brother Tony,

Both my parents and grandparents were subscribers to the Times. All found love and peace in each issue and it is my hope that Liz will too.

May the Lord richly bless you and yours,

Kathy Lewis
204 Meadowview Lane
Grayson, Ky 41143

March 31, 2008

Mr. Tony Horton,

Just received my April issue of the Signs and see it is time for me to renew.

Have enjoyed and feel to have been greatly blessed by the Signs this past year. And never want to miss an issue. The unsearchable truth of our Lord and Master as portrayed in the Signs is indeed priceless!

Roland G. Allen
4235 3rd Ave.
Columbia, Ga. 31904

Dear Brother Tony,

Here is my renewal to the Signs for 1 year. At my advanced age 93 I only renew for one year. I enjoy reading it and do not want to be without it. Best wishes to the ones who do so much that others may read. I enjoy reading the ones written when it was first published and wish I could get some of the older ones.

Thank you so much.

Mrs. Bennie Clifton

ARTICLES

THE LITTLE MAMA BIRD

On a Monday in June of 2000, I was sitting on my glassed-in porch and what a lesson God taught me that day. It started off a pretty and fairly sunny day in the morning. I love to go out on this porch because it seems to bring me closer to nature and the life that God has given to his little creation that live outside. As the day went on, it began to cloud up. The wind started blowing and I started hearing thunder and seeing some lightning. Outside in a hanging basket, right at my porch window, a bird had a nest with four little eggs in it. When the lightening and thundering started, the little mama bird came right to the nest. God just showed me through this little bird that when our storms come he also

is over us, sheltering and protecting us from our storms. The bird came and sat on those eggs and yet the lightening was very sharp and the thunder really loud. The wind was blowing the basket back and forth, turning the basket half around, again and again. It just went this way and that, yet the bird was still sitting and protecting those eggs. God is over us when a storm comes. He is our shield like that mama bird was a shield to those eggs. I watched the bird as she held her head high. She stayed calm in the midst of the storm, as if she was just waiting for the Lord to speak, "*Peace, be still.*" This is a lesson to me and to whoever is going through a storm right now; a lesson to remember that Jesus is our protector, shield and hiding place. When our storms come, like the little bird, we have to wait on the Lord until He says, "*Peace, be still.*"

Shirley Renfrow

VOICES OF THE PAST

LUKE 15:1-7

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him, and the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, hav-

ing an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. 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."

Over the last nearly fifty years many subjects have been discussed among the saints of God. I am glad to say that except in a few instances I have agreed with the general thoughts about the Bible. In none that I recall have hot words been exchanged in our conversations. Some of the time I did not agree nor disagree. I did not have any settled convictions about the subject under investigation. I could often, and did, tell them that their views sounded plausible but that I was not able to subscribe to them, although I did not have anything better to put in their place. This subject, together with others, has been like unto that. I would hear it expounded one way, and it seemed like trying a prisoner in court. I would think, well it must be that way for it sounds good. Soon I would

hear it from another quarter by as lovely a brother as the first, and he had entirely another version of it. I knew that I was not in any condition to write on the subject or to attempt preaching on it. A man without convictions does not have any right to his opinion in fact, he does not have any.

Recently, out of a blue bolt of sky lit beauty, it came flooding into my mind that this had to do with the Gentiles. Frankly, I was elated, because I had been asked about it from time to time and had been without any comment, except to say that I did not have a settled mind in regard to it.

In nearly all public preaching in the Bible there were mixed congregations. Usually, there were some believers and some unbelievers; some that came because of hunger and thirst, and some to gainsay. This occasion was not any exception. The subject at the end of the preceding chapter was fraught with interest to the publicans and sinners, they desired to know and feel the savoriness of this salt. The motive of the Pharisees and scribes was entirely different. The desire of the first was to be taught; the desire of the second was to trap the Teacher and get Him into a snare whereby He would ridicule Himself. Clearly, it is seen where all the jeers and sneers and scathing insinuations and unclean innuendos come from upon the dear Man and His humble train of followers. It would seem that at first He paid attention to their murmur before He did the desire of poor

sinners to hear Him. But that is not true. No doubt they thought so, but the people of God were given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven even if they were spoken in parables, and they understood the goodness of God towards poor sinners, while the wrath of the Pharisees and scribes was intensified.

“What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?” If these had understood the significance of what His question implied, their chagrin would have been multiplied over and over. It is necessary to note that they were in the wilderness, and He left them in it. True, the wandering lost sheep was also in the wilderness, but the wilderness were not the same. One was dense, but they that were in it did not know it; the other was dense, and the one in it knew that he was in it, and knew that it was dense. Both were sinners; one knew it, the other did not. If the ninety and nine had known that they were in the wilderness, they could as they thought, have gotten out. The lone sheep was in the wilderness and knew that it could not get out. The condition of the ninety and nine was the condition of all of us while in nature. The condition of the lone sheep is the condition of us all when we were conscious of having strayed away.

The Jews as a nation were cho-

sen to show forth God's care for His chosen people. No nation has ever been so signally blessed in natural resources as had Israel. The Lord had given them so many rich tokens of His care for them. He fed them; He fought their battles; He gave them favor after favor. It would seem that they would walk humbly in His presence forevermore, after being so graciously dealt with in the famine caused by drought. It would seem that they could never forget His sovereign and universal deliverance out of the land of the enemy at the Red Sea. When God called them to Sinai and they fled in consternation at the sound of His threatening voice, they persuaded Moses to go for them, and God had mercy and received him as an emissary from them, although they had grumbled and complained and questioned His every act toward them. Even though the Lord acknowledged that they could not hear Him and live because of their sin, yet His mercy was extended in promise that He would raise them up a prophet from among themselves, and they would hear Him. Every prophet that He called from among them, the Spirit of Christ in them testified that He would come among them. They told in the most minute detail His manner of coming, and yet not one of them as National Israel believed in Him when He arrived as their Prophet.

This unbelief was accompanied by the most sarcastic arrogance that has ever been known. There was a

bicker and a murmur and a constant arraignment of God before their tribunal of so called justice, because their sins brought down upon them the consequences of their sins. During all of these four thousand years God's care and mercy did not diminish. There were no overtures made toward the people that never had been a people unto Him. Even though they (the Jews) insulted Him to His face, and treated Him like a common criminal, yet He continued in mercy to take care of them.

The promise of God embraced the Gentiles. *"I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved, and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of God."* (Rom. 9 :25-26) *"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness."* What shall be said of this? What a strange statement, what a mysterious phenomenon, what a blessing to the Gentile nation. Paul asks, Wherefore? Why this? Then he answers, *"Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law."* (Rom. 9:30-32) The Jews did not

stumble that they fall, but through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles. (Rom. 11:11)

Their fall was manifested in their self esteem. In their eyes they had not whereof to repent; they had not done any wrong, because to them they had carried out the law of God. That law had said, Thou shalt have no other gods before me, and, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. These ninety and nine sheep called Jesus a breaker of these two laws, as well as His breaking the law of the Sabbath. This is, to them, the main reason for their kind of justice. They thought themselves just because of their zeal in carrying out the law of God.

The law of God condemned having any god other than the God of Israel. The law of God condemned the taking of His name in vain. The law of God condemned doing any labor on Sunday. All of these the Jews charged the saviour with violating. This charge of guiltiness by the Jews gave impetus to their wicked nature, and whetted them into rejection and crucifixion of the Saviour, and into their feud with Him over His guilt and their self righteous justness. All of this was in God's mercy towards the Gentiles. Men may carp about how hard such a doctrine is, but the truth of the matter is that mercy and justice were both carried out justice against Christ because of His agreement with the covenant of grace, and mercy for the Gentiles. Our natural

mind, being as contrary to God's way of doing things as was that mind in the Jews, we are prone, as human beings, as natural men and women, ready to charge and arraign God before our tribunal of justice for such a hard way of doing things. But suppose, even as some say it should have been, that the sheep had all wandered into the mountains and were lost as the one? Where in the world would the Gentiles come in? What would have become of them? What would have become of you?

The good news of the gospel of the grace of God as it concerns us Gentiles is this, to wit, God had set His love on Israel as a special people. The continuation of that love was dependent on them. That is the covenant made with them. The mandates of that law applied to them. It was not given to anyone else; no other people were under it. Every penalty for violation was against them; every blessing for obedience was their's exclusively. This law they agreed to as a rule of conduct. Did it work? It did not. Strange as it may seem, their violations increased, and as they increased their arrogance, obstinacy and self-righteousness increased. God had according to the covenant that He had made with them, held His hands out-stretched to them all of the law day. Had they given heed? Had they received the prophets which God sent them? Did they bless, or crucify Him that came as the Lord? The answer is obvious to every student of the Bible. This

despotic attitude of theirs continued even after our Saviour left them and went after the one lost sheep. They had seen His miracles; they had witnessed that He lived and died as their prophets had predicted; they still flouted all this proof, and, when many attended the preaching of the word, it was to continue the jeers and sneers on the apostles that had been heaped on the Saviour. (1 John 3:3; John 15:18-19) *"Then (the time had come. This adverb is one of time) Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles, for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth; and when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* (Acts 13:46-18)

As the ninety and nine were left in their self righteousness, even so was the elder brother left out of the glorious meeting when the poor sinful prodigal arrived at home, and the rich man was left to die in his riches and go to hell, and as the Pharisee supposedly prayed (but in truth informed God of his own justness), and then the publican prayed and

went down to his house justified; even so will justification come to every Gentile represented by the lost sheep, even everyone chosen unto eternal life.

Sometimes I am asked, Did God not know what the men of Shinar were building until He came down? Did Jesus not know what things His two followers were talking about? Did Christ have to hunt for the lost sheep? (Gen. 11:5; Luke 24:17-19) My answer is, yes, to all such calling of God in question. It is not anything short of unbelief to ask such questions. As the Man Christ Jesus He did not have ability to work apart from His Father, and as the same Man He did not have eminence, and as the same Man He had hurts and anxieties, thus I am not backwards nor reluctant to say that it was necessary for Him to hunt for the Gentile sheep. Let me hasten to add that in their experience and in their relationship to the covenant of grace that He found everyone of them. Too, I want to urge that all sheep knew such a little amount about redeeming love that our God speaks in language that little sheep understand. Do you need that kind of talking to, or are you qualified (just) to be left in your satisfaction?

He found this sheep, which means, experimentally, that each of them were lost. He finds them all in a lost and ruined condition. As it is with every heir of eternal life, they were indeed in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. (Deut.

32:10) They would not have gotten out had the Saviour not hunted and found them. (Luke 19:10)

I must urge upon you that you keep in mind His leaving the ninety and nine. Remember where He left them. Remember the self righteousness of them. Now look in amazement at His treatment of the lost sheep. We too were sinners, but when He finds us there is not a proposition made to us, to the lost sheep. It seems that I would be ashamed to go into the pulpit and preach Jesus, and come down before the congregation (and in the presence of God) and make a proposition to my hearers. He did not question this sheep nor make an "iffy" proposition to it. And that is not all. Wonder of wonders, that is not all! He did not remonstrate or repudiate or rebuke the sheep. Ah, how favored are our people by our Lord and Master! He held no consultation to ask if they would. That is Old Baptist doctrine all the way. That is good news to a lost and ruined sinner; it is as salt rubbed into a sore of ninety and nine just persons.

He picked it up and put it on His shoulders. Has there ever been any doctrine as good as this? He put it on His shoulders. Let us remember who this Man is. He has been born unto us; He fulfilled those predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, of their consequent judgment at that time, and of all those signs which should indicate the near approach of the judgment of that great

and terrible day.

From all these considerations, let the saints throughout all subsequent time be admonished. The destruction of these false teachers and prophets among the Jews, as also the destruction of the old world, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were all presented by these faithful apostles as examples of what should be developed in the last days, when perilous times should come; when false teachers should come among the saints, bringing in damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, when they should turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables; (tracts, fictitious stories, dairymen's daughters, and the like,) and when they with feigned words, (professing great reverence for God, and extravagant love for souls, &c:;) shall make merchandise of the saints; but the apostle adds, "*Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*"

*"But oh! their end, their
dreadful end,*

*Thy sanctuary taught me
so;*

*On slippery rocks I see
them stand,*

*And fiery billows roll be-
low."*

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert
Beebe, January 15, 1840)

FROM AN OLD SIGNS

Dalrk, Arkansas,

Dear Brother in Bonds:

I received your very comfort-
ing letter about a month ago,
and was certainly elated over the
contents, but wonder why anyone
would stoop so low as to even no-
tice such a wretched character as I
am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that we have a few things in common. Your age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "way-marks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way, if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace. I was raised by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the Missionary Baptist people. Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere.

I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a "*Hard Shell*," until I was

grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called "*Hard Shells*," who I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization with my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literary and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first in the schoolroom, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of "Big I," and the foremost symptom was self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellow-men falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went along smoothly for awhile.

Now, dear brother, the saddest, most heartrending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now make me shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the "*big preacher*" from the city, to take full

charge of the service. He called me the night before, and thus spoke: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, "*Sinners in the hands of an angry God*," using "*Thou shalt be cut off, and that without remedy*," as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call old men, old women, boys and girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, "*You are a sinner vile and needy*." I wanted to run out at the door and hide from everyone. As soon as I could I did get away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself as a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but I was still in possession of my

credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not, I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as anyone could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, *"Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner."* I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God.

I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon several of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night by myself, still feasting, when the train of thoughts was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the Holiest of Holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law. I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that night to preaching. He said Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked him if they were *"Hard Shells,"* and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: *"I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year."* I answered, *"For curiosity's sake I will go."* I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I

consented to go for the first time to hear a "*Hard Shell*" preach, and I was glad I did go. I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to take up each question that came to my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power; my foolishness and God's wisdom. I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw him, as it were, pickup sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with his blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the winepress alone. In my stead (as I hope) he kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was charged to my account, my sins were laid on his shoulders and he bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that

year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for a license of course. With all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face anyone. One night, at the home of Elder J.R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested that I be called on to say a few words. I was on the outside of the house, but was called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while the South Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some of the marks of the road I was forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,

(Elder) E. J. Lambert
Jan. 1938

PROVERBS XVI. 9.

“A MAN’S heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.”

In order to acknowledge truly one’s utter inability to carry out one’s plans and purposes one must have learned the supremacy of God in humility and bitterness of soul. The Scriptures are very plain and positive as to the utter depravity of the heart of man, yet man cannot believe he is so utterly wicked as the Scriptures say until the light of truth is shining within him to reveal the depth of evil in the heart of flesh. Man simply cannot bring himself voluntarily to think that there is not one whit of good in him. When David said he came forth from the womb speaking lies, he said that which is exceedingly repulsive to every natural man to believe; yet it is absolutely true that man is by nature a deceiver, and he deceives no one more than himself. It is so profoundly natural for men to think themselves otherwise than they are, to think their motives pure when they are really evil, to appraise their acts as benevolent when they are simply selfish, to con-

sider themselves serving others, when they are really ministering to their own personal ends. Man is constantly dressing up in a disguise to deceive himself, and is all the time blind to the fact that he is not the man he thinks he is. If a man really knew himself as he is, he would feel every impulse to get away from self, and would see that his own bitterest enemy is dwelling in the same house with him, that is, in his own heart. It is the highest wisdom to know one’s self, and this wisdom comes only by revelation of the Spirit of God. To know that one is at his best estate nothing but vanity, calls for divine instruction, which none but God can impart, and this knowledge is imparted in the deepest depths of the helplessness and woe. What man proposes to do is one thing, what God actually does with that man is quite another. Nothing is truer than that a man’s heart does lay plans and proposes to perform this and that, but the will and purpose of God are paramount and direct the man’s steps in paths wholly unsought to results wholly unlooked for. At the command of God to Nineveh and preach, Jonah devised in his heart that he would not do so, but that he would go exactly in the opposite direction, so took ship to Tarshish. The Lord, however, directed Jonah nearer and nearer to Nineveh the farther and farther Jonah though the was getting away from Nineveh. The longest way around is many times, in the providence of God, the most

direct way to one's journey's end. Because of the unpopularity of his doctrine, Jeremiah resolved it was useless to preach what Jerusalem seemed not inclined to hear, so he devised in his heart he would speak no more in the name of the Lord. However, when he refrained from speaking, he found the word of God was like fire in his bones, and that the very stones of the street threatened to cry out if he longer held his peace. Nothing remained but for the prophet to declare what was given him to say, no matter whether the people heard or not. He, poor man, learned in fiery soul-anguish to say, Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; Joseph's brethren devised in their hearts to get rid of Joseph, and so they sold him to the Midianites; but this so worked out that Joseph's being in Egypt caused the very same brethren to afterward wend their steps thitherward to procure food of him they had despised. Though that which they had planned was evil in them, God directed their steps unto the saving of much people alive, to bring about in Joseph a great deliverance. Nebuchadnezzar devised in his heart to rule the whole world, and to this end captured Jerusalem and led Israel away captive; but though he meant to firmly establish himself securely against all defeat, yet the farther he pushed his conquests, the more and more the elements of decay imbedded them-

selves in his kingdom, so that he who would have ruled the world came afterward to serve those who triumphed over him. The wise men from the east who came to where the child Jesus lay in the manner that Bethlehem thought within themselves to return to Herod at Jerusalem to apprise him of the birthplace of the holy child, but an angel from God appeared to these men and directed them out another way, so that Herod never received the message for which he so much yearned; not, however, that he might worship him, but that he might destroy Jesus and thus rid himself of a rival in the kingdom. The apostle Paul thought at one time to take a trip into Asia and preach the gospel there, but the Spirit thwarted him; again he essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit prevented. Afterward the Lord directed him into Macedonia; a striking instance of how the Lord disappoints where man appoints, and carries his creatures into places not anticipated by them. The Bible from cover to cover abounds in many such instances as those we have given here, but we have mentioned only those which sprang into our mind. Man predestinates, that is, makes in his mind beforehand to do this or that; but God's predestination, being based on his infinite ability to execute his will, makes him abundantly sufficient to direct men here and there, while man's determining, being founded in frailty and short-sightedness, fails to bring to

successful ends the things devised within his heart. Many able spiritual writers have multiplied words in the endeavor to show how God's ways are not man's; to show how God is different from man, and so forth; but these are things better felt than known, and better known than said. Faith is the only thing that can give to man any adequate conception of what God is and of how God's ways and thoughts are higher than man's, as the heavens are higher than the earth a distance that no reckoning of man has ever comprehended. Also, there is another way of looking at this matter. What a man plans within himself he may be prospered of the Lord to carry out, only to find that the end to which his plans bring him are not the ones his soul desired. We believe that very rarely is one whom the world looks upon as a successful man satisfied with what he has accomplished. Many have planned to get themselves riches, and have gotten their gains only to find the wealth an empty shell, without the comfort and solidity they had supposed it to be. Many have sought fame and have achieved it, only to find that the applause of men brings not with it the sweetness they had sought. Travelers in deserts are often deceived by mirages to seek water where there is none so does the mirage of fancy induce ambitious men to press forward to roseate goals, only to find there emptiness and desolation. The cunning and genius of man's heart often unleash

forces that cannot afterward be bridled, and which ride their inventor to destruction. Does anyone suppose that when Franklin discovered electricity by the simple device of a key on a kite-string that he had any idea the force he had bit upon would come to be an agency of destruction in supposed-to-be civilized world, when men would kill one another with it, outvieing one another in schemes of electrical machination. The Lord often directs these things to ends unguessed and unsought by those who discover or invent them. Every civilization that the world has ever known has inevitably carried within it the seeds of its own decay. People talk about the world being civilized now, as though it had never been civilized before, when, as a matter of fact, there were some things in the civilizations of the ancients that are superior to what is called civilization today. Just as the civilizations of Egypt and of Greece and of Rome each perished in their turn, so we are witnessing today the crumbling of modern civilization, which is bound to be superseded by a civilization of another order, whatever that may be. The world which many of us lived in prior to the summer of 1914 is gone never to return. What the future will be none can say, but it will be different. We do not mean by this assertion that what is coming will be any better than what has been, but it will differ from what has been, as one age has differed from preceding ages in

all the history of the world. The civilization decaying all around us has carried unsuspected within it the seeds of its own destruction. Forces have been unleashed through the devising of men's hearts which men have been unable to control once they were committed. These men guessed forces have carried the nations to unguessed ends, and are threatening to engulf us all in worldwide calamity, whence none but the mighty arm of God can ever deliver us. The doctrines of Arminius had gained such a foothold in the world we all have been living in, man's ability to bring about his own salvation was so widely preached and universally believed, man was thought to be so mighty, while God merely an auxiliary, such mighty strides were being made to convert the whole world to christianity through millions of dollars sent to the heathen, such great reforms were thought to be assured in all walks of life and among all conditions of men, that the world awoke affrighted and astounded four years ago when hell opened its jaws to swallow us all. What happened was but the consequence of man's own doctrines and institutions. They had sown the wind and were now to reap the whirlwind, and the harvest is not ended yet. Christ had said two thousand years ago that they compassed both land and sea to make proselytes, converts to hell and not to heaven but then this modern world regarded Christ as out of date, and his teach-

ings not applicable to this gilded age of ours. The gods worshipped by this generation have gone back on their worshippers and left them floundering in a welter of blood and sorrow, from which they cannot find their way out. These gods, what are they. First of all, gold. Men and nations and religions have worshipped at the shrine of gold. They are now calling upon their god to deliver them, but their god is dumb, the whole world is sweeping onto the rocks of financial ruin. Gold is all right in its place, just as every gift of God is made to be used and not abused. The right place for gold is as man's servant, but when men serve gold, then woe betide them. Another god of this age has been science and learning. What magic could not these accomplish in the minds of their adorers? Science had proved the Bible a fake, and learning had relegated to back numbers the sacred sayings of Christ and his apostles. Science and learning, like gold, are all right in their places, and that is, as man's servants; but when men serve learning and science and make them their gods, then woe is coming their way. Truly men's hearts devise tremendous things, but to what evil ends their plans do often come. Money and science and learning, these have been the trinity of this modern civilization; these have been the, gods expected to usher in the regenerated world of universal brotherhood. Now they stand unmasked as devils pursuing man to

destruction, hurling their victims, into abysmal woe. In the midst of the havoc man's ingenuity has wrought we have a strong tower, a sure defence: the mighty God, the everlasting Father. His dear Son is a hiding-place from the wind to all who trust in him, a covert from the tempest, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Come, all ye weary travelers whom faith guides on your way. Rest in him, ye prisoners of hope.

Elder Lefferts.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly In all wisdom."—Colossians iii. 16.

This surely means something more than merely reading the word in a careless, formal manner. It is "to dwell in us," that is, take up its firm and lasting abode in our heart, and that "richly;" not poorly and niggardly, but copiously and abundantly, unfolding to us and putting us into possession of the wealth of its treasures; and that in "*all wisdom*," making us wise to salvation, opening up to us the manifold wisdom of God, and how it displays itself in the great mystery of godliness. Now we shall not attain to this rich and heavenly wisdom unless we search and sludy the Scriptures with prayer and supplication to understand what the Holy Ghost has revealed therein, and what he is

pleased to unfold therefrom of the will and way of God for our own personal instruction and consolation. We very easily fall off from abiding in Christ; nor can we expect to keep up sensible union and communion with the Lord Jesus if we neglect those means of grace which the Holy Ghost has provided for the sustentation of the life of God in the soul. When we get cold, sluggish, and dead, to read the word of God is a task and a burden; but not so, when the life of God is warm and gushing in the soul. Then, to read his holy word with prayer and supplication, entering by faith into its hidden treasures, and drinking into the mind of Christ as revealed therein, is a blessed means of maintaining the life of God in the heart, and keeping up union and communion with Christ.

Elder J.C. Philpot

2 CORINTHIANS 5: 1-3.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

MEETINGS

**NEW DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST CHURCH MEETING**

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia, purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on June 28, 2008. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30am and preaching at 10:00am. The church is located on State Road 636(State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line Union. The fifth Sunday in June 29, 2008. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. Especially ministers of our correspondence. Church is located On Highway 700 between Eden, North Carolina and Danville, Virginia.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll, Clerk

**STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST UNION MEETING**

The Staunton River Union Fifth Saturday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday only, June 28, 2008. Singing will start at 10 o'clock a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

Springfield Church will host the meeting and it will be held at Springfield Church, located at U.S. 29, South Main Street, Gretna, Va. Pittsylvania County.

We invite all ministers, brothers, sisters, and all believers in salvation by grace to join with us during this meeting.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk
434-656-1782

JULY 4th MEETING

The annual July 4th meeting will be held, the Lord willing, this year at Paynes Creek Church. It is located near milepost 150 on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The meeting Time is Friday July 4th. We invite our Brothers, Sisters, and Elders to be with us.

Tony R. Horton

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2008

Roland G. Allen, GA.....	5.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Elsie Poindexter, VA	10.00
Elizabeth Lewis, DC	25.00
Pearl Pendelton, VA	5.00
Donald Arrington, NC	5.00
A.L. Shelton, VA	15.00
Rosalie Walker, VA	25.00
E.H. Chandler, LA	5.00

OBITUARIES

BEULAH WATSON DAVIDSON

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of our dear sister, Beulah Davidson, by request.

Sister Davidson was born Nov. 12, 1917 and passed away Sept. 24, 2007, making her stay on earth almost 90 years.

She united with Old Union Primitive Baptist Church, Aug. 5, 1951 and was baptized by Elder C.E. Turner. She had been a member of this church for 56 years.

To know Sister Davidson was to love her. She was a faithful member

and attended her church regularly as long as she was able. When I would go visit her in the nursing home, she always enjoyed us telling her about the meetings and she enjoyed the Brethren visiting her. I feel she was kept by the Almighty Power, to walk in that straight and narrow path that leads to life everlasting.

She was married to the late Herden W. Davidson, he died in July 1969, and to this union four children were born, all of whom survive, they are: Charlotte Woodson, William Davidson, Brenda Davis and Ralph Davidson.

She was preceded in death by one grandson, Terry Davidson, two sisters, Evelyn Towler and Agnes Blair and two brothers, J.W. Watson and Calvin Watson.

She is survived by three grandchildren, Justin Davidson, Jason Davidson and John Davidson, six sisters: Sallie Towler, Kitty Doss, Elmore Ester, Patsy Rice, Dorothy Yeatts and Virginia David and one brother, Gordon Watson.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Marvin Brumfield at Colbert-Maran Chapel in Gretna. She was laid to rest beside of her husband, in Liberty Memorial Cemetery, Sandy Level.

May God grant her eternal peace and rest.

Written by one who loved Her dearly,
Mabel Hedrick.

The family requested that a copy be sent to them.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
William Midkiff, Clerk



Elder Carlton Robinson

Facts:

Born: January 1, 1927

Place of Birth: Clayton County, Georgia

Death: February 28, 2007

Place of Death: Haralson County.

Survived By:

Edna Ruth Robinson, Wife
Debbie Faulkner, Daughter
Robert Robinson, Son
Tommy Robinson, Son
Mrs. Margaret Hester, Sister
Mrs. Sue Duncan, Sister
Mrs. Elsie Brock, Sister
Billy Robinson, Brother
Bobby Robinson, Brother
Leonard Robinson, Brother

ELDER CARLTON ROBINSON

January 1, 1927- February 28, 2007

Elder Carlton passed away February 28, 2007.

Elder Robinson was born on January 1, 1927 in Clayton County, Georgia the son of the late W.T. "Coot" Robinson and Martha Barrow Robinson.

A retired steamfitter and welder

with Plumbers and Steamfitters Local #72 of Atlanta, Veteran of The United States Army and Member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church.

In addition to his parents, he was also preceded in death by a son, Jerry Lee Robinson, brothers, Adrian Robinson, James Robinson and Max Robinson, sisters, Hvacinth Harris and Genevive McKibben.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Edna Ruth Robinson of Waco; daughter, Debbie Faulkner of Villa Rica; sons, Robert Robinson of Waco and Tommv Robinson of Meansville; sisters. Mrs. Margaret Hester, Mrs. Sue Duncan and Mrs. Elsie Brock all of Carrollton; brothers, Billy Robinson of Mt. Zion. Bobby Robinson of Douglasville and Leonard Robinson of Waco; five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Funeral Services was conducted Saturday, March 3, 2007 at 2 P.M. at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church with Elders Frank Andrews. Leonard Robinson. Homer Benefield and Mr. Tommy Howard officiating.

I have no more conception of a true believer without morality, than of a river without water, or of a sun without light and heat.

Toplady

MR. CHARLES F. STEWART, JR.

On August 2, 2007, our Lord called Brother Charles Stewart to his heavenly home.

Brother Charles was born in Mebane, North Carolina, to Charles and Lula Ann Wray Stewart and lived to be 89 years of age. He honorably served his country in the U. S. Army during World War II. Brother Charles was employed with Liggett & Meyers Tobacco Company for nearly 35 years and lived most of his life in the Durham, North Carolina, area. A few years ago he and Sister Novaline moved to Manteo, North Carolina, near their son, Ronnie and his wife, who faithfully looked after them.

Brother Charles joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on November 17, 1985, and was blessed with a quietness of spirit. He was a good listener and thoughtful in responses to his brethren. The members of the church at Durham have really missed him and Sister Novaline since they moved away.

Surviving are his wife of nearly 70 years, Novaline S. Stewart; his two children, Charles "Ronnie" Stewart, Sr., and wife, Alice, of Manteo, North Carolina, and Jo Ann Rhew of Bahama, North Carolina; eight grandchildren; 21 great grandchildren; and 6 great great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Durham Primitive Baptist Church on Tuesday, August 7, 2007, at 11:00

a.m. followed by interment at Woodlawn Cemetery. Elder Cleo Robertson, Pastor, conducted the services.

Brother Charles quietly rejoiced in hearing the sweetness of the Gospel with its assurance of salvation by grace. He loved to sing the old hymns and could witness with the words of Toplady who wrote:

*Sweet in the confidence of
faith,
To trust His firm decrees;
Sweet to lie passive in His
hands,
And know no will but His.*

*If such the sweetness of the
stream
What must the fountain be
Where saints and angels
draw their bliss
Directly Lord from thee.*

With love and respect,
Catherine Humbarger, Clerk

EPHESIANS 1:8-9.

*Wherein he hath abounded
toward us in all wisdom and
prudence;*

*Having made known unto us
the mystery of his will, accord-
ing to his good pleasure which
he hath purposed in himself:*

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 176

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*My God, what silken cords are
thine;
How soft, and yet how strong;
While power, and truth, and love
combine
To draw our souls along.*

*Thou sawest us crushed beneath
the yoke
Of Satan and of sin:
Thy hand the iron bondage
broke,
Our worthless hearts to win.*

*The guilt of twice ten thousand
sins
One moment takes away;
And grace, when first the war
begins,
Secures the crowning day.*

*Comfort through all this vale of
tears,
In rich profusion flows,
And glory of unnumbered years
Eternity bestows.*

*Drawn by such cords, we on-
ward move,
Till round thy throne we meet:
And captives in the chains of
love,
Embrace our Conqueror's feet.*

Doddridge.

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EDITORIAL

I HAVE COMMANDED THE
 RAVENS TO FEED THEE

1 Kings 17:4 reads, *“And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.”*



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

In the days of Elijah, Ahab was king over the ten tribes of Israel and was more evil than any king before him. He married Jezebel who was the daughter

of the king of Zidon which was a nation that worshipped Baal. So Ahab built an altar to Baal and worshipped the idol as well as setting up other idols and images in the land.

God sent Elijah to Ahab to tell him that there would be no dew nor rain these years. James 5:17 tells us that it was for a period of three years and six months. Then the Lord told Elijah to hide himself by the brook Cherith as Ahab and Jezebel sought to find Elijah to kill him. Cherith means *“to cut off or separate.”* Elijah was cut off or separated from King Ahab and according to 1 Kings 18:10, Ahab sought Elijah in every nation and kingdom but could not find him. They could not because what God has hidden, no man can find. In all his searching, Ahab could not locate Elijah. God raised up Elijah as His prophet for the times. The Lord always raises up His servants and qualifies them for the work for which He has purposed. How alone Elijah must have felt as he was being hunted to be killed! God had called him to confront the king of this nation with all the evil and worship of false gods. One man against a king and his army, but God was with Elijah and neither the king nor his army could touch Elijah. The Lord does not forsake His little ones in times of trouble and afflictions. He feeds them with grace and truth that is comforting and strengthening.

The Lord told Elijah he would drink of the brook and that He had commanded the ravens to feed him

with bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening. Ravens by nature would not bring food to anyone. They are scavengers that feed on dead or decaying matter and prey on small defenseless things such as worms, crickets and even young birds. They are black in color and in Leviticus 11:15 and Deuteronomy 14:14 were said to be unclean and an abomination. To me, the ravens set forth God's ministers in their fleshly or carnal nature. The natural man is a sinner and as black as the raven. To be carnally minded is death because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Therefore, those in the flesh cannot please God. In their carnal nature, men could not bring spiritual food to anyone as they feed upon the dead things of natural man as the ravens do. In my own experience, I never had any thought of bringing any food of the gospel to any of the Lord's people. I had other plans and desires that did not include the Lord or His people. But, the Lord commands and it stands fast, speaks and it's done. I am made to feel so weak and unworthy and to feel surely one such as I am cannot be one of the Lord's ministers. Yet, there is great comfort in the Lord's words to the Apostle Paul, *"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*

In his raven nature, King Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, captured the city, destroyed the

temple and took many vessels of the temple as well as many of the Jews to Babylon. He worshiped other gods and boasted of his power and majesty in building a magnificent kingdom. In Jeremiah 43:10, God calls Nebuchadnezzar His servant. Therefore, at God's appointed time, He took Nebuchadnezzar out of his palace and into the wilderness where he was shown that he was nothing and had no power of his own. Again, at God's appointed time when Nebuchadnezzar had been thoroughly taught, he said he lifted up his eyes unto heaven and came forth praising God proclaiming that God's dominion *"is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and 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?"* Nebuchadnezzar was blessed to set forth his experience of grace in the book of Daniel. Daniel 4:1-2 reads, *"Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me."* Daniel 4:37 further reads, *"Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment:*

and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." The Lord had commanded the raven (Nebuchadnezzar) to feed His little ones with bread and flesh.

As with the Apostle Paul before his conversion, his raven nature was persecuting the Lord's people and binding them and putting them in prison. He even consented to the gnashing of teeth and stoning of Stephen. But, then, on the way to Damascus, the Lord brought him down and showed him the blackness of his earthly nature. The apostle experienced that which he was blessed to write in Ephesians 2:1-3, *"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* There on that road he also experienced what the psalmist wrote in Psalm 107:1-2, *"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."* Paul could proclaim that by grace you are saved and that grace and truth came

by Jesus Christ. The raven (the Apostle Paul) was commanded to feed the Lord's elect with bread and flesh.

Noah sent the raven out of the ark first and it did not return because it found its desires of death and decay in the natural world. The dove was sent out afterward which was a type of the spiritual and it found no rest in the world and returned to the ark. I Corinthians 15:46 states, *"Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."* God chose His ministers as He did all His people from the foundation of the world, brought them into an understanding of the truth at His appointed time, and made them willing in the day of His power. He commanded the ravens to feed His prophet and they did. Christ commanded Peter to *"feed my lambs. Feed my sheep."*

The scripture says that the ravens brought Elijah bread and flesh in the morning and in the evening. I believe that this event actually took place, but I also believe this is setting forth God's ministers preaching the gospel of Christ. Elijah could not provide any food for himself. He was in a helpless condition and totally dependent upon the Lord. John 6:33 states, *"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."* Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life."* The food that the ravens brought to Elijah was

not raven's food. They did not make it nor prepare it. God made and prepared the bread and flesh and gave it to the ravens to bring to Elijah. It was nourishing and strengthening to him. It was life to Elijah. So is the gospel to every little child of grace. John 6:51 reads, *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* The world that Jesus refers to is not this natural world, but the world of believers, His elect people. This bread and flesh that the ravens brought to Elijah sets forth that which was to come, namely, Christ in the flesh. It speaks of His suffering and death and the redemption of His people from their sins by the giving of His flesh or body on the cross and the shedding of His blood. When Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish, He was setting forth Himself as the bread and flesh. I believe the five loaves are five manifestations of the one bread. Jesus is manifested to His people as Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace: five manifestations of the one bread. The two fish set forth grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ. Every little heir of promise feeds upon this bread and flesh. Every God-called minister preaches this bread and flesh. To eat of His flesh is to experience in a measure the suffering of

Christ. Christ told His disciples in the upper room to *"take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."* The Apostle Paul writes in II Timothy 2:12, *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him"* and in Romans 8:17, *"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."* When the apostles were brought before the Sanhedrin, which was the highest Jewish council, for preaching Jesus, they were beaten and told not to do it any more. But, the apostles departed rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. As the psalmist wrote, *"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."* O, dear people, haven't you feasted upon this bread and flesh? What joy you experienced! Yet, how humble and small you were made to feel with the precious hope that you were included in His suffering, death and resurrection. His resurrection was the first resurrection; and all that hath part in that resurrection, on such the second death hath no power.

The water of the brook which Elijah was commanded to drink was setting forth the Holy Spirit. As natural water is essential for natural life, so the Spirit is essential for spiritual life. As Christ said in John 3:6, *"That*

which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The Spirit was manifested to Elijah as it kept him safe and provided for him. As David experienced and wrote, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*" In the green pastures of His grace, his little ones are given rest and feed upon the green grass of the gospel. No works of the flesh are involved. They are led beside and drink of the still waters of His Spirit, that pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, that flows from the throne of God. But, at God's appointed time, the brook dried up. God did not leave nor forsake His prophet, but the appointed time for Elijah to leave this place had come. The Lord commanded Elijah to go to a certain village to a certain widow woman whom God had commanded to sustain him and the Spirit was manifested in the barrel of meal that wasted not and the cruise of oil that failed not as well as the miracle of raising her son from the dead.

How marvelous are His works and His ways past finding out! May the Lord of all grace be with each of you and feed you with this bread and flesh and bless you with comfort and peace.

In bonds of love,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Tony, Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two more years, enclosed find check, with a little extra to use were needed.

May the Lord continue to bless the Editors, and writers, of this fine paper, with words of wisdom that can only come from our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; To feed and comfort the little flock of the Lord's people. If it be according to His Holy and divine will.

With love and sweet fellowship in the truth, as it is in our Lord and Savior. I hope.

C. Fox

ISAIAH 53: 1-3.

WHO hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF THE LATE ELDER S.L. MORAN, FLOYD COUNTY, VA.

I have had a desire to leave something with my people in regard to the Doctrine that I have contended for from a child.

I had serious thoughts about things of God, and I was made to know without a doubt there was a God in Heaven, and that he loved me and that I loved him. And I felt that love filled my soul, and if I had to throw that away it would leave me with nothing.

I was very young but that stayed with me. I grew up as other boys and as wild as any of them, but when I did wrong it would hurt me and I would say I would not do that anymore. I would find myself going on in the same way, and continued to make the same promises but never able to keep them. I went on in this way until I was a grown man. I thought I could live a different life, but the more I promised - the worse I got. I thought I could do better but found I was a failure.

After my first wife died, I felt she was saved, and I had a feeling I wanted to be prepared to meet her. I got down on my knees and tried to pray, and of all the wretches that ever made the attempt, I was the worst, and said in my mind that I

would never attempt such a thing again.

I went on in my wild way until I married again, and I felt the Lord had given me a help-mate. Everything seemed to be getting along well with me until suddenly a change took place in my life. One night after going to bed, sometime during the night I was brought up before the Great God of all the earth. He was taking the Righteous on the right and the Sinners on the left. I was wondering what would be my doom. When I was brought up, I thought I would make some plea, but before I could speak I was taken on the left, and then I knew I was a lost sinner, justly condemned before a just God; and if all the world had told me there was a chance for me, it would not have done any good. My life had been so wrong and sinful, I knew there was no hope for such a sinner as I. And from that time on for months and years I went begging for mercy. I would go in the mountains to try to find peace of soul. I had to give up all for lost and thought I would not try any more, but I was still begging in my mind. I felt I must try one time more. I went to the lowest place I could find and fell on my face and put my mouth in the dirt and all I could say was, "*God be merciful to me a condemned Sinner.*" And when I got up everything was new and that burden of sin and condemnation was gone. I felt to be in a new world, and made to praise God from whom all blessings flow. I thought I

would go to the house and tell my wife, but I did not. I was afraid I was mistaken.

I went on sometime wondering what all of this meant. I had never heard any preaching for I had not attended any church, for I was not interested in church matters, and I had no thought of where the church was. I thought anywhere they claimed to worship was Church.

There came a time I felt I wanted a home among God's people. I went to the Methodist to find a home. I went with full intention of joining them. But, lo, when the preacher began his sermon everything he said was against my hope. When he got through he left me without any hope. I went home and felt then I would not go to church anymore, but I soon got restless, and it came in my mind to go to Laurel Creek Church and see what Elder Cole would say. I went and when he began preaching, in the place of condemning me, he told my troubles better than I could. And when he got through I knew he had told the truth; and I did not have to look for the church anymore. Since that time I have not searched for the church. I have no doubt where the church is and no desire to find any other .

I went on for a year or two going to hear the Baptist preach. The more I heard the more I loved them. I did not feel I would ever join the church. But there came a time something took place with me very unexpected to me. The 4th Sunday

in November, 1910, I told my wife that morning, I was going to Laurel Creek Church to hear Elders Cole and J. J. Spangler preach. She said, "*If you are going to join the church I want to go with you.*" I said, "*If that is all you are going for, don't worry I have no thought of that, and I don't guess I ever will; and I know, not today.*" I went to church and both preachers preached. Elder Cole gave invitation for members and when they began singing to dismiss, something took hold of me with such power it caused me to tremble. I said, "*I am not going,*" but getting up and starting to the pulpit still saying, "*I am not going.*" But went on and began telling what I felt the Lord had done for me. They received me, and I rejoiced.

Then came a question in my soul, "*What kind of a man have you been?*" I answered that question, "Very bad." Then, "What have you done? Can you do any better?" And I said, "No." "*You know you will have to be turned out of the church, they will not keep you in the church.*" I went home with a greater burden than I have ever been able to tell in words.

Elder Cole asked when I wanted to be baptized. I replied, "*I don't know.*" He said, "*that is unfinished business.*" I went on until the next meeting which was the 4th Sunday in December, 1910 and yet I had no desire to be baptized. But on the night of the same month, if I have

been called to preach it was the 25th of that month. I went under a great burden since joining the church and had no thought of preaching until during the night. I saw a cloud come over me. I felt it was the power of God and a weight was so powerful it was pressing my life out; and a voice spoke out of that cloud and said, "*Take up thy cross and follow me.*" I said, "*Is it to Pray?*" And the power got harder. I said, "Is it to preach?" The weight was lifted off me and I sat up in bed, and I felt a power over me that I never will be able to tell. I commenced speaking. I felt to know that it was the power of God. I had no doubt at that time, and I commenced speaking with as much assurance as I ever have since; and I said, "*I will go wherever I am sent for the God of Heaven has called me.*" I did not have any doubt at that time, but when I came to my self I knew that was impossible. I told my wife not to tell of what I have said for I can't do that. I felt I would not go to church the January meeting. I still had no feeling to be baptized. I thought they would think strange of me for not saying anything about being baptized.

I had some work to do that day and started out to get some help. I was stopped on the way and this Scripture came into my heart, "*He that forsaketh not father, mother, house and land, wife and children for my name's sake is not worthy of me. Take up thy*

cross and follow me." That turned me around and I went back to the house. My wife said, "*I thought you were going to haul hay.*" And I said, "*No, I am going to church.*" I went and after the meeting was over, invitation for members was given. Henry Board came forth and gave a good reason of his hope and was received. He said, "*I want to tell a dream. I had. I was baptized in a pretty pond of water and there were two fishes one on each side of me, and I loved them.*" Elder Cole said, "*When do you want to be baptized?*" And he said, "*This evening.*" I felt I was bound to be baptized with him. I said, "*Brother Cole, I want to be baptized tomorrow.*" And Brother Board was willing to wait until the next day.

The next day it was raining. I thought there was not any reason in going out on such a day, but fixing all the time to go. When we got to the place they were coming out of the house to go to the pond. Elder Cole had told me to tell my wife to bring her clothes and be baptized with us. I told her and she said she couldn't do that. I said, "*He told me to tell you and that is all I will say.*" My wife went and was received. Elder Cole took me in and baptized me first, then took brother Henry Board, and then my wife. Brother Board said, "*I see my two fishes and I love them.*"

That was the happiest day I have ever seen fulfilled and there

was not a thing that stood against me. I felt I was in a new world.

I thought all my troubles were over, but in this I was sadly mistaken. I had to go down, so much so that I felt I had deceived the Church. I felt I had to go to the church and tell them I was mistaken, but before the next meeting, I was more satisfied when Paul's writing came in my mind so sweetly, "*There is a thorn given me in the flesh to buffet me lest I become exalted above measure. I besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed from me. The Lord said, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*"

That was my case. When that came in my heart I had read the Bible but very little, but I knew that was Scripture. I went to the house and opened the Bible and it opened at that place without turning a leaf. That gave me great consolation.

After that my burden became the same as it did that night when the Lord said, "*Take up thy cross and follow me.*" The same voice said, "*You have lied to God.*" I awoke my wife crying aloud. She asked me what was the matter. I told her I had lied to God, and it was more than I could stand. I went on wondering what to do.

Sometime after that I had a trip to make. I had to go in the mountains, and as I was walking along thinking of my troubles, it came in my mind that all I had seen was in

the night. Maybe it was only a dream. That same voice came in my heart and soul, "*You have lied to God.*" I fell on my face and made a promise to God if he would let me live, if I was ever called on, I would go, I thought that would let me off for I was not going to tell anyone; but it was not long until I told a brother and asked him not to tell anyone. It was not long after that, Elder Sumner came to our house. We were talking over many things, and the first thing I knew, I was telling him; but told him it was impossible for me to ever preach.

I went to Pine Forest Church. Brother Sumner asked me to go home with him. I went that night. He asked me if my impression was with me as much as it had been, and I told him not as much as it had been. We went back to the church the next day and he told me he was going to call on me. It shocked me so I could hardly speak. Then I remembered the vow I had taken and said, "*If it doesn't make any difference with you, don't call on me, it will embarrass me for I just can't go.*" I will never be able to tell the feeling that went in my heart and soul. I could not stay in the house. I walked below the church and stood for a few minutes, and if I know my heart, I asked the Lord to take my life for it was more than I could bear. It was not because I did not want to preach, I would have given anything if I could but I knew I could not. I thought I would go to the woods and

try to ask the Lord to let this cup pass, but I was unable to even bow. A voice seemed to say, "*You fool, why stand you here!*"

I went back to the house. Elder Sumner was in prayer. I slipped in the house and got in behind someone. Elder Sumner saw me and said, "*You just as well come on up here, you will have to anyway.*" I went and stood on the steps of the stand. I spoke a few words, but in the place of getting relief, I felt I had brought disgrace on my people; but the worst was, I had disgraced the Church. When I got home, I told my wife she could be getting things in shape for I was not going to stay in this country, and I certainly meant every word at that time. The next Sunday was the 4th Sunday, which was Laurel Creek meeting. Elder Cole hearing I had gotten up at Pine Forest, asked me in the stand. It seemed I had no resistance and went on and that was still worse than the first.

My wife and I started to Brother Board's to spend Saturday night. As we went I told her that was the last time I would ever go; and I verily thought I was telling the truth. That night at Brother Board's, something took place with me, I will never forget. After retiring, I will never know if I was asleep or awake, but let that be as it may. All at once I was in a strange country and I wanted to go home. I came out to go home, but I found myself in a wilderness. I could see a narrow path. I would follow that

path until it would come to a solid wall. I would have to turn back and try another path it seemed. I continued trying and felt I would have to give up, then I saw a narrow path leading up a hill. I knew I would have to go that way. And when I got to the top of that hill, I looked across a Beautiful Valley and saw a passenger train, and I was glad for I knew I would be able to get home. When I got to the train the first thing I knew I was in a buggy with a young man, and I will never be able to tell the sweetness I felt in that ride. But it soon came to an end. All at once we came to a wide river and there was a covered bridge. When we got to the bridge, a shutter came down and cut us off. The young man was gone and I was left alone. I wondered what to do. I walked around the end of the bridge and looked at the river. It looked deep but I knew I had to go that way. I dreaded it but it was not as deep as I expected it to be. Then I got in the same road, it was a plain old road. When I got in this road, I looked ahead of me and I saw an old-like woman walking ahead of me. She had on an old-time slat bonnet like my mother used to wear. I thought if I could catch up with her she could tell me of my troubles. But when I caught up with her, I began telling her my troubles. She began kissing her hand and laid it on my cheek, showing the love she had for me.

When I came to myself, I never doubted she was the Church, for the

church had shown me all the kindness I could ask of them. That vision caused me to go, and I went to some church every weekend, but felt to have no liberty to preach; until I got to the place I lost all hope of ever being able to preach. I feel the Lord gave me endurance and I feel that it was his time.

I went to Old Pine Creek Church. As I went around the cemetery, a Scripture came in my mind. It was sweet to me. I was not in the habit of reading a text. Elder Cole passed by me and dropped the Bible in my lap. I turned to the text that was on my mind. I read it and then began talking I felt with another tongue, for it was altogether different to me. I looked over that crowd of folks and they all looked good to me. I spoke for around 30 or 35 minutes and felt satisfied the Lord turned me loose and I would go and preach the rest of my time just like I did then. Only I would preach longer.

That was the first Sunday. The next Sunday there was meeting at Old Salem Church. That was the longest week I thought I had ever seen, but when Saturday came I went. But not to preach. I knew there would be more people there on Sunday, so I refused on Saturday. There an old Brother said to me, "*Go with me to my nephew's.*" And I said, "*Alright.*" That night after retiring, whether asleep or awake I cannot tell, but I was in a room and the man that kept that room had to keep ev-

erything just right in that room. I used to dance and I thought I had not tried to dance for a long time. I began dancing over the floor, and the man that kept the room began whipping me with fire. It came around my waist and began taking my breath. I looked back over my shoulder to see who it was whipping me. I saw no one but I was picked up like a feather, and there was liquid fire in front of me and I was thrown in that fire and consumed. And a voice came into me, "*God is a consuming Fire.*" I wondered what that meant.

When I got to the Church that morning, I found out what that meant, for instead of preaching, if I ever opened my mouth I never knew it. I sat down crying, longing to get out of that church and never to be there any more. When I was leaving I was bidding every thing goodbye. But before I got out of sight of the church something took place with me. This sentence of Scripture came into my mind with sweetness, "*We rejoice therefore in tribulations, knowing tribulations works patience, patience experience and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given us.*" So I was made to rejoice and shed tears of joy. I was made glad the Lord had shut my mouth and taught me some sense.

The next Sunday was the third

Sunday and I went to Pine Forest. And I went in the fear of the Lord, and he gave me liberty to speak; and I have been going ever since. I know I am about through for if I live until February 22, 1959, I'll be 82 years old. And I can't expect many more years. The Lord has been wonderfully good to me and my Brethren and Friends have showed me all the kindness I could wish for. They are bound to see something in me that I can't see in myself, for I see nothing in my vile flesh that is good.

I hope I have not set forth anything in this writing to give myself any honor, for if I have been shown anything, it is the rottenness of my nature. It makes no difference how much the Lord has shown me I still see nothing good in my flesh.

There was a period of time in my ministry that the sweetness of the Gospel seemed to be completely taken from me. I felt I would have to give it up, but in that time I had a dream. I was traveling a road that was muddy and I was so worried on my journey. I felt I had gone as far as I could go and had given up. Then I viewed a road in front of me that was so beautiful, I can't describe it. When I had put my feet in that road, I felt as light as a feather. I began leaping and jumping and quoting one Psalm after another in praises to God, and I wondered how long that would last. When I awoke I told my wife I had been seeing something wonderful to me. And from that time on for a few years I had sweet liberty continually

for a while, baptizing six or eight. Then I could see what that beautiful road meant.

The longer I live the more of my vileness I see in the flesh. And I can say of a truth, "*In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.*"

S. L. Moran

(Elder Moran is well remembered among the Baptists of Virginia. He united with Laurel Creek Church, Floyd County, Va., and later united by letter with the Salem Church (Head of the River) in the same county. He served as Moderator of the Smith River Association from 1932 until his death in 1960. He was ordained in 1916 and served five churches during his ministry.

The above was written by Elder Moran December 30, 1958, and we are glad to publish it in his memory.-
J.D.W.)

ST. LUKE 1: 1-2.

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

SERMON BY
ELDER D. V. SPANGLER .
(Tape Recorded and Edited)

Last evening I read and commented from the 5th chapter of II Corinthians, and I will read that again this morning, as I have not expounded that scripture fully. We will begin reading in the 17th verse, *“Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*

It is a blessing that God has described the pathway of the sinner. We are told in the word of God that the spirit in the heart of those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious will cause them to hear a voice behind them saying, *“This is the way; walk ye in it.”* Though we assent unto a truth, that which makes the word of God precious is the application of it to our heart. All the promises of God in the Bible would mean little to us if we hadn't had somewhere along the way these promises applied to us. When our Master said to His disciples, *“I will be with you always, even to the end of the world,”* that promise is precious to all who have had that said to them in the inward man.

Paul, in using the expression, “Therefore” in the 17th verse, had reference to the things contained in the former verses in this 5th chapter of II Corinthians. *“If any man be in Christ.”* He now describes the effect of it. Sometime ago I spoke in connection with the subject of a person be-

ing in Christ, which is an endless subject. Paul, in the first chapter of Ephesians, said to the church, “He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Paul is not talking about the eternal vital union of Christ and His people before the world began in this scripture. He, in this scripture, was talking about the manifestation of that union that Christ had with His people before the world began. Christ is formed in their heart, “The hope of glory.” I would never belittle the doctrine of hope religion, as some do. The scripture teaches that we have a hope in Christ, as Christ Himself formed in us, the hope of glory. So if a person ever has an inclination to speak lightly or belittle the doctrine of hope religion, you will just have to take Christ out of the picture. There are a lot of people who say, “I just don't believe in that kind of religion.” I have no quarrel with them. But the precious thing that we want to keep in mind is that if you have a hope of heaven when you die, that hope is Christ formed in you, and it is the hope of glory. That's what Paul is talking about in this chapter. *“If any man be in Christ.”*

If there is a manifestation in the life of a person that Christ has been formed in them, that is the hope of glory, and they are new creatures. Paul speaks of this as the new man. (The old man is the

outer man.) He speaks of the effects of regeneration, and I want to emphasize that, though the world is full of conversions (so called) of people. it isn't full of regenerations of people. There is a difference in being converted and being regenerated. Conversion is substituted today by man, by saying that is all you need. Just change your opinion about a thing. Regeneration is the work in the heart, and the other is in the head. A man can be converted a lot of times, but he is only regenerated one time. You may have to be converted after you are born again. Jesus told Peter "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." If it has been manifested that Christ has been formed in one's heart, (and there will be a manifestation of it, for the tree is known by the fruit it bears,) he is a new creature.

This "*new creature*" is then brought to understand something of the new covenant. One cannot really understand and get any comfort from what is called the new covenant in the Bible unless he knows something about being made a new creature in Christ. The new covenant which God said He would make with the house of Israel after the days of the law was, "*I will write my laws in their heart.*" That's being made a new creature, isn't it? "*I will write my laws in their heart.*" I used to think that read, "*I will write my law in their heart,*" but it doesn't. What does it mean? I will write the law of Moses in their heart? No! I will write

the laws of Christ in their heart; the general principles that brings truth into their hearts. The laws - "I will write my laws" - the laws are the new covenant, "*in their heart.*" And no more shall a man teach his neighbor or his brother saying, "Know the Lord; for they all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest." That sets aside men teaching men to know Christ, doesn't it? I would feel right guilty this morning if I had started out here to make christians in the face of that scripture. God said that no more it is to be that men teach his neighbor; men teaching men to know God.

If any man be in Christ there will be a manifestation of it. There will be a manifestation of new life in that person where the work of grace has been wrought. One of the manifestations of the child when it is born into the world do you know one of the first things that happens to a baby when it is born? Most of the time a cry goes up. They begin to cry. And it isn't but a little while until they are hungry. They begin to hunger. These are some of the evidences that they are a new creature, (and they can be classed as one). In the Book of Matthew it is recorded "*Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.*" And then they can adopt the sentiment of the hymn on page 179, as they are brought to know these things in their own heart;

"O that the Lord would guide

my ways

To keep his statutes still!

*O that my God would grant
me grace*

To know and do his will!

*O send thy spirit down to
write*

Thy law upon my heart!

*Nor let my tongue indulge de-
ceit,*

Nor act the liar's part.

*From vanity turn off my
eyes;*

Let no corrupt design,

Nor covetous desires arise

Within this soul of mine."

Did you ever pray that God
would turn your eyes from vanity?
And then the next verse says

*"Order my footsteps by thy
word,*

And make my heart sincere;

*Let sin have no dominion,
Lord,*

*But keep my conscience
clear."*

Read that hymn sometime. It's
wonderful. If any man be in Christ he
is a new creature; old things are
passed away, and all his old views
of God are passed away.

I can't have much hope in any
person's profession of religion, re-
gardless of who they are, if I don't
find Christ in him. I must see Christ
in him. The keynote of all their hope
must be in the Person of Jesus. Re-
gardless of what we may claim is the
ground of our hope when we die, if
Christ isn't in it, don't count on it too
much. Discard it! The poet knew

what I'm talking about when he said
"On Christ the solid rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.
I dare not trust the sweetest
frame "

How true that is. You know,
people can get emotional and trust
the frame sometimes instead of the
grace of God. Somebody can get up
and tell you about their grandmother
dying and touch your heart, but I
want to be touched by the gospel of
the Son of God. That's what I want
to be touched with; not sentimental-
ity, not emotionalism! Oh, no! I want,
and you want, to rest on something
else, not anything attached to this
world. "*I dare not trust the
sweetest frame, but wholly lean
on Jesus name.*"

Isn't that wonderful, that there is
a place of rest for those who are
brought into this new relationship;
that they need rest? All of us in the
kingdom of heaven; if we know the
truth, find there are places and times
that we need rest. Where will we find
it? Can you find it in your zeal? Can
you find it in your wisdom? Can you
find it anywhere in yourself? If you
can, you don't know the wonderful
rest that comes to the people of God
through our Saviour, who said,
"Come unto me all ye." How many?
"All ye that labor." The laboring is
the evidence of life, isn't it? It is the
evidence of the new creature in
Christ. "*Come unto me all ye that
labor and are heavy laden, and
I will give you rest.*" Don't tell me
that in the christian experience there

aren't places of rest for the soul. *"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart."* That's how He describes Himself. *"And you shall find rest for your soul."* So with the newborn child. At times they need rest; regardless of their outward situation, they need rest. God has provided one place for it -in Christ. Well, somebody said, *"Just how can I rest in Christ?"* You rest in His blood. You rest in His righteousness. You rest in everything He has wrought for you. You are a new creature; old things have passed away.

There was a man on the Eastern Shore of Maryland years ago who carried the mail, and he was teaching Sunday School, trying to teach people to know God, and become the children of God. He was a leader in his church. One day that man began to tell them that salvation was of God. He began to tell them that all the salvation they had, God gave them, and that they had no part in producing it. They told him, *"You're an Old School Baptist."* He said, *"Who are they?"* The man had never heard one of them preach. He said, *"Who are they?"* They said, *"They are people who preach about what you are talking about. We don't need you any longer."* Why? Because all things had become new with him when God gave him a view that all he needed was Christ. All things had become new with him when the time came

that He showed him in his flesh there was not anything good, and he couldn't teach other people to know God. He just started teaching the true way, and they got rid of him. I was up there later on and met the man who carried the mail, and you know I said to him, *"Have you heard from the King, lately?"* I wanted to get his reaction. *"Have you heard from the King, lately?"* And he said, *"I hope I hear something every day from Him."* He told me a dream he had. He said, *"I dreamed I was by a stream, and I looked over and there were lots of sheep across that stream, and I wanted to get over and I couldn't find a place to pass. I kept looking, and looking, and there was a shepherd over there with that flock of sheep, and I wanted to move over to where they were."* And he said, *"Suddenly, I was there. I didn't find the passageway across by myself."* *"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away."* The former things are passed away in God's working with us, and God through the work of His Son does everything needful for the sinner, and his view of God is different when Christ is revealed in his heart. All things do become new.

Somebody would say in listening to me this morning, *"Does everything become new with me? Tell me that I might have some evidence that everything is become*

new with me.” You know, all people’s experiences are different. Some are gradually brought to see Christ by faith. Some can’t tell when the burden fell off their back. Some are lead one way, and some another, but in substance, the leading is the same way. And we are inquiring now, *“Just what is the ground of my hope that I have passed from death to life; have all things been made new with me?”* Let’s examine a few things the word of God says. John said, *“By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren.”* Religion isn’t social-ability. No, no, it is founded upon Christian love. And a man can love a man that maybe some way in nature he doesn’t care too much for, but if he bears the mark of Christ he will love that man in his heart. He said, *“By this ye may know you have passed from death unto life because you love the brethren.”* And that love was so great that when Ananias heard about Paul, he said, *“I’m afraid of him. I’m afraid of that man.”* And when he met him, he said, *“Brother Saul.”* *“Brother Saul.”* That’s what the grace of God does for a man.

In the 89th Psalm it is recorded, *“Blessed is the people that do know the joyful sound. They shall walk, Oh, Lord, in the light of thy countenance, and in thy name shall they rejoice all the day.”* One of the marks of a new creature is that they know the joyful

sound. The gospel of Christ has a joyful sound. Oh, my friends, I mentioned last night when I first heard it, it seemed like something gradually going through my very being at the name of Christ. And I have searched everything else for heavens ways, and I haven’t found it. All things pass away! Old things pass away, and all things become new. These all things - (I like that expression, don’t you?) are of God. Everyone of them are of God; not half of them, not 99% of them, but they are all of God.

Now let us move on. I don’t want to take too much time with this. *“And all things are of God.”* What does he mean? He means what he said. That the conviction, the conversion, the regeneration, and everything that is wrought in the sinner’s heart is of God, because of Christ’s work. *“Who hath reconciled us to himself.”* It is an endless subject - the union of Christ with His people and God Himself. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. That’s the spiritual, heavenly world, those people. *“Who have reconciled us to Himself by Christ Jesus.”* There is no sinner who has ever stood on the face of the earth who has ever had what is needful to reconcile himself to God. What is reconciliation? It is to remove whatever has separated. That’s simple - bring them into union. We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. There has never been a substitute for that. If Jesus

Christ in His death didn't reconcile us to God, we will never be reconciled in this life or in the one to come. ***"And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."*** What does he mean by that? He means absolutely what he said. God has given to the church the ministry of preaching the reconciliation between God and man by His Son. That's the one He reconciled. That's what He teaches. To wit, that God was in Christ. If you follow the pathway of our Saviour through Bethlehem, you will see God there. Christ said, ***"The Father worketh, and I work. I and the Father are one."*** This is reconciliation, that God was in Christ. He was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and what's more, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Not charging the sins of His people, but laying them on His Son, and then commits to us the ministry, the word of reconciliation.

How many of you, this morning, are glad there has been a reconciliation made between God and man, and that your hope is in that? And in that alone, and nothing else? And He has committed to us in the gospel, wherever it is preached, he has committed the word of reconciliation that the death of Christ paid all the debt for His people, and justified them with His blood, brought them to God.

Paul, as he entered Athens, preached God as sufficient, who

made all things, and he said, ***"He's not far from any of us."*** ***"In Him we live, and move, and have our being."*** Now then, we are ambassadors of Christ. A minister is an ambassador for Christ. ***"As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God."*** A minister is an ambassador from heaven. If I am preaching the gospel to you, I hold the highest office that ever a man held in this world. They bring a message from God to man, and we pray you in Christ's stead, as Paul said, be ye reconciled to go. What does he mean? A believer here has lots of trials the world knows nothing about. He examines the things that come to him in life, whether the hand of God is in it. He will ask during the hours of night, ***"Is this the hand of the Lord in my life?"*** Is this some trial that has come to me to bring me closer to God? I never fear trials, if they bring me closer to my Master. Do you know what I mean? In the nature of believers, they wrestle with themselves and with their imperfections in the flesh. That the world knows nothing about. Sometimes they are on bended knee because of indwelling sin, and their life isn't what they would have it.

Sometimes they find themselves under God's chastening hand. If God loves you, He is going to chasten you somewhere along the way. The Bible says that if you be without chastisement, of whom all are partakers, ye are bastards and not

sons. I heard the doctrine preached that we can so live that God will not chastise us. That hasn't been my experience, my dear brethren. It hasn't been my lot. And yet it said, *"Whom the Lord loveth, he chastens, and he scourgeth every son that he receives."* Be ye reconciled to God, and when trouble comes, remember my friends, they are always for your good.

"Trials make the promise sweet; Trials give new life to prayer.

*Trials bring us to His feet,
Lays us low and keeps us there.*

*Did I meet no trials here;
No chastisement by the way;
May I not by reason fear I
should be a castaway,"*

I remember many years ago, one night, I had a great burden. I had a burden I didn't know whether I could carry or not. I remember a spot I went to that night, and the hymn sweetly began to sink like rain into my heart, and that song was,

"If God is mine, then present things,

*And things to come are mine;
Yea, Christ, his word, and
spirit, too*

And glory all divine.

*If he is mine, let friends for-
sake,*

*Let wealth and honors flee:
Sure, he who giveth me him-
self,*

Is more than these to me.

If he is mine, I'll boldly pass

*Through death's tremendous
vale;*

*He is a solid comfort, when
All other comforts fail."*

I will never forget on that dark night that He showed me He is mine, and *"I'll boldly pass through death's tremendous vale."* I believe that. *"He is a solid comfort, when all other comforts fail."*

*"Oh, tell me, Lord! that thou
art mine;*

What can I wish beside?

*My soul shall at the fountain
live,*

*When all the streams are
dried."*

"For he hath made him to be sin for us." It is hard for us to comprehend that wonderful truth, but it is truth. Not to be made a sinner for us, but to be made, in the eyes of God, sin for us, as our sins imputed and charged to Jesus Christ, in the eyes of God He was made to be sin for us. He was born of a woman, to redeem His people under the law. Paul said, *"Sent he forth his son, made of a woman."* And he was not a sinner, but a sinless, holy person, and yet He was made to be sin for us. God imputed or charged the sins of His people to His Son. Did He take them? Yes, He did. Yes, He did. How many? All of them! It wouldn't do you any good if He hadn't taken them all. One single sin will sink you into hell. You wouldn't need but one. How many? All of them! What did Peter say about it? *"He bare our sins in his own body on the tree*

of the cross and put them away by the sacrifice of himself," and when he comes they will all be in that great assembly of the saints. I don't know how it will be over there, and you don't either. But I've had a foretaste of it, and if it's like the foretaste I've had, it is indescribable. The few moments of praise to God and with all the work of Christ is all I need for heaven, and it would make a heaven below, the Redeemer to know.

I will remember the hymn being sung when I was baptized. They gathered at Dan River, on the bank of Dan River, and we sang that hymn,

*"O how happy are they
Who their Saviour obey,
And whose treasures are
laid Up above!*

*Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and
peace*

Of a soul in its earliest love."

And as I walked down into that water beside my dear natural father, on the bank the dear people were singing

*"Now my remnant of days
Would I spend to his praise,
Who hath died my poor soul
to redeem; Whether many or few,
All my years are his due,
May they all be devoted to
him."*

My dear brethren and sisters and kind friends, this morning, what few days I have I want to be devoted to my Master . May He bless you is my prayer.

Elder D. V. Spangler

SALINE, La., Jan. 27, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS: - As it is time for me to renew my subscription to the good old SIGNS, I feel that I want to write a few lines to let you know that I certainly love to read that paper, for it advocates the doctrine I hope I love, as it is the only doctrine that does me any good. It gives God all the praise, and none to man, and it is sweet to be enabled to trust in a God that has all power both in heaven and in earth, who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. I feel too unworthy sometimes to claim that I have a hope, as I am so wicked, and my heart so deceitful, but as it is the sinner that is saved, I sometimes hope that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life as saved by grace, and if so, it is according to the love and mercy of the holy God who changes not; and if I am one of his redeemed, all the powers of hell cannot undo what has been done for me in redemption's glorious plan, for his people are safe in his hands. I very often think of the terrible distress that is in the land now, and dread to think of the future, for we do not know what it will bring forth. It is best that we do not know what is in store for us, as brother Ker said in January 1st SIGNS. My only consolation is, that God rules in all things, there is nothing that can go beyond its limits; the devil can go no further than the Lord sees fit for him to go. God. has a purpose in all

this woe and misery, and it will be to his honor and glory, but we poor mortals cannot understand why these things must be. May his people be enabled to trust in him, and not fear them that can only kill this old body, and cannot do that unless it is the Lord's will for it to be done. I am not afraid of dying one moment before my time comes; for Solomon has said there is a time to all things; a time to be born and a time to die, and we who live here on this earth know that our time will soon be spent, although we should live to be old. The longer I live, the less I see to live for; but may we be reconciled to his holy will, and patiently wait until our appointed time to leave this world of sin and sorrow. Everything that God's people have to suffer is for their good and his glory; we cannot follow Christ unless we follow him in suffering. He came here and suffered and died that his people might live. They have joys that the world knows nothing of, which are inexpressible and full of glory, which joys they would not give for all that is in this world, for they realize the vanities of this earth, which are perishable and only endureth for a short time. May the God of all grace guide and direct his people in the way they should go.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,
E. F. READHIMER

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Directions to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before, August 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount, at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.), go 1 mile to church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go app. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 1/2 miles to church.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Clerk: Elder Thomas Solomon

PSALM 8: 3-5.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

**STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene for its one hundred Sixty-Seventh session on July 12th and 13th at Weatherford Church according to previous arrangements and if we are granted this privilege by our God.

The church is located on State Roads 760 and 763 intersections (intersection of Music Street) and (Weatherford Drive).

Malmaison is the host church for this association.

The time of the service begins on Saturday at 9:30 am. We invite all that have a desire to worship with us.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

ST. JOHN 4: 13-15

Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2008

Ralph Hocutt, GA	100.00
<i>In memory of Parents:</i>	
Ralph A. and Agnes D. Hocutt	
Flora Vest, VA	5.00
Tommy Middleton, NC	5.00
Billie Freeman, AL.....	20.00
Charlie Fox, AR	5.00
Grace Manley, AL	5.00
Lula Holley, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

**ELDER LOWELL
BERNARD HUTCHENS**

We bow in submission to the will of our heavenly Father in removing from our midst our beloved Brother and Elder, Lowell Bernard Hutchens. We miss him greatly, but feel our loss is his eternal gain. He suffered much during the last several years, but bore his afflictions, looking for that day in which his suffering would be over, and he could go to praise the God He loved. He was a firm believer in the doctrines of the Old Baptists. He was blessed to believe that God is, and that He has all power. He preached the sovereignty of God and the weakness of mankind, salvation by grace alone and that God declared the end from the beginning.

Brother Bernard asked for a home, at Russell Creek Church, the first Saturday in April, 1993. He was ordained a deacon the first Saturday in August, 1993. He served the churches well as deacon. He asked for Liberty to speak the first Saturday in December, 1993. Elder Bernard was ordained an Elder the first Saturday in December, 1994. He served as Moderator of the Lower Mayo Association in 2002 and 2003. It was amazing to see this frail and weak Elder bow in prayer or stand behind the pulpit and see the transformation as God delivered him with power from on high. How unsearchable is his grace.

Brother Bernard was born June 21, 1929 to the late John Beal and Ether Biggs Hutchens. He was married to Martha Clark Hutchens April 12, 1951. He passed from this life March 29, 2008, at Martinsville Hospital, with his wife and sons by his side, making his stay on earth almost 79 years. At God's time, he received the answer to his prayer, "*Oh Lord, please, take me home.*" In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, John Winford Hutchens and Wilbur Gene Hutchens and a son, Lowell Hutchens. Survivors include Martha, his wife of 57 years and three sons, Elmo Hutchens, J.B. Hutchens and Kenneth Hutchens, and 7 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Also surviving are two sisters, Dorothy H. Dollarhite and Dornice H. Carter, and a host of friends and loved ones. He

was owner and operator of Moorefield Store, near his home, for many years.

The funeral was conducted on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, at Community Funeral Home in Stuart, Virginia by Elder Kenneth Hopkins and Elder Ralph Gaines. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, in the Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, there to await that great rising day, when he, along with all of the elect, shall hear that welcome voice saying "*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" May God reconcile us to his will, knowing he is too wise to err and too gracious to be unkind.

At the request of the church, copies of this obituary for the church records, for the family and for publication. Approved in conference May 4, 2008.

Committee: Donald Moore
Lowell Hopkins

CORINTHIANS 12: 6-8.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

ON CHRIST THE SOLID ROCK

*My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness*

*I dare not trust the sweetest
frame*

But wholly lean on Jesus' name

*When darkness veils his lovely
face*

*I rest on his unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil*

*On Christ the solid rock I stand
All other ground is sinking
sand
All other ground is sinking
sand*

*His oath, his covenant, his
blood*

*Supports me in the whelming
flood*

*When all around my soul gives
way*

He then is all my hope and stay

*When he shall come with trum-
pet sound*

*Oh may I then in him be found
Dressed in his righteousness
alone*

*Faultless to stand before the
throne*

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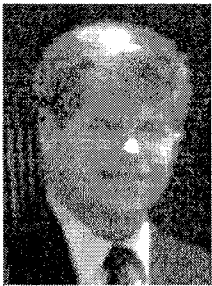
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EDITORIAL

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” 2 Corinthians 4:6.



Elder J. B. Farmer

This scripture, as all scripture, is of no private interpretation. No carnal understanding will do for God’s little ones, who hunger and thirst after the righteousness of God. For a scripture to be brought forth in truth, it must be rightly divided. It must be

explained according to truth with no error added. To speak the truth without falling into some kind of trap of the devil, who was a deceiver and a liar from the beginning, is an impossible task for the sons of men. It is impossible with men, but all things are possible with God. If anything is written that is not in accordance with the truth, and I know I am subject to error, may it be rejected and attributed to my ignorance. It is my desire to be kept by the power of God through faith while writing on this profound subject. It is my desire that the truth of it may be revealed to the writer as well as the dear reader - that all may be edified and comforted, and that God may be praised in all things.

It appears that the heart of the matter is the glory of God, and Who it is that gives the knowledge of it, and by what means the glory is given, and whom it is that is taught of God, and what specifically is the glory of God.

It seems plain that it is the true and living God, Who has all power, even to command the light into existence, Who gives the knowledge of His glory by shining in the hearts of His little ones. The question that comes to mind is this. What is the glory of God under consideration here, and how was it shined into the hearts of His people? For the beginning of the answer, I believe we must back up to the days of Moses, when he was called into the mount and was given the ten commandments

by God Himself. When Moses came down from the mount, he knew not that the skin of his face shone with the glory of God. When the children of Israel saw it, they were afraid. The glory upon Moses, I am made to believe, was the glory of God and represented the presence of God. The children saw that glory and feared, knowing their own imperfections and sinfulness and also the perfection of God.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Before we knew anything of the scriptures, or of the doctrine, or of the church, or of the Lord Himself, we were made to fear before God. His glory was all around us in all the things He had made. Even small children, if asked from whence all things come, will say that God made them. Those having this revealed to them in truth and in power begin to see something of the all-wise, and all-powerful God of perfection. They are blessed to know Him in the simplest manner possible. From this simple beginning, they are blessed to grow in the knowledge of God and His kingdom. It is precept upon precept, and line upon line, here a little and there a little.

It is recorded that Moses put a veil on his face when he talked to the children of Israel, and gave the commandments of God unto them. The veil upon his face was to cover the glory, in order that the children of Israel might come into the presence of Moses without fear. Moses was given the law and was a symbol of

the law for all ages. There was a glory upon him representing the same glory, which is upon the old covenant of the law. The old covenant was glorious in that it was good and holy and just. But the law was not given to save, but rather to condemn and to kill. For the law is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death. The law was given as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

Without the law written in our hearts, we would never have known that we were sinners and that we were under the sentence of death. We would never have known a need of the Savior. We would have gone on through life thinking we were just as good as the next fellow, if not a little better, and that we were on our way to a better place based upon our supposed goodness. But the law was not given to save us, so it had a little glory, but not to be compared with the glory of salvation to come. There was prepared a glory to come that excelled the glory of the law as much as the glory of the sun excels the glory of the moon.

The blessed apostle was given to say, "*But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the min-*

stration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." Now, here is where the apostle was inspired to explain the veil of Moses. He said, "*Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: but their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn unto the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."*

That same veil stood between us, and that great glory, which afterward should be revealed. We were shut up under the law, condemned, and killed to all self-righteousness, and led to the feet of Jesus and made to beg for mercy. It was not until that veil was lifted, that we were enabled to look to the end of the law

for righteousness. For Christ is the end or the perfection of the law for righteousness to all that believe. Today multitudes have that same veil upon their hearts and minds where the new covenant is concerned. Christ and the gospel of grace is hidden to all who are not blessed to believe in Him. When Christ was resurrected the veil covering the entrance to the holy of holies was rent from top to bottom. This shows to us, I believe, that the way was opened for the children of God to look in to the most holy place, where God dwells. When the veil was rent, I believe it symbolized the veil being taken away from the hearts and minds of God's children.

When the veil was taken away for us, we were blessed to see the end of the law, which is Christ, and to believe and trust in Him. Our blindness and fear of destruction were taken away. We were not only blessed to know the glory of the old covenant, which was unto death, but to also know the excelling glory of the new covenant which is in Christ to life. We were blessed to see that the old covenant was good and served its purpose, which was to show us our sin and condemnation. And then we were shown the new covenant, which proclaimed our pardon and redemption in Christ. And as the moon shines at midday and is barely seen, because of the brightness of the sun in its strength; so does the old covenant pale in comparison to the new. We are blessed

to see the image of the glory of God transformed from the glory of the old covenant to the glory of the new covenant when the veil is removed.

The blessed apostle said, *“But we all, with open [uncovered] face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed in the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”* So it is by grace that we have been brought the way we have come. We have been enlightened to know the terrors of the law. We have been enlightened to know that we are sinners. We have been enlightened to know the need of the Savior, and He has been merciful to reveal Himself to us and in us in the brightness of His Spirit, if so be that we have tasted that He is gracious. All this is according to the purpose of the merciful God to save alive a remnant according to the election of Grace. And it is all to the praise and honor of Him unto Whom all praise is due. Thanks be unto God forever. *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
4-11-2008

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Zion's Landmark
ADAM.



Elder P.D. Gold

The word Adam means earth or dust. He is the figure of Him that was to come, the Second Adam, the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven. As a figure or type he must answer two purposes: he must shine in brightness enough to foreshadow the reality furnishing outline that reflects the substance, and he must be only a shadow with no substance or reality.

The Lord made Adam upright, but Adam abode not in that uprightness.

Was he able to stand but liable to fall? That is a question that has puzzled and perplexed many. Articles of faith declared by churches are intended to abbreviate what the brethren believe. So that if one asks you what do you believe, you refer to the articles of faith to set this forth. To my mind no articles of faith can better set forth our faith, if it be the faith of God's elect, than the Bible does. When Peter says, be ready to give to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and with fear, you do not refer to the articles of faith declared by your church. When you seek

membership in the church you do not offer the articles of faith of the church, but you state that you believe that Jesus is the Christ. How? By telling what great things the Lord has done for you and has had mercy on you.

I am not objecting to articles of faith, if they faithfully declare the truth. But the half cannot be told.

To the question, was Adam able to stand, but liable to fall, it is difficult to say yes or no. If you say he was made able to stand why did he not stand? If he was made liable to fall, it implies ability to stand, yet liability to fall. That Adam sinned in disobeying God is evident. For as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners proves that Adam transgressed God's law. The Lord said to him, cause thou has hearkened to thy wife therefore the earth is cursed for thy sake. What excuse had Adam for his sin? None. His nakedness proves this.

For years I found fault with Adam, thus endeavoring as he did, to put the blame on some one else, as Adam did on his wife, until the Lord showed me that I am Adam, that I am the guilty one, and am without excuse, and have no shelter as an excuse for sinning; but that God is holy and I am vile.

Any theory, doctrine, articles of faith, or apology that man offers excusing his sin, or reflecting on his Maker is false. Any pretense that because I am conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity I can in any de-

gree palliate my sin, or supply any excuse therefor, is false. This is taught the child of God under conviction. By nature he is wrapt up and covered with a refuge of lies, with all manner of excuses for his wrong doing, and hard thoughts against God until the Lord sweeps away this refuge of lies, and shows a man that he is dust and ashes, a liar, corrupt, yet full of pride and rebellion, possessed of the devil and serving him.

When this is done man is abased and can truly say, let God be true and every man a liar and knows that his nature is sinful and his element is to do wrong?

Then he knows that he is of earth earthy. God placed the man which he had made in the garden giving him holy and spiritual law. His failure to keep that law proved the purity of the law and also the frailty of man. For he was in the likeness of his Maker and the figure of him that was to come, which was that as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners - or Adam is the head of his generations, and by his one act of disobedience death passed upon all because all of his off-spring sinned in him; so by the one perfect obedience of the one man Christ Jesus shall many be made righteous.

Hence the unity of Adam and his off-spring, and the unity of Christ and his seed. Sin reigns unto death by Adam and grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. For, since by

man came sin and by sin came death, So by man came the resurrection of the dead.

Those who love sin hate God and find fault of his government. Those who love God abhor themselves and justify the ways of Providence.

Was it as certain before Adam's transgression that he would transgress? If not why was grace given to the elect in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world?

This is God's way of showing what sin is and what man is, and what the holy law, of God is, and the revelation of grace is. Man being in his finite state could not know the heights and depths of sin, nor the super-abounding heights of holiness. Whether man should abide in his finite character, or should be translated by the obedience, death and resurrection of Jesus, the second Adam, the quickening spirit into conformity with Jesus, who is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person is solved by the revelation of Jesus who is found in a fashion is a man as the Surety and Redeemer of his people, and the revelation of the mystery of grace in him. When we know that where sin abounded grace did much more abound, then we can say by the grace of God I am what I am; and that we should be to the praise of the glory of his grace.

Is man able to do all that he ought to do? He ought to love the

Lord God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and his neighbor as himself. But who does it? Not one. Is man excused because he is carnal sold under Sin, and cannot do the things he would? Because I cannot keep a holy law am I therefore released from a desire to do this? The more I fail to keep a holy law the more I abhor myself and love God that supplied his Son to me who gave himself for me.

Through the riches of God's grace in Jesus who loved me, died for me and rose again, I am translated out of Adam the failure into Jesus the Savior, and shall be glorified in him, and be satisfied when I awake with his likeness.

God cannot deny himself. He is of one mind and changes not. The God-head is brought to view in the transgression of Adam and in his salvation. The entire character of God, mercy rejoicing against judgment is brought to view. In the end the sinner saved shall praise God: forever and forever for what, God hath wrought, and because God's way, is holiness. The strength of God is shown in man's weakness. When the sinner is humbled in self he is exalted in the Lord. Through Adam's fall the door of mercy is open and in Jesus' resurrection it is shown that Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

"I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE."

This confession of Jesus which *he* knew would cost him his life. He distinctly makes and repeats.

How absurd that appeared to a carnal Jew. The Jews that knew his mother and supposed father and his brethren saw nothing in him but an ordinary man, and to them it was the greatest impiety for him to say he was the Son of God.

Their blindness of heart excluded every reason he gave, every prophecy he expounded, every miracle he wrought, every display of power he exhibited.

We wonder at their unbelief and the hardness of their heart, as we read the scriptures. We do not see how the rulers among the Jews could have acted as they did. Had they known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. He prayed on the cross, "*Father forgive them; they know not what they do.*" Yet they had no cloak for their sin.

Can it be said of any two men that they are one? Can it be said of any natural father and his son that they are one? The son may delight to please his father, yet they are not both one. A principal may have an agent or deputy that does his will officially, yet the two are not one. A husband and wife may be one, and are one in law, and in the marriage relationship, yet they are not one as Jesus and his Father are one.

The Son of Man said, my Father in greater than I, yet he said I and my Father are one.

All things are of God. The Father is greater than all. He is the fountain whence all proceeds. There is nothing in Jesus that is not of God. There is nothing he does but that which is well pleasing to God. Everything he did was the highest service and most well pleasing to his Father. It was the Father's work in him, for he came from heaven to do the will of his Father which was in heaven at that time. He understood that will and it was his delight to do his Father's will. The counsel of peace was between them both. Jesus was so joined unto his Father that all he did was all of his Father. His redemption of those under the law which were given him brings them from under the curse of the law. For he who knew no sin was made sin for them that they should be made the righteousness of God in him.

The Father is first of all, older than all, above all, and greater than all, the Son came out from the Father was one with the Father, and received a body in which he delights to do his Father's will. Jesus came in the flesh to put away sin that the people which were the Father's and which he gave to the Son, might receive a standing and goodness in the Son as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and be one with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father. The father principle,

the mother principle, and every principle or relationship is in the father, and proceeds from the Father, and is manifest in and through the Son, for in him all the fulness of God dwells; so that whoever does his will is his mother and sister and brother.

Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, and in him every relation of life is sanctified, every jot and tittle of the law is fulfilled, and all things are made new.

In the revelation of Jesus sin is ended, death is abolished, and life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel, and all to and in whom Jesus is revealed shall be manifested in the resurrection as children of God being children of the resurrection.

Thus the whole family of God shall be gathered and manifested in Jesus who shall say, Behold I and the children who thou hast given me.

They shall all be one in Christ Jesus, even as the Father and the Son are one, Do you believe in Jesus? He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, for God is love.

Elder P. D. Gold

HEBREWS 2:7.

Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

MATTHEW XIII. 8.

“BUT other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.”

The Savior in this parable of the sower takes a natural illustration to teach us a spiritual truth. The sower went forth to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, some on stony ground and some among thorns, while others fell into good ground. Since the ground was cursed for man's sake, the natural production of the earth is to bring forth thorns and thistles? And in this respect all the ground is just the same. Good ground is prepared ground. All intelligent farmers know that in order to reap a crop they must first prepare the ground for the reception of the seed. He takes out the stones, digs up the thorns, breaks up the soil and then sows the seed. What would be thought of the farmer who would sow his seed to prepare his ground? Would he not be judged insane. As foolish as this may seem, there are thousands today doing this very thing in what they think a spiritual sense. Further, the Savior in the parable shows what may naturally take place with the sower: some seeds fall by the wayside, some on stony ground, and some among thorns. But if a farmer did this he could not expect to reap anything from the grains that fell by the wayside, nor on stony ground, nor

among thorns. No, he knows the grain that falls into such places will never bear fruit. Do you think the Lord would expect fruit from such conditions. In the preparation of the ground for the reception of the seed we know it is passive. The good ground is the ground that has had the stones and thorns removed by the husbandman, and the ground is perfectly passive as to the reception of the seed, and, too, it is perfectly passive as to the growing of the seed sown in it. Growth depends upon the rain, so the prophet says: *"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."* The apostle in his letter to the Hebrews says: *"For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth a blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."* Here we are shown the *"dressed ground"* only brings forth herbs meet, but the undressed brings forth thorns and briers. The

flood, the prepared ground, represents the sinner *"born again,"* given eternal life, raised up from the dead. The ground that bears *"thorns and briers"* represents the unregenerate, the sinner dead in trespasses and in sins; both by nature just the same, and the work of grace alone makes the difference, as represented in Cain and Abel. God had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. Notice, God had respect first to Abel, and then to his offering. That respect first made Abel righteous, by which he was enabled to offer an acceptable sacrifice. Let us notice what Paul says of Abel: *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh."* His more excellent sacrifice was not the cause of him being righteous, but rather testified that he was righteous, and this is the key to all acceptable service. The *"respect"* God has to his people fits and prepares them to serve him. God said unto Cain, *"If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."* How true; sin is the cause of all evil doing. Men sin because they are sinful; their acts are but the fruit of a sinful, depraved nature; so Cain's offering was the fruit of the ground, and God said to Adam, Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. So Cain's of-

fering was but thorns and thistles, *“the cursed thing, but Abel’s offering of the lamb was acceptable; it was a type of the Lamb of God, who should come into the world and put away sin by the shedding of his own blood. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.”*

I believe I have said enough to show the farmer does not sow his seed in order to prepare the ground. Then if we are taught anything by the parable or less on, we are taught the gospel is not preached to prepare the sinner for the reception of the truth. Even the preaching of Jesus did not prepare men to hear and believe the gospel. He said unto the Jews: *“Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.”* *“He that is of God [first] heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”* Here we see that even words of Jesus could not be received or believed, because men were not first prepared of God were not born again. I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of

me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” If preached!, the gospel had been God’s plan to give life to the dead sinner, the preaching of Jesus would have certainly accomplished that end, but we see it did not; they would not, yea, they could not believe. *“Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,”* said Jesus. *“Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. To come to Jesus, we here see, is the work of God, and is the direct result of the gift of eternal life. “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.”* No peradventure or maybe here. *“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”* The old prophet said, *“All thy children shall he taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.”* Not one shall be forgotten or neglected; all shall be taught to the remotest bounds of earth; and not only that, but everyone taught shall come to Jesus. He is the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him. For there

is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. There must first be a preparation, a learning of the Father, in order to come to and believe on Jesus, and the preached gospel does not do this; even the preaching of Jesus did not do this. Jesus said to the Jews, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”* The same was true of the apostle’s preaching. Paul said, *“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”* *“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”* Who could believe that God would choose as a means for the salvation of a sinner that which is a stumblingblock and foolishness unto them? Would not such be charging God with folly John says: *“We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”* Does this not show the seed of the kingdom must fall into good ground, the good and holiest heart, made so by the grace of God? The quickening, regenerating power of

God that raiseth up the dead is given before the reception of the gospel, just as the farmer prepares the ground before he sows the seed. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. Is ever any of this fruit found in the unregenerate heart, or could it produce them? No, no more than we would expect the wayside, stony ground to produce fruit. In the more than fifty years that I have farmed there is no doubt that many times I have literally done what the parable says: sown some seed that fell by the wayside, and some among stones; and, too, there is no doubt in my mind that in the nearly forty-five years I have been trying to preach, some of the spiritual seed sown fell by the wayside, and on stony ground, and among thorns. The gospel is to be preached to every creature. I did not expect in my sowing my natural wheat that the seed which incidentally fell on the unprepared ground would yield fruit, nor have I expected spiritual fruit to grow in unregenerate hearts, nor do I believe the Lord does. But who has not seen many who have done just as the Savior said in the parable about the stony ground and the thorny, ground-hearers who manifested quite a lively interest in the truth, and showed much zeal, even uniting with the church, but by and by their zeal and love began to grow cold and they finally fell away. This condition was evident in the apostles’ day. John said, *“They*

went out from us, but they were not of us." Is it not evident that they could not have gone out unless they had first gone in? *"For if they had been of us, (the good ground) they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."* I am with the beloved John here, that they went out because they were not of us. Had they been *"born again"* they would have borne fruit and have continued; but it has happened to them as the true proverb said: *"The dog has returned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."* Peter did not say they, like the dog or the sow, but the dog and the sow have returned. The returning did not make them either, but it made manifest what they were. No one ever saw a sheep do what the dog and the sow did, nor ever will. I have often observed how careful a sheep is to keep out of a mud hole. John says, They went out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not of us; and he added without a doubt about the matter: *"Had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us."* These characters are, as Peter says, wells without water and clouds without rain, or virgins without oil in their vessels. In the kingdom of heaven under the law dispensation, all the seed of Abraham were included; the wheat and the tares grew together

no separation. But when the Bridegroom came, at the cry, go ye out to meet him, all arose and trimmed their lamps. The wise had oil, and their lamps burned; the foolish said, Our lamps are gone out. Being the seed of Abraham gave them no right now, that light had gone out. Saying, We are the seed of Abraham, could not be accepted. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, for now in this new dispensation the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and he who does not bring forth good fruit (faith and repentance) is cut down; the door is forever shut, and it ever will be against that law religion.

Jesus said, I never knew you, depart from me. He never said to that people whom he foreknew in the covenant of grace and mercy, depart from me, I never knew you, but, Come unto me. All the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and he that cometh I will in no wise cast out. The wheat and the tares teach the same truth under the law dispensation; both grew together, and when the time of the harvest came (the beginning of the gospel dispensation) it was said to the reapers (John the Baptist and the apostles, yes, and the ministers of the gospel), Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn (church). The gospel always takes the precious from the vile. I believe the proclamation of the truth always does this. *"If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou*

shalt be as my mouth.” So that separating the wheat from the tares is not to be at the end of this natural world, but at the end of the law dispensation, and at the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. *“And then shall he send his angels [gospel ministers], and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of earth, to the uttermost parts of heaven.”* Jesus said, This shall come to pass before this generation shall pass away, showing that these things have taken place. This is the gospel day, the day the old prophet had lived to see. *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.”* The ones who shall come are the ready to perish *“and the outcasts.”* *“Gospel is good news and what was good news to the poor, the halt, the lame and the blind, was not good news to the men who had bought land and oxen and married a wife. It must be a prepared people to receive the gospel. The poor lonely have the gospel preached to them,”* in spirit and power; as Paul says, not in word only, but in spirit and power, and they can no more reject the word that comes in power than can the earth reject the rain that comes down from heaven to make it bring, forth and bud. Imagine a poor man, dying with thirst,

rejecting a cup of cold water and I could as easily believe that as to believe the heaven-taught soul could reject the mercy of God.

While God’s people are not willing until the day of his power, they shall be willing then. *“I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even everyone that is called by my Name.”* Everyone is brought from a long distance, for all are far off. The angel said to Joseph, *“Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.”* *“As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.”* And, all thy children shall be taught of the Lord. *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.”* Not one shall be left in the broad way of sin and death that leadeth to destruction, the way in which all the world dead in sin is going. What a failure would the mission of Jesus have been had he only saved a “special few” of his elect, and left the greater part to wander in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Would not the angel blush with shame who heralded the purpose and mission of the Savior into the world’ *“He shall save his people from their sins.”* Solomon says, *“There is a way which seemeth right unto a*

man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

The legal way; by the deeds of the law is the "*broad way*" all men dead in trespasses and sins are in. But if any man be in Christ Jesus no matter who he is or where he is) he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. Not every character spoken of in the Bible was a child of God, even if they had taken the communion with the Savior. Satan was once in heaven, the legal or law heaven, but was cast out into the earth. "*And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out.*" He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. These are the tares that grew with the wheat until the time of the harvest, the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The axe was then laid to the root of the tree. These things we notice took place soon after. He that was born was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. (See Revelation xii.)

Dear brother Ker, these thoughts I leave in your hands to do with as you may see fit. I wish you not to publish if you think it not best, for I desire the peace and prosperity of Zion.

In gospel bonds,
G. E. MAYFIELD.

ELGIN, Ore.,

Feb. 21, 1918.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.,
Jan. 22, 1918.

Elder H. H. Lefferts - Dear Brother: - When left to myself and to my own thinking powers, the result is not valuable, but when the Lord's most precious thoughts are given me, "the sum of them" and the value and beauty of them are infinite. He says, I know my thoughts concerning you: thoughts of peace, and not of evil; to bring to pass an expected end. Now, at any time when the Lord's thoughts come into my heart and take possession of my soul, then I can understand how a sacred principle of reconciliation is connected with the gospel of the dear Savior. I know that by the peculiar power of faith I am right sure of this; but I am so very seldom, if ever, in possession of that holy, heavenly principle. It is by this faith alone that the divine power of faith can be known, and by that alone can resignation, true resignation to the will of God, be known by mortal, sinful man. The power of this soul-searching principle cannot be obtained by anything that mortal man can do. It is, like all things belong-

ing to the kingdom of Christ, the gift of God. We cannot purchase it, we cannot make or create it, we cannot obtain it by any device of men. In no way can it come into our possession except as the gift of God by the power and will of Jesus Christ.

The day after I was baptized, over fifty-six years ago, I found this question in my mind: What is faith? What is there in mind now that was not there before. At that time I was at peace. I was glad all the time for those few days, or, I might say, weeks.

The Word was there and the church and the brethren, and I wanted no more. I thought then I could see and feel the power of faith. I was not curious, but had enough for my own poor soul. I do not think I have had much more of a view of faith since then than I had at that time. How many things are said about faith in different parts of the New Testament! The brethren, Paul and others, are so clear in their arguments and write so confidently that it seems I can see their statements as unanswerable and can follow them with assurance. Then I turn to my own heart to see if that holy principle is there, and with a drooping head and with a great deal of uncertainty I have to acknowledge much of the time that I am not sure I have faith. Sometimes I can see and hear from others the same things that are in my own heart. Then I can but recognize evidence for them, and see it forced back upon me as a

reflection in a glass; as the apostle says: "*We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*" I have to acknowledge, that. So when evidence of this kind is experienced, we have to acknowledge it is true, we cannot dispute it; and the apostle gives evidence thus by inspiration, which comes by divine power, showing what is true in us and true in Jesus. He says: "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" Concerning faith and the exercise of it and many things connected with it in such a wonderful manner, I would love to write a little or talk a little, but the time has gone by for that. I cannot feel that I shall write at length any more; but I do enjoy talking with the brethren and to hear from the publishers of the SIGNS and others of the brethren scattered far and wide. The unity of the brethren manifested in the writings is delightful to me. The great beauty of the doctrine and of the order of the church takes hold upon my soul most thoroughly. Zion is called in the Psalms "*the perfection of beauty.*" My mind has been led, when writing or preaching, to trace out the exercises of such as feel, like I always have, that they are the poorest of the poor, and that strongest doctrine (if there be any difference) would be the only doctrine that could answer the needs of

such a weak person as I. I can go no further just now. On January 5th I entered my eighty-sixth year.

Your brother in hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

HABAKKUK 2. II

“For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.”

Sin is a burden to the people of God. The Spirit of God causes one to have a very tender conscience regarding sin. Thoughts and imaginations which would not give the natural man a moment's not easiness, prick like thorns in the conscience of the spiritually-minded. At no time in the history of Israel was that chosen nation without the witnesses of God among it. To these living witnesses, as Habakkuk, the corruption of Israel was a source of great sorrow.

Habakkuk preached in Israel prior to the Babylonian captivity. Israel was then exceedingly corrupt. It was a mystery to the prophet that the Lord should tolerate such wickedness in Israel. The book of Habakkuk begins with the crying out of the prophet unto the Lord because of the sins of Israel. Habakkuk complains that the Lord does not hear his crying, that he has complained unto him of violence, but still

he receives no answer, the Lord does not appear to save.

Habakkuk cannot understand why the Lord has caused him to see iniquity and to behold grievance, yet the power of the Lord is not manifested to clear away the evil. We think there are many, very many, of the Lord's people living in this are of the world who have experienced something of the same as Habakkuk. We often wonder how much longer it will be before the Lord's purpose in all the evil that is going on at the present time will be accomplished and the evil brought to an end by the outcome of righteousness. These are mysteries that no human mind can fathom, and it is good to have living faith to await the Lord's time to reveal himself to us and to bring to light the good which must surely ensure out of all that comes to pass. Habakkuk lived when spoiling and violence were going on in Israel, when strife and contention were rampant. The law was slacked, that is, its mandates were being wantonly disregarded and wrongdoing was indulged; judgment was abased; wickedness enjoyed immunity from the law, at the expense of the righteous. Those whose duty it was to uphold the law were traitors to the duties of their office and sought to uphold and protect evil in its stronghold, instead of sheltering the righteous against the schemes of the wicked. Such was the condition of Israel at the time of Habakkuk's crying unto the Lord, as told in the first

four verses of the first chapter of the book. Now, from the fifth to the eleventh verses of the first chapter, inclusive, we have the answer of the Lord to Habakkuk's cry. In this answer the prophet is assured that the Lord is not unmindful of the evil going on among his people, and will rectify it at the right time. This coming of the Lord to judge his people is to be a time of great trouble and affliction, a day of darkness, and not light.

"For, so, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places that are not their's." God's people sowing to the flesh inevitably reap corruption; the experience of every subject of grace will attest to this. The fruit slowly ripening out of the disobedience and corruption of Israel prior to the Babylonian captivity was that they were to be led captive to Babylon, there to remain for seventy long years. These Chaldeans were to sweep over Israel on horses swifter than leopards, fiercer than the evening wolves; they were to come for violence among the Israelites and to gather them into captivity like heaps of sand. These Chaldeans, to whom war was a business and a science, would laugh at the Kings and princes of Israel and hold their fortifications in derision. Such was to be the terrible punishment visited by Jehovah upon his Israel of the old covenant for their

evil transactions and corrupt living. When the Lord revealed to Habakkuk the coming captivity at the hands of Babylon, which was to ensnare them all, then Habakkuk in turn testified to the Lord of the purity and holiness of God, and that surely God would not allow his people to perish forever in Babylon. Habakkuk, while sorely grieved at the corruption of Israel, and deeming some sort of punishment necessary, was astonished at the awful calamity about to be visited upon them, and begged the Lord that the affliction might be tempered with mercy, lest they be swallowed up and lost forever. He asked the question: *"Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One"* This being true, then, *"we shall not die."* The Chaldeans were the arch-imperialists of that day and time, and at the height of their power ruled well-nigh all the known world of that era. Habakkuk says they raked all the peoples like fishes into their net of dominion. They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad.

And now even Israel was not to be spared captivity, but was also to be dragged into the net of Chaldean world-dominion. Habakkuk says to the Lord: *"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity ."* This being true, it mystified Habakkuk to understand how the Lord could prosper

insatiable Chaldea to the extent of delivering Israel into its power. Habakkuk did not know that Chaldea was itself to fall while yet the Jews were captive in her midst, and that Gyrus the Great was to be the deliverer of Israel back into their own land. So it often occurs that God's purposes are hid from our eyes while yet we stand astounded at the present's tale of woe. Habakkuk feared that after Chaldeans had gathered all nations into its net that it would never let go. Alas, the prophet forgot that no temporal power remains fixed, that all nations have their periods of increase and of decrease; they rise and fall. Nevertheless the prophet thus voiced his fear: Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations. Thus, you see, Habakkuk feared the victorious progress of the Chaldeans would ever remain unchecked, and that, having gotten their hold on the necks of all peoples, they would never forego their hold. Like all of us weak, short-sighted mortals, the dear prophet for a moment forgot there is a God in heaven, and that this Providence rules among the affairs of men and nations, so that the tyrant of today is the servant of tomorrow. God will never fail at the proper time (which is God's time, not ours) to appear for his people's safety, and no matter how hard and difficult the place they are in, God is abundantly able to deliver their soul from the snare

of the fowler and his darling from the jaws of the lion. Now, coming to the second chapter, the Lord again answered Habakkuk, and this time the prophet was shown that the power of the Chaldeans would not prevail continually, but that Babylon itself should fall and Israel be delivered when they should have learned the truth for which God purposed their captivity. Chaldea, who had spoiled the nations, should itself be spoiled. *"Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein."* Chaldea was so powerful and so well fortified that it thought itself invulnerable and supreme forever. Chaldea set its nest on high, that it might be secure against all dangers; yet it took the Lord a very little while to bring all that pomp and power low in the dust of defeat and to disclose the sham of all its fancied security. Chaldea was built up by blood and established through iniquity. Her palaces were built by her slaves, those whom she had conquered. The blood of her captives mingled with the feasts of her princes. Greed, vice, lust, oppression and all manner of sin were the mortar that held Chaldea together. Was it any wonder it crumbled and fell when the Lord blew upon it to deliver his people Israel, and that it consumed away like chaff. The very stones and

beams and timbers of her magnificence cried out against her wickedness. Her splendor was the mute condemnation of her wickedness. This is what is meant primarily by the words: *“The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.”* The very stones of their palaces testify to the oppression and guilt through which they were erected, and the beam out of the timber should add its witness to this condemnation. God’s people were slaves in Babylon. The ear of their God was ever open to their cry, even though he seemed often not to hear. Their wounds and stripes, their burdens and tears, were all borne in their Jehovah’s mind until it came his time to recompense them on their enemies. Their very sorrows cried out against their captors. Thus did God’s living stones and timbers cry out against the evil round about them and unto their God to deliver them. When a subject of grace is made to see himself a sinner, he sees the vileness of the house and the earthly kingdom in the midst of which he lives. He is now a living stone, and cries out of the wall because of oppression, and his cry is answered by all the beams and timbers of the house of God. All of God’s people have a tender and compassionate fellow.

I feel for every mortal that has ever been made to see himself a sinner in the sight of God. This testimony of sinfulness brings aliens out

of the hearts of all the members of the temple. Every testimony of weakness, of unworthiness, of sinfulness, awakens a response in every contrite heart, for all have been made to know what the burden and oppression of sin is. Just as the very stones and beams of those palaces, reared through oppression and vice, cried out against their builders, so our frail refuges of lies tumbled about our ears when the Spirit of the Lord disclosed to us the rottenness of our works and swept away the spider’s web in which we had sought to clothe ourselves. Then we saw that all is vanity, that even man at his best estate is altogether vanity. We had vainly sought justification by the deeds of the law, but any building so reared is founded on the sinking and shifting sands of human wisdom, and cannot abide the day, the terribleness of our Lord’s coming! It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and none know it better than God’s own people, for they are the ones who fall there.

We have written on this subject at the request of Mrs. J. B. Holloway, of Gorman, N. C. The third chapter of Habakkuk, which closes the book, is the best of all, and is the glorious psalm of praise welling up from the heart of the prophet unto the throne of God. After the Lord disclosed to him how Chaldea would eventually fall and Israel be delivered, the prophet had a wonderful exercise of faith, and narrated in

psalm the goodness ;and mercy of the Lord in his dealings with his people. However, we will not go into this now, as we were only asked lto write on Habakkuk ii. 11, so this will suffice for this time.

Elder Lefferts

ELDER T.M. POULSON
Massey, Va., 1902

Dear brethren Editors;— Something has seemed to prompt me to open a few things incidental to my life in a general way, and forward them to you for your disposal, whether to give them a place in our family paper, The Signs of the Times, or not.

I was born in the year 1831, in the same county (Accomac, Va.,) where I have resided ever since. I experienced a hope in God through his abounding grace in August 1851; was united in marriage with my present companion January 1852; was recieved, and baptized by Elder Thomas Waters, in the fellowship of the Old Baptist Church at Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., March, 1852. So you see that I have very few more mileposts to pass to my journey's end, as I have passed the 71st year of my natural life, and the fiftieth of my spiritual life, and also the fiftieth year of my married life.

In the year 1865 I became very much impressed in mind in regard to the things of the kingdom of God, and what constituted that kingdom.

The more I thought about it the more beautiful the subject became, and the stronger my interest grew. In my deep meditations I would find myself talking all alone, not supposing that was preaching, my ignorance would forbid it, but these things still grew more and more oppressive until it brought me into a state of questioning myself, what this all meant? and soon brought me before others also, who would inquire with reference to my exercise of mind. Thus I was led along until I was prevailed upon to talk a little in the meetings, and I think sometime in the year 1866, I was given a license to speak as I felt led, and in the year 1869 or 70 I was set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry, and immediately afterwards I accepted the care of four of the churches of the Salisbury Association, viz; Messongo, accomac Co., Va., Indiantown, Wicomico Co., Md., Nassaongo, Wicomico Co., Md., Pitt's Creek, Worcester Co., Md., and a few years later the church was organized in Snow Hill, Worcester Co., Md., and they called me to the care of that also, and I have been paying my best attention to those churches ever since, travelling from twenty-two to twenty-three hundred miles each year to fill my appointments, and nearly all by private conveyance. But if you will notice the above dates you will see that my labor is nearly over, I have experienced varied seasons in the churches during this period of thirty-five years. Nearly all have passed away that composed

the whole five churches when I first commenced my feeble labors among them. I have witnessed the coming in of all the five churches at present but eighteen persons. During the thirty-five years there has not been an "ism" nor "schism" nor any new thing to interrupt the fellowship of those churches. There have been times when the churches were full of life and zeal, and of frequent additions, and also times of drought and coldness. Sometimes when I am looking for some evidence of my hope and call to the work of the ministry, the only evidence that I can rest upon is in the remembrance of what the apostle Paul said referring to believers; *"Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read by all men."* Then my mind surveys the faithful brethren and sisters, and it brings comfort with it. But O, how wretched and miserable I do feel at times, for as much as I have witnessed and experienced during the fifty years passed, I have fallen so far short of living up to the scribe that I pictured in my mind years ago. I have been tempted to mark upon the walls where I can have it to look at, Watch your words and your thoughts, and also every evil lust, but I have failed. Finally a longing desire has been following me that I wanted to be an angel just for the time being, so I could not be contaminated with sin in any way, but I wanted to die a sinner saved by grace, for I know that will be the theme of the heavenly host, and

then I think that an angel cannot magnify the grace of God, and then I am brought to a standstill, and can only say, keep me O lord, and I shall be kept; draw me and I shall run after thee. I feel and know that this tabernacle in which I now groan must soon be taken down, and one of the strongest evidences that I have to rest upon is what Paul said; *"For I know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternally in the heavens. For in this we groan being burdened."* This is a strong evidence to me, for I know this is so. How the thought gladdens our hearts that in that building of God there will be no burdens, there will be no groaning there, and all tears will be wiped from weeping faces. I am trying to be as contented as I can, and live as much for others as I can sometimes get to think that my usefulness is nearly over, and then I have an unrest. I sometimes hear the brethren talk over their spiritual comforts, then I think my life and labor among them is of some profit, and then I am contented to live on, and fill up the measure of my days. How it is that my poor labors and mingling among the Lord's people has been acceptable, I have never been able to tell, only to hope that the things to which I bear testimony, finds a witness in the hearts and lives of others.

I hope that this is so.

It is more than likely this is the last time that I shall trouble you with my scribble. I thought that I wanted the brethren all to know some of my feelings and experiences before I passed away.

This from a poor old sinner whose only hope of salvation is through the blood and righteousness of a crucified and risen Savior.

Farewell.
T. M. Poulson

MEETINGS

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred, and 14th Annual Session of the New River Association, will convene the Lord willing, at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Floyd County, Va. It will be entertained by Flower Gap (P.B.C.) located in Carroll County, Va.

It will begin on Saturday before the fourth Sunday, continue through Sunday the dates being September 27, & 28, 2008 the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Hwy (787) in Indian Valley, Va.

Those coming by way of Rt. 1 221 or 52 or Rt. 8 go to Willis, Va. then turn on 787 approximately 7 miles to church on left.

If you travel by way of I-81 take exit 114 south to Route 8 watch for Route 693 Childress Road then turn left on 787 go approximately 15 miles on 787 to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and friends who believe in salvation by grace to be with us.

Kenneth D. Hopkins
Moderator
J. B. Mitchell Jr.
Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION 2008

The Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing at New Bell Spur church the first Sunday in September, Friday and Saturday before September 5,6,7.

Those traveling the Blue Ridge Parkway exit the parkway at mile post 184 and take Terrys Mill road (Rt. 610) to the church on right.

Those traveling US-58 turn on Terrys Mill road Rt. 610 near the Carroll County line and go approximately three miles to the church on the left.

We invite the Ministers of our faith and order, our Brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 27 & 28, 2008.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2008

Dan Delp, VA	10.00
Gladys Shelton, NM	35.00
Miles Byrd, LA	5.00
Alan McDaniel, VA.....	5.00
Shelby Stratton, MS	25.00
Alvis Beachum, NC	25.00
Jerald Hatchett, OK	50.00
<i>In Memory of Linda Joyce Hatchett</i>	

PROVERBS 18:1.

Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.

OBITUARIES

SISTER MARCY BURGIN

On Monday, March 17th, 2008, in Tyler, Texas, Sister Marcy Burgin was called from this vain world of sin and sorrow. She was born on January 21 st, 1924 in Wood County, Hawkins, Texas. Elder Jimmie Hamrick, her pastor, conducted her funeral service at Caudle-Rutledge Funeral Home Chapel in Lindale, Texas. On March 20th, 2008, her body was laid to rest in the Smith Cemetery, Hawkins, Texas to await the second coming of her Lord. Her loved ones who preceded her in death include: her husband, Wilborn Burgin, her brothers, Leon Kennedy, Willey Kennedy, and Howard Kennedy. Her beloved daughters were Jane Norris and Linda Strickland and son Jimmie Wayne Burgin. In addition to her grandchildren, her great grandchildren are left to mourn her passing as well as her beloved church family. May all that mourn be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who does all things perfectly and in a timely manner, for it is He that gives and He that takes away.

Humbly submitted by family who loved her deeply.

Flora Marie Stutts
Paron Church
Hawkins, Texas

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*When the arm of the Lord is thus, revealed,
Through his grace all things are sealed.
The believing family is rejected of men,
In this low ground of sorrow and sin*

*Through the grace of God we become able,
To feast from the rations from the master's table.
In the green pastures of his loving grace,
He guides us daily in the things we face,*

*We are guided daily by his mighty power
All blessings come at his appointed hour.
A sinner feels so vile and lost,
Then God reveals how he paid the cost.*

*When one experiences God's precious love
That's meted out from his court above.
They then walk in God's graceful light,
When lifted from the darkness of the carnal fight.*

*Through this faith we come to see
by his power the bad things will flee.
We are helpless creatures to do one thing,
We only give thanks for the blessings he brings.*

Riley Justice

Box 272

War, W.Va. 24892

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 EDITORIAL

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (Eph 6:11)



Elder R.H. Campbell

We believe that this is always by faith, which is a gift from God, that these things are understood and for the deeds to be accomplished by his children. Paul said, (Phil 4:13) *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."* and again, Gal 3:27) *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* Therefore, it is by

baptism into Christ that this power, or ability is given, and that is not speaking of the baptism by water, that is under consideration here. The apostle Paul is speaking of that baptism that John the Baptist referred of when he said, (Luke 3:16) *"I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."* This, baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire is the baptism into Christ by which man puts on the whole armor of God, for Christ is the whole armor of God, and then and only then, can the natural man wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the ruler of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Surely, Christ is the whole armor of God, for it is in him that the saints stand, him who of God is made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and what more do they need. When they are clothed with all of these things they can stand against anything, for as Paul said, if God be for us who can be against us.

This requires an ability far beyond that of mortal man, and this wrestling is not an offensive maneuver, but rather, a defensive stand against the powers of Satan, for then (Eph 6:13) goes on to say, *"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and*

having done all to stand.” This is an armor whereby man may stand, not that he may be aggressive and strive to overcome the enemy, by force or by the wisdom of man, but, to stand fast in the faith and to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him in all meekness and fear. This takes a courage and strength that the natural man does not possess, but, Paul said, (II Tim 1:7) *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind, and with this they can respond to the admonitions.”*

Peter, one of the apostles who traveled with Jesus during his ministry here on earth, for three years; and who made the solemn declaration that he would stand with Jesus unto the death; was not able to do so, when confronted with the anger of the mob who came to take Jesus. He could not walk on the water when he saw the waves boisterous about him, even though Jesus had told him to come. This is not to infer that Jesus’ command was insufficient for the task, but it was to teach Peter the lesson that he could not walk on the water, or attain to any of the other admonitions made unto him, when he takes his mind and eyes off of Jesus, and neither can we. Then this same man, who failed these tests in the flesh: did stand after his baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire on the day of Pentecost. He boldly

stood in the face of the doubters and mockers who had heard them speak in other tongues, and who were amazed and marvelled at the things that they saw but accused them of being drunk, and preached unto them Jesus and expounded, using the scriptures, the meaning of those things which were transpiring on that day, to the extent that three thousand believed and were baptized. Peter could not do this of himself; any more than man can put on the whole armor of God, in and of their own wisdom or ability, but with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which gave him utterance, he could preach Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God to the converting of the souls of many present on that occasion, and it was because he had on the whole armor of God. He had his loins girded about with truth, had on the breastplate of righteousness, his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and therefore he was enabled to stand and preach the gospel.

Paul said, (Rom 1:15) *“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.”* and then again, with the same reasoning he said, (Rom 12:18) *“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”* If Paul had preceded the above text with the phrase, as much as in you is, or, as much as

lieth in you, it would have been seemingly more easily understood by man, because his children believe this to be a requirement to perform the admonitions given by the writers. It is in much the same manner that Jesus taught his disciples, when he said, (James 4:13-15) *“Go to now, ye that say, Today or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For what ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”* Man should always precede a statement of his intentions with the phrase, “the Lord willing I will do thus and so”. It is however understood by all true believers, that this is necessary for man to do anything, but he doesn't say it each and every time that he states his intentions, and neither did Paul; it is just automatically understood that this stipulation applies when man makes such a statement, and also the above phrase, as much as in you is, applies when considering the admonitions made by the writers of the scriptures which were left on record for the instruction of the saints. The scriptures are never addressed to the world in terms of, *“whosoever will”* and are never given as a condition upon which man can expect to receive a reward, or to earn favor with God, by their complying with them.

They are directed to those who have been made to know, by experience, their own weak and helpless condition in the flesh, and their dependence upon God to enable them to comply with any of the admonitions to perform any acts of righteousness.

Peter admonished the brethren, (II Pet 1:5-8) *“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Again, this seems to be an admonition to the brethren to do these things, as if it was left up to their own determination or ability, but remember, he had just qualified this statement by preceding it with the words, (II Pet 1:3-4) *“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: hereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”* and with this stipulation the saints can

indeed do all of these things. This goes back to the fact, that it is the results of the work of God in revealing unto his children his kingdom and power, and the results are from this power working in them; both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.

The apostle Paul said, (Rom 12:1) *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."* This is indeed what should be reasonably expected of the children of God, because of what has been done for them in the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior who laid down his life for them, when he experienced the cruel death of crucifixion, that they might have a more abundant life than they could ever experience in the flesh, but they must first be given the unction and the ability from God. Their whole life should be dedicated to these things that the apostles admonished the disciples to do, in the gospel dispensation, are to be understood in the same manner as the commandments of the law under the first covenant, they were imposed upon them, and they were under the obligation to do them; but the scriptures clearly state that there is none righteous by the law because righteousness does not come that way, but nevertheless the requirements still stands. (Gal 3:11) *"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident: for the*

just shall live by faith." And again, (Gal 3:24) *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith."* They are admonished to do these things, even as the law commanded them to observe it, but in both cases they learn that they cannot do them, of themselves, and therefore they must look to the schoolmaster. Those under the law are made to look to and trust in the Messiah that was to come, and who would make the acceptable sacrifice for their sins. In like manner those in the gospel day must look to the Christ who has already come and who took the law of sin and death away for them, and ushered in the law of the Spirit of life which they received in the new birth; and therefore those who lived under both the old and the new covenants are brought by their schoolmaster to Christ, who is the way, and the truth, and the life, and the only way whereby man can draw nigh unto God.

Jesus came to do all of these things, in their room and stead, and it is by his sacrifice alone that they are enabled to put on the whole armor of God, and that they are able to stand against the wiles of the devil, the rulers of darkness in this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. The whole armor of God is Christ in you the hope of glory. This enables the children of God to do, as Paul continued in the above text, (Eph 6:14-17) *"Stand*

therefore, having you loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” As we stated above, this is in order that, (I Cor 1:29-31) *“That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”*

It is normal for man to be concerned when he reads the admonitions, knowing how far short he comes of living up to them; but just remember, they are setting forth perfection, and the natural man can never attain to that standard. Peter said, (II Peter 1:12) *“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.”* The admonitions are only to those who are already doing those things, as much as in them is, but each time they are admonished, they are again reminded that it is only by the grace of God that they ever have a hope of things eternal. It is by the

Holy Ghost that indwells them, enabling them to see and understand that it is the longsuffering love of God that reaches them in their lost and undone condition; and gives them the assurance that they are of the Lord's portion.

With this assurance they can rejoice in the admonitions, because they now see that they are not as the stern unyielding demands of the law, but rather loving encouragements from a brother who is speaking from experience; and yet yearning to see in the fearful, humble walk of a brother, which are the fruits of the Spirit, being made manifest in them. He knows how the brethren need these gentle expressions of love along the way that they faint not, nor be discouraged by their feelings of unworthiness in and of themselves. They are, as Paul's statement which he made many time to the churches and to Timothy, (I Tim 12:2) *“To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”* He was speaking as moved by the Spirit reminding them of God's love for them, and the grace and mercy that will accompany them in their pilgrimage in this low ground of sin and sorrow in spite of their analysis of themselves. When I go to other churches or associations, many times I will say, *“The church at Memphis sends their love and fellowship for you.”* Now, no one directly told me to tell them those words but I feel that I can freely say

this and it be the truth. It is in this manner that Paul admonishes the church at Ephesus to put on the whole armor of God. He cannot give them the power to do it, but is lovingly calling to their mind the way in which they should walk to show forth the evidence of that precious robe of righteousness that they have been clothed with, as a new creature in Christ, and that the whole household of faith may rejoice with them in seeing this love manifested in their fearful walk and conversation in the church. Surely these are the good works that Titus affirmed that the brethren be careful to maintain, because they are good and profitable unto the church.

May the grace of God be with all who love these admonitions, and who receive them in the same spirit and understanding that they are given, and whose heartfelt desire is to be found, as much as in them is, doing them.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

July, 2008
563, FM115
Scroggins, Tx., 75480

Mr. Tony Horton,

We received our July issue a few days ago and I noticed it is time to renew our subscription

for another year. We look forward to it each month.

I have really enjoyed Elder Farmers writings.

Mrs. C. G. Elledge

July 5, 2008

Bro. Tony Horton:

Since I am 93 years old I will renew my subscription for one year. Enclosed is my check and use the rest where you see fit.

I really enjoy the "Signs of the Times" and especially Elder J.B. Farmer. May the Lord Bless all the writers and Editors.

Thank you,
Lessie Smith
4033 Caederwood Dr.
Shreveport, La. 71119

7-10-08

Dear Bro. Horton,

Please renew my subscription to "The Signs." I look forward to each issue. I am pastor of a church in Huntersville, N.C. We are a very small flock and believe in salvation by God's free and sovereign grace and mercy. To sinners who are helpless to save themselves. The Lord continues to pour out his blessings upon us who are so undeserving.

Yours in hope,
Ralph Dale
2508 Governor's Pointe Ct.
Concord, N.C. 28025

VOICES OF THE PAST

JAMES 2:26.
October 1939

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

The chapter from which the above verse is taken is very plain, and simple, so that a child might understand it. This is one of many Scriptures that deal with practical religion, teaching that there is something else beside a belief in, or assent to, the word. While in this chapter James says that one is doing well if he believes there is one God, yet he tells us that devils also believe and tremble. Not all that hear the word do it, therefore James also said, *“Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But who so looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”* - James 1:22-25.

It is true that faith does come

by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, but there is as decided a difference between a living faith and a dead faith as there is between a living child and a doll. The doll can be dressed up with dress, shoes and hat, as the living child, but it is still a doll, it is dead. In the child is life, and life must always be there before any evidence of life can be manifested. The heart beats, breathing and movement of limbs, the crying, hearing and seeing are evidence of life which, as others see them, cause them to conclude that this is a living child.

True faith is a living principle in the soul, that works by love, causing the possessor to do the word of God, as well as to hear it, while false faith stalks about in an empty profession. Paul says, *“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”* Titus 1:16.

To some, perhaps, as they read these things, it will seem hard to reconcile them with the utterance of Paul in Romans 3:28, where he tells *“That a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law,”* using the testimony concerning Abraham as a proof, but does not James also use the same testimony in the chapter before us to prove his assertion that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only? Paul refers to works of the law; James is referring to very different works, as

we shall try to prove.

We fully believe that Paul and James were agreed, for the Holy Spirit inspired their testimony, and neither of them would have been faithful had he tried to mix works and grace, or law and gospel. One who has never been delivered from the law by the body of Christ does works which he, in his own mind, feels will help him to get to heaven and God's presence with a "WELL DONE." Working for a blessing.

One under the gospel, led by the Holy Spirit, and blessed with a living faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, will do those things that are well-pleasing unto God, and such a one is blest in his deed. We would have our readers note that he is blest, not for his deed, but in his deed. How strange that we should find such unruly characters in the church even in the apostles' days, who were so high-minded and indifferent as to their walk and conversation. They had "*crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.*"-Jude 4. It was so that God's servants should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

There have always been those who seem to have a strong faith, a faith that could move mountains, and have not charity, and Paul says of such, they are nothing. They can speak with tongues of men and of angels, yet they know not how to bridle their tongues; they deceive

their own hearts, and their religion is vain. Paul and James were both agreed in the cardinal truth of justification by faith. In Hebrews Paul tells us of the works of those who walked by faith, while James in the afore mentioned chapter is insisting upon the evidence of true faith in the everyday life of the brethren. He would not have them rest in a head knowledge, which they might call faith, and reckon that such is sufficient for salvation, when it does not affect the heart, nor influence the walk and conversation. Thus he first mentions "respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool." - James 2:1-3. "*If ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.*"-James 2:8, 9. Again, "*What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can such faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them*

not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only thing that can make us acceptable unto God, but such a faith proves itself true and genuine, for it works by love and is accompanied by every good work.

As faith in the Lord Jesus Christ makes us acceptable unto God, so the works of faith make us acceptable unto the brethren. A person professing that faith, yet who is at home in the world, having little or no care for better things, while he is enslaved by the love of money, and under the dominion of sin, his religion is vain. No doubt it was such people that James had seen. He noticed that in their excitement to bestow attention upon the man with the gold ring and goodly apparel, that they would slight God's humble poor. As an example of a true and living faith, James takes our father Abraham, who is called the father of the faithful. He says, "*Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God,*

and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." "*Faith wrought with his works.*" Though he knew that in Isaac his seed should be called, and was told by God that that seed would be innumerable, yet he believed God, and went to offer up Isaac, doing the work, going under the power of faith, or, as James says, faith wrought in what he did. Such a work was to be fulfilled of the Scripture. Every word of God shall come to pass, the things that God has said his people will do, faith will work in them, enabling them to work out those things well-pleasing unto God. This is what Paul meant when he said to the Philippian Church, "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*"-Phil. 2:12, 13.

Many who believe that there is one God, creator and disposer of all things, who has planned and purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, reason with a carnal mind, and say, that seeing that God has declared the end from the beginning, etc., and that his people are to be blessed, then why pray for a blessing which is purposed for us? With the same reasoning, Why go to meeting? Why read the Scriptures? Why try to influence our young to attend where the truth is preached, for if they are to be saved they will be saved? Why ask God for any-

thing when he knows what we need, and in asking we might ask amiss? Why profess his name, or strive to live godly, for if we are to be saved we will be saved anyhow? We call all such reasoning carnal reasoning, and it is from our carnality it springs, and it is God-dishonoring, resulting in this day from ignorance of the Scripture and of the power of God. There is a place for prayer in God's purpose, a very special place, it is called a throne of grace, and God's children rejoice that there is a throne of grace, and they know that praise is comely to the upright, and it is said that "*God inhabiteth the praises of Israel.*"-*Psalms 22:3*. God has not only purposed the end, but every link in the chain of events, and his worship is in his appointments.

The woman of Canaan was in trouble, her daughter was vexed with a devil. The Lord had sent this trouble, other women, perhaps; had the same trouble, but God's Spirit was in her, and a God-given faith was there also, and she pushed aside every obstacle. So mightily did faith work in her that she faced a rebuff from Jesus, and opposition from his disciples, and she worshipped him (what a work of faith), saying, Lord, help me. (Matt. 15:22-28).

Public worship is also of God's appointment, and it is longed for by those who are deeply tried, to them it is a relief to leave the world and its noise; they often have a gladness

of heart, as when David said, "*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*"-*Psalms 122:1*. Where true faith is there will be an exercise or work that will redound to the good of the soul and the glory of God. In the preacher, it will prompt him to go, leaving his home, and, if necessary, suffer privation for the cause of truth, he will endure the cross and despise the shame. He will lose sight of the gold ring and goodly apparel as in his heart he feels to be at the footstool of God's humble poor, and he is blest in his deed. Although he may feel that he cannot pray, yet many will desire an interest in his prayers, and it is good when his faith is exercised in the word of God to the comfort and edification of the saints.

It is in faith and by faith that brethren will esteem others better than themselves, it will enable those who have it to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. What sweet fellowship there is enjoyed in the church of God when brethren are doers of the word as well as hearers. It was a work of faith when the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their stripes, when he submitted to the believer's baptism and received them into his house and set meat before them. (Acts 16:33, 34.) What a work of faith was Abraham's and Isaac's as they journeyed into the mount. Isaac said, My father, behold the fire and

the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And faith working in him mightily, Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb. What a blessed road, and what solemn thoughts were theirs as they journeyed. James not only gives us Abraham as an example, but he seems to go from the greatest to the least, bringing in the harlot Rahab, the last one that man would expect to look to for an example of good works. A fallen creature, like ourselves, who had done nothing good, and of herself could do nothing good, yet it is said "*she believed in God.*" The proof of that was her works. She received the spies into her house, and sent them out another way, and she perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace. Her faith did not fail, for after she had sent the spies out another way, she confessed her belief in the God of heaven and earth, and she displayed the scarlet thread in her window. Steadfast in the faith, she waited until she was taken by the spies, with all that she had, into Israel's camp in peace.

We cannot possibly see how our subject can be twisted to strengthen a system of duty religion in which the soul would build up a store of works which would force God to change his mind. "*He is in one mind, and who can change him?*" There is no way of acceptance with God but in Jesus Christ our Lord. The creature by nature has

no righteousness acceptable unto God, all he may have is a righteousness of the flesh, which Paul had made much of, but of which he spoke when he said, "*Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.*"- Phil. 3:8, 9.

To those who have another and different way to that which Paul had, in which they would set up the old creatures to work for heaven, we would say, should God, who is rich in mercy, lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, "*hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.*"- Isaiah 28:17. Then they would confess themselves vile, without ability to do any good things. Jesus, the Savior of sinners, would then be the one thing needful and they would want to feel the word with power. It was the word with power that enabled Abram to leave his father's house and go to a land that God would show unto him. This word with power is "*a springing well,*" within the person to whom it comes, enabling them to walk and do those things that are acceptable

unto God.

Faith embraces the beginning and the end, and every step of the way, it believes God and embraces the faith once delivered unto the saints. It enables the possessor to *“hold fast the form of sound words,”* and accounts that *“the words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.”-Psalms 12:6.* A respect unto the word will often bring about a self-examination, while a neglect of the word in its precepts and exhortations will result in a coldness, and the soul will soon find itself lusting after, and minding the things of the flesh. The carnal mind ever results in death, a death to all joy and peace in believing, but it is a work of faith, a faith of the operation of God, that makes one remember God and be troubled. Those precepts and exhortations are given that we may see our shortcomings and realize that only by faith, which is the fruit of God’s Spirit, can we do them. They are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Some, of course, will say that it is a lack of faith when one is troubled. We do not think so. True faith lives and labors under loads, though damped it never dies. It, like a star, shines brightest in the dark-

est night. There may be a fearfulness lest we slip, yet such are kept by the power of God. It is through much tribulation, yet faith enables them to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. While passing through trouble, Job, a possessor of faith, could say, *“The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly,”* as much as to say that there are no bounds in their death, their strength is firm, while the child of God seems often ready to slip. Surely this is for the trial of faith, which is more precious than of gold, though it be tried by fire.

Many of us can look back to the time when we knew the Lord helped us, but this is not sufficient, faith wants a present help, past helps will encourage us to wait upon the Lord, knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. It will cause us not to despise the chastisement of the Lord, nor to faint when we are rebuked of him. We may not be able to say that our prayer is a prayer of faith, and we know that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, but our needs will be such that pray we must, it will seem to be our life’s breath, and whether we are answered or not, we know at such times it is right to pray.

The same applies to all our ways: if it is going to meeting we do not know that there will be a blessing for us, but the word saith, *“Not forsaking the assembling of your-*

selves together, as the manner of some is," and we know it is right to go, and wrong to absent ourselves. If it is not our pleasure to go, it is our duty, for we should not please ourselves. If we are concerned as to our duty to the Lord and to those who have offended against us, the word of God is plain and will be followed if we walk in the faith, though often such work will be very unpleasant to the flesh. It is not easy to pray for our enemies, to do good to those who spitefully use us, yet it becomes us so to do, even though it is a painful work.

Much could be said bearing on this subject, but we close with the observation that in the foregoing chapter James tells us in the last ten verses no less than three times that faith without works is dead.

Elder George Ruston

PSALM 89:2-5.

For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

'I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,

Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne "to all generations. Selah.

And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

**TRANSCRIBED FROM A SERMON
PREACHED BY
ELDER D. V. SPANGLER**

Snow Hill Church, October 23, 1975

May we turn to page 156, I would like for us to think about the sentiment of this hymn as we sing it. If you sing it without taking note of what it says, it is worthless:

*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! O, fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love.
Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood!
O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be:
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above!*

I am thankful to be with you. We had two things happen since arriving that has, you might say, made my trip worthwhile; if there

was nothing else. Some time ago I received an invitation to spend our time at this meeting in the home of one of the young members, Linda Adkins. Now I have a reputation in this country of writing short letters, when I write. So I wrote, she said, in maybe two lines, "*The Lord willing, I'm coming.*" As I said to her yesterday morning, "*I am going to write you a long letter now, and the letter will say this, that if I hadn't received your letter, I don't think I would have come.*" So you all might take that as you want to. The other thing is I visited an old friend in the nursing home yesterday morning, Mr. Clarence Robinson, who attended my services many years ago. He is blind now and he didn't recognize my voice. When I told him who I was, the reaction was worth my whole trip. Oh, the reaction of joy he showed for a poor sinner like I am. It surely meant something to me.

In the 17th chapter of the book of John, I shall begin reading with the first verse.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted Up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I

have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

These are the words of Jesus. And the occasion was the approach to the cross and the laying down of His life for His people. I think the message begins with His summing up in the 14th Chapter of John. You know Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us about the birth of Christ, the virgin birth, the genealogy and the events surrounding His natural birth. But the Apostle John soars away in his bringing Him to us. He loses sight, you might say, of His humble birth, His genealogy, as he said, "*In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.*" All the ministers here and elsewhere could never expound the expression, "*The same was in the beginning with God.*" For the unity of the Godhead is there. The covenant relationship is there, in the description, "*The same was in the beginning with God.*" And much of this chapter is bringing to us the relationship and the unity of God the Father and God the Son in the realm of salvation. Embraced in that unity is the people of God. Jesus in God and God in Jesus, and He in them, and them in Him, etc.

In the 14th Chapter of John,

Jesus begins to tell His disciples that He is going away. They are puzzled often concerning His going away. In the 14th Chapter He tells them, *"If ye believe in God, believe also in me. Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."* As the time would open and develop and be brought to pass they would see and know more about it. *"I go and prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also."* He tells them they know the way. Yet there is an inquiry in the mind of Phillip, and he said to Jesus, "Show us the Father." Show us the Father. You have talked about Him. Jesus said, *"Have I been so long with you and yet thou hast not known me, Phillip?" "Has all the work that I have unfolded as the eternal will of God in my life been unnoticed and unknown?" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."*

The word of God says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many? Everyone! Everyone under consideration. So the 14th Chapter is laying the foundation of His coming again. We are still holding that forth to the people. If it has not become the key to hold, it never will be. I am looking for the coming of our Lord. If I wasn't I wouldn't be here this morning. I anticipate the

event because He said, "I'm coming again." You can say it in the gospel, or however you please, but there is a second coming of the Lord.

Then Jesus brings the matter a little closer as He comes to the 15th Chapter of John regarding the unity of the Father and the Son. He said, *"I am the true vine. My Father is the Husbandman."* And He didn't forget to say in that chapter, *"Ye are the branches."* That is bringing into view in a lovely way, the unity of the Father and of the Son and with His people. *"Branches."* And in connection with that expression He said, *"As I live, ye shall live."* Just as certainly as I am alive, there is your life. *"Ye shall live."* There are about five occasions where the expression is used in these three chapters, *"These words spake Jesus."* It seems that there was a special significance in what He was saying at certain times. *"These words spake Jesus"* unto them.

I especially delight in the 15th Chapter in the words of Jesus when He said, *"These words have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full."* We will never know what salvation really is until we know the joy of our Saviour in saving us. Our cup will never be full. It will be half empty, until there is in our heart the knowledge that it was just as great a joy for Christ to save us as it is for us to be saved. Paul said, *"For the joy set before him."* It was always set before Him, and

every movement of His life, He endured the cross despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. Not only while Christ walked upon the earth, but in every phase of the salvation of His people did He have the preeminence in all things. But His place in heaven now, this morning, is as our Intercessor. He appears in the presence of God for us.

I remember the time I read that scripture in the 15th Chapter. It was at night and I was setting in my room. Whatever He had been telling in the 14th Chapter, and coming on down to the 15th, "*Ye are the branches,*" etc., *it seems now, He said, "These words He spake."* He says, "*I spake these words unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full.*" I don't think that we would detract anywhere from God's grace and His mercy and His everlasting love for His people to say that even the Father in bringing many sons to glory throughout the work of His son will take pleasure in it, also. And in connection with that there is something about the doctrine of grace and the wonders of God's grace that presents these two thoughts. When this world has been brought to a conclusion, and is over, there will be a people in heaven that God won't be ashamed of. And the only reason there will be a people that He won't

be ashamed of is because He will prepare them for it. And we also, my hearers, won't be ashamed. Christ was not ashamed to call His people, "*Brethren.*" God was not ashamed to be called our God He says that in the book of Hebrews. God was not ashamed to be called the God of the people pictured in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. It is the only way God could have a people in heaven that He wouldn't be ashamed of. He prepares them for it. And one of the great blessings of Grace is that God prepares us for what He has prepared for us. Have you learned that in your life? That same hand must prepare you for what God has prepared for you? Whether it is either joy or sorrow, it is the same thing one is no different than the other. God must prepare us for joy as well as sorrow.

And now, Jesus in the 14th and 15th chapters has been preparing them for His going away. He has stressed to them that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name it shall be given to you." That used to be a great puzzle to me. But when I found that the various names of Christ and the titles of Christ was found over 100 times in the Bible, I said, "*His name must embrace every need of His people.*" Whether He is the Advocate, the Intercessor, or whoever He is, it must embrace it all. His Name! These Great Right Reverends, so and so might think they have a right long handle when they have two or three words attached to

their names. But think of the Lord Jesus Christ having over 100 names and titles in the word of God, and each one suited to each characteristic of Him. Oh, my friend, isn't it a wonderful thing? I would travel thousands of miles to see Him one moment. He is the Kings of Kings. He is the Lord of Lords. Everywhere!

I have been in the city of Washington a few times, and they say every avenue leads to the Capitol. You go down Pennsylvania Avenue or Massachusetts Avenue, or any other, and they lead to the Capitol. But think here, every name of salvation, every phase of salvation of the people of God embodied in the Name of Christ that leads to Him!

You can have a dozen avenues in the city of Washington, and they would be crowded thoroughfares, wouldn't they? But there can be over a hundred names and titles of Christ pointing to Him and the virtue of Him and there is never any congestion in the way. There is always a way to see Him, and there is always a desire in the heart of those at the throne of God to say, "*I would see Jesus.*"

Paul admonished Timothy to preach the word: to reprove, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine. I said not long ago that if the doctrine of exhortation wasn't in the New Testament I had been preaching a lie over 50 years. It is there and it is for the minister as God directs him. If it is preached in blind zeal it is just as terrible as he is, but if it is

through the constraining grace of God, then it is, as recorded in the New Testament, "*Exhort the church of God with all long suffering, and doctrine.*" "*The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears.*" You know, I used to wonder what that was, "*Teachers having itching ears.*" I said, "I have heard of the nose itching, but not the ears itching." Probably I shouldn't say this, but I say a lots of things I wish I hadn't said, and lots of things I don't say that I wish I had said. But not long ago I heard a minister speak, and when he got through he took out of the pulpit like he was in a race with somebody. And he looked like he was itching to hear what somebody was going to say about the sermon he had preached. He must have had itching ears, do you suppose? I don't know. I will leave that for you to decide.

But these words, now we are coming to the hour of Christ. We are coming to Him and the hour appointed in eternity that our Saviour must die for us. And now His prayer. His people come first. The awful hour is approaching that He must pay the debt that all mankind couldn't pay. All the blood of all Adam's race from Adam's day to today couldn't pay it. The blood of the Son of God only, could. And the hour, He recognizes very well. He says, "*Father.*" "*These words*

spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee." That is the unity of the Godhead. There is the husbandman and the true vine. "As thou has given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." That's what we preach! Christ had power over all flesh for one end. To give eternal life to as many as thou has given Him. "And this is life eternal that they might know him." That is what it is. God has a sure and certain and definite way of bringing that life to them. The only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. "*And now, O Father.*" There was a time that our Saviour couldn't call God His Father. There was a time when in His humiliation His judgment was taken away. There was a time that the literal words that were in the 22nd Psalm must be brought out of the lips of Christ. "*My God; My God, why hast thou forsaken me.*" Now what was He asking God for? He calls Him Father, and I like the expression. "*And now, Oh Father.*" We only hint at what is involved. We can't tell it. What is He asking for now? What is the special request of Christ? "*Glorify thou me with thine own self.*" That is what He wanted. That is what He was asking for. And the kind of glory that He asked God to give Him was the kind that He had with Him before the world was. Could He have asked

anything greater? That in the hour of departure, the wonders of the covenant might be brought truly into view; that He who He entered into covenant with before this world was, there would be a continuation and a fulfilling of it in bringing Him from the dead. Paul said in the last chapter of the book of Hebrews, "*The God of peace*"; "*The God of Peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.*" The blood of the everlasting covenant! Make you perfect, etc., and in every good work it was good. And now He asked God to glorify Him with His presence. That the fulness of the love of God in the moment when the covenant was entered into, and God's love for His Son and His Son for Him, and the love for His people and the love of the people of God for them. "*With thine own self.*" That is the glory Christ is asking for. There is no question, is it? That is the glory He has asked God for. Glorify Him with Himself. "*With the same glory I had with you before the world was.*"

Some try to tell us now and try to bring us a saviour like one peddling something on the street. That isn't the God I worship. Our Lord Jesus Christ stresses in these chapters in John that though He was going away, He wasn't going to leave them comfortless. "*I will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit in my name, and he shall take the*

things of mine and show them unto you." That work is still going on. You talk about experiences of grace. Every time the Holy Spirit brings to the heart of a sinner the assurances of Christ's work and their need of it, it is an experience of grace. It is of grace, however it may come, and that which doesn't come by grace isn't of the Holy Spirit. It is of the flesh, whatever it might be. The Holy Spirit doesn't wander around at random looking for something to bring to the people of God. He doesn't bring just any thing. He brings the things of Christ. He applies every promise that a sinner has ever received in his heart of heaven and immortal glory. The Holy Spirit brings it. And there is no substitute for it. You can have a lot of substitutes, but not the Holy Spirit because He is equal with Jesus Christ, Himself. "And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory I had with you before the world." And an answer was given Jesus on one occasion from the Father, "*I have already glorified thee.*" My beloved children, this morning, our Saviour is at the right hand of the Throne of God. He is as much alive today as He was when He was here, and He now in heaven appears in the presence of God for us. He is our Mediator the only one between God and man that has the power of mediation. Every requirement of God for His people, Christ has met in His death and His righteous life.

And as the hour approaches that He must depart, He said, "*Oh Father*". Have you ever felt you could call God your Father? Have you ever felt the sweetness of your Saviour's love that you could never tell anyone of? Oh, my friend, I wake up in the hours of night sometime, and it is like day. Some avenues pointing me to the virtues of Christ, Something I haven't seen will appear. I want to exalt His name. I sometimes think as the poet said:

"I want to praise Him while He gives me breath I hope to praise Him after death."

And in the 24th verse of the 17th chapter our Saviour prayed. Yes, my friend, He prayed, that those He died for would be with Him. And He didn't only pray for that, but that "*They shall see my glory.*" I expect to see the glory of Christ. I expect to share in the glory of my Master. Will that be fulfilled? As sure as you are setting there, this morning. And when the hour arrives, Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." But He tells us here, "*I have finished the work.*" Before He died He said, "*I finished the work.*" "*All things that are written in the prophets and in Moses and the Law and the Psalms concerning me.*" As He approached the cross He said, "*They have been fulfilled.*" Every one of them. There hasn't been a one left out. "*And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the same glory I had with you before the*

world.” Then in the next chapter when He leaves His disciples, He goes out to meet our great foe and His. As He approaches those that Judas was bringing He said, “*Who are you looking for?*” And then He said, “I am the one.” “*I am the very one you are looking for.*” His great love led Him to meet them. His great love for you, my friends, led Him to meet His enemy. The eternal relationship and the eternal love of God in Him led Him, and the enemy fell on the ground. I’m glad they didn’t have to send after Him. I’m glad they didn’t have to tie Him. I know that the lamb was tied for a time in the eternal covenant as a type of Jesus on the Jewish altar. He was bound with cords on it, bound to the altar, but here I see the Lamb loose, now. And He goes to meet them, and He opens not His mouth. “*Dumb before His shearers.*” I said yesterday afternoon I had some thoughts the other day about Christ being dumb. I just touched it. I can’t tell you about it. Dumb. Mute. Beyond speech! Carrying our sins to that cross. Oh, my friends lift up your heads this morning. Many of us may never meet again here on the shores of time. Lift up your heads. Lift up your heads! Our redemption is drawing nigh! I thank you!

Elder D. V. Spangler

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Seventy Eighth session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church on October 11-12, 2008. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located on Peliter Loop Road, Carteret County, North Carolina. From Maysville travel East approximately 15 miles on Route 58. Turn right on Peliter Loop Road and the Church is one half mile on the left.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2008 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord, willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 4 and Sunday, October 5. Services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

Tarboro Church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue. Out of Raleigh, take US 64 East. Stay on the bypass until you get to Exit 485. Take this

exit and turn left at the stop sign. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight. This will be St. James Street. Go about one mile and the church will be on the right, next to the railroad tracks.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

(Our association was originally scheduled to be held with Ske-warkey Church, in Williamston, NC. Due to illness of the dear brother, it was agreed they would try to have the association another year.)

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Staunton River Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday only, August 30, 2008. Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church is the host.

Singing to start at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

An invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells - Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Greensboro Church, located at Tate and Carr streets, on the 31st of August. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2008

Elder Junior Conner, VA	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Lessie Smith, LA	35.00
Woodrow Abshire, VA	5.00
Ralph Dale, NC	5.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

FRANCES T. JARVIS

SALISBURY-Frances T. Jarvis, 93 of Salisbury went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, July 13, 2008.

Born on May 16, 1915, she was a daughter of the late Wilmer Francis Townsend and Bertha Townsend White.

Mrs. Jarvis retired from the state of Maryland. She was a volunteer for Peninsula Regional Medical Center for 15 years.

Her greatest joy in life came from her longtime membership in Forest Grove, Salisbury Old School Baptist Church.

She is survived by her sister, Willsie M. Wood of Chesapeake, Va.; her stepdaughter, Norma Larmon of Philadelphia; and many nieces and

nephews.

She was preceded in death by her brothers, John W. Townsend and Will H. Townsend; and sisters, Mary E. Jarvis and Elizabeth Adkins.

The family wishes to thank all the wonderful people at Pine Bluff Village and Deers Head Hospital for the wonderful care they have given Frances throughout the years. The family sends a very special thank you to her minister, Elder Elbert Robbins. Frances could not have had the quality of life and peace of mind she had without you.

A funeral service at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday at Holloway Funeral Home.

Elder Elbert Robbins officiated. Interment was in Wicomico Memorial Park in Salisbury.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-9.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not "the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

ANNIE DAVIS HOLLEY

Annie Davis Holley was blessed to live in the midst of family, friends, and a community who loved her for more than ninety years. Annie was born on September 13, 1916 and died on May 9, 2007.

Her parents were Raleigh and Mary Davis. Annie Holley is survived by her husband of seventy-three years, Irvin Holley.

Annie Holley is survived by three daughters Gladys (Boots) H. Elliott, Shelby H. Shelton, Nancy H. King, and by their husbands, E.C. Elliott, Norman Shelton, and Gary King. She is also survived by two sisters, Gladys D. Astin and Sallie D. Powell, and a brother, Jack Davis. Annie Holley also leaves seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren to mourn their loss.

Annie Holley never joined the Primitive Baptist Church, although she served admirably as a deacon's wife for many years. She and her husband in earlier times served as hosts to groups of the Primitive Baptists, near and far, until their home was overflowing.

Annie Holley spoke softly and with well-chosen words. A smile, a nod, or a brief word of encouragement were treasured by those who knew her.

The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians 5th Chapter, Verses

22 and 23 wrote about " ...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." I believe that all who knew Annie Holley well can see these qualities manifest in her life.

The funeral for Annie Holley was held on May 11, 2007. Elders C.B. Davis, and Jimmy Gray conducted her funeral. We hope the Lord will reconcile her loved ones to their loss.

Written by one who loved her,
Michael Williams

*"He is just away" Awaiting
the Great Resurrection Day*



Bro. Clifton A. King

Brother Clifton King of 3795 Zoo Parkway, Asheboro, N.C. was called away on the Eighth Day of April, Two Thousand Eight, at the age of 89.

Clifton was born to the late Jonah and Bertha Lassiter King.

Brother King was retired from the Weiman Furniture Company of Ramseur, NC and continued to earn a living in woodworking. He served in the US Army during World War II.

Funeral services were held April, 11, 2008 with Elder Calvin Harward officiating and the burial was at

Randolph Memorial Park. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Vera S. King, two sons, Gary Dewey King and his wife Sylvia of Asheboro, NC, son Tony Clinton King and His wife Debbie of Spartanburg, SC, brother Lacy King of Montgomery, Alabama, 4 Grandchildren and 3 Great Grandchildren.

Brother Clifton asked for a home at Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Asheboro, NC in December 18th, 1977 and was blessed to express His love for the church. He was joyfully baptized on Sunday morning, February 19, 1978. A beautiful light snow was falling as he was laid beneath the liquid grave by Elder Ralph Gaines and Elder James Moody.

Even though the snow was falling, it was such a warm feeling that was scattered over the children of God, Rock Hill Members saw and felt that Brother Clifton was yet still carrying another banner. The church saw fit to ordain Brother Clifton as a Deacon March 18, 1979.

He served Rock Hill Church faithfully for 28 years.

We miss him so much, but know that God's will is done.

*"The grass withers and the
flowers fall,*

*But the word of our God
stands forever."*

Isaiah Chapter 40, verse 8

A Sister in Christ, I hope
Carolyn S. Gaines

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 176

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Always be concerned of our duty to
the Lord
As we gather in harmony and one
accord
at the Throne of Grace, we are blessed
to pray
As He reaches down and guides our
way.*

*We find faith without work is dead,
Through his Grace, we are daily led.
We find this faith more precious than
gold,
As his graceful blessings are daily un-
folded.*

*Faith embraces the beginning and the
end
As he reaches down to this low land
of sin,
For instructions to the man of God
To be led in the way our Father trod.*

*True faith labors under a heavy load
As he guides us daily on this sinful
road,
Faith enables one to wash their robes
of sin
And he daily visits our hearts within.*

*Faith comes through God's Holy Spirit
Which carnal flesh cannot merit.
Through the goodness of our all wise
Lord*

We assembled together on one accord.

*This faith becomes our guiding Ray
Which sustains us daily on our way.
This is meted out from his court above
That we resume through his immacu-
late Love.*

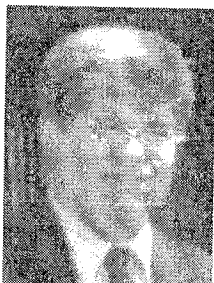
R.J. Justice

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EDITORIAL

“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” Luke 24: 39.



Elder J.B. Farmer

I must again acknowledge the weakness of all flesh and express my desire that the God of heaven and earth will keep me in the faith as this is being written. We are taught that all see through a glass darkly and only know in part, which makes us to depend upon Him for light and understanding and causes us to fear

and tremble. We are commanded to rightly divide the word of truth, which means, to me, to not handle the word deceitfully but to explain it with as much light as we are given. I also believe that this fear causes us to remain silent about those things which are unclear or doubtful in our own minds. Also, I must say that all men are fallible and none should be heeded except as they are kept in the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the end our God will be praised and His people will be comforted and edified.

Jesus had lain down His life for His friends, was buried and was raised after three days according to His word and the word of prophesy. When Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James came to the sepulcher, they were told by the two men in shining garments that Jesus was risen. They came and told these things to the apostles *“and their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.”* After Jesus had appeared to some in the way, they came to Jerusalem and told the eleven and others these things. *“And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do these thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is myself: handle*

me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it and, did eat before them."

Now, we see that none believed, neither could believe that He was actually raised from the dead until he revealed Himself unto them. This is the way it has ever been. *"No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal Him."* When Jesus unexpectedly and at once stood in their midst, they were terrified and thought they had seen a ghost. This is the best the flesh can do since it is faithless. However, Jesus did not leave them in that faithless condition with doubts and fears and misunderstandings. But He appeared to them, at that time, to show them that He, Himself was risen from the dead and was not a ghost. They had to know that it was Jesus, Himself who was raised in a recognizable body which could be seen and handled. Jesus showed Himself in the ways which He did after His resurrection, not to confound us, but rather that all His own would be comforted and would be given to understand enough about the resurrection to

sustain our hope here in this evil world. He showed that He was not raised a spirit or a ghost but that He had a substantial body of flesh and bones. Now, we know from the scriptures, *"that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."* Flesh and blood here, I believe, refers to the natural body while *"flesh and bones"* spoken of by the risen Lord refers to His spiritual body.

If included, in times past, I may have stumbled at this point, thinking that Jesus somehow came forth in a natural body and that He was changed later when He ascended into heaven. He, according to the scriptures, was the firstborn of all that sleep. He was the example for all who would follow Him in the regeneration. His resurrection must have been, in essence, what ours also will be. It seems to me that it was impossible that He could come forth from the grave in a natural body because a natural body is subject to death and He had just gotten the victory over death. If it was not a natural body that He arose with, it must have been a spiritual body. Then, how is it possible for a spiritual body to have flesh and bones? The inspired apostle, speaking of the relation of the spiritual church with its spiritual head, even Christ, said, *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones."* *Ephesians 5:30*. This is a great mystery which can only be received by faith. Jesus, in a resur-

rected spiritual body, manifested Himself in a way that He would be known by His little ones; that is, in a body with spiritual flesh and spiritual bones. It was not possible for Him to appear in the fullness of His glory at that time because the fullness of His glory would have consumed them and all flesh together. We know that no man, in his natural flesh, has ever seen God and lived. Only when the saints are changed and given spiritual bodies will they be enabled to stand in the presence of Him in all His glory.

Many have speculated about what kind of body the saints will come forth with in the resurrection of life. The apostle called all who do such, fools, since all speculation about spiritual things is foolishness. What we are given to know about the resurrection is contained in the scriptures and may only be known by revelation. So then, what does the inspired apostle tell us about the resurrected body? First, we are told that it is a quickened or living body. It is a celestial or heavenly body. It is raised in incorruption and therefore can never perish. It is raised in glory or honor. It is raised in power, therefore, is not subject to any of the forces of this world of vanity. It is a spiritual body, yet not a ghost which Jesus abundantly showed to His disciples in the above account. It is an immortal body and so is not subject to death.

I cannot escape the conclusion that Jesus was raised a living, heav-

enly, incorruptible, glorified, powerful, spiritual and immortal body. He had power to appear in any form which pleased Him and even to appear and to disappear at will. He could appear in a substantial body as he did with His disciples at Jerusalem or in flaming fire as He will at His glorious coming. In that substantial body, he manifested Himself in times past to His apostles and disciples as a spiritual man with spiritual flesh and spiritual bones showing that it was He, Himself who was raised from the grave. In our time, we are given to see by the eye of faith, the risen Christ as a spiritual man, as they did, and are also given to see, as they were, a faint view of His glory which is to come. But when He comes, every eye shall behold Him in all His glory and in the fullness of His power and majesty. Both those who have died and have been buried and those who are alive and remain at His coming shall see Him; both the righteous and the wicked.

Jesus said, *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”* John 5:29. The inspired apostle Paul said, *“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his*

mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.” 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. And finally, the holy apostle John said, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” 1 John 3:3-4.

This was written in love, I hope,
Elder J.B. Farmer

PSALM 103:1-4.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul;
and all that is within me, bless
his holy name.*

*Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits:*

*Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
who healeth all thy diseases;*

*Who redeemeth thy life from
destruction; who crowneth thee
with lovingkindness and tender
mercies.*

CORRESPONDENCE

Sept. 25, 2005

Dear Elder Key,

I think all who attended our last association were well fed Spiritually as well as naturally.

I think sound doctrine of God our Saviour, was set forth on both days, in a beautiful way.

I will be in Greensboro on the 27th of Sept. to celebrate with the hundred elected nurses who were chosen from 58 thousand my daughter Edith Bayless was one of the hundred. Needless to say we are very proud of her. She works in a hospital in Tarboro, N.C.

If you see fit to enter this in the Signs you may do so.

In bonds of love,
Riley Justice

8-5-08

Dear Brother Tony:

Enclosed please find money to renew my subscription for two years.

My wife and I sure enjoy the Signs of the Times. We don't have a church in Central Louisiana to go to, or can't find one that believes in absolute predestination of all things, or of the Old School faith.

I was in the military for 20 years and never had a church to go to any length of time. I thought when I retired I could find a church, but they are few and far between. The nearest one of the faith we believe in is close to a hundred miles from us. If you know of one of the Old School faith (Hardshell) please let us know.

I've been retired from the military since 1974 and am still looking for a church.

Sincerely with loving kindness,
Jerry & Bobbie Morgan

890 Jeff McNeal Road
Center Point, LA. 71323
318-253-7567

NOTE: If anyone knows of a Church near Jerry please let him know.

ROMANS 8:27-29.

And he that searcheth the hearts and mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

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.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

ARTICLES

A little article on graceful spiritual blessings has been on my mind for some time.

God's grace that is funneled through the channels of God's amazing power to the recipients of his love, belongs to God.

I find this word grace to be one of the most beautiful words to be found in the human language, a word that has a very distinctive particularly spiritual, meaning for old Baptist beliefs. Grace, though having many colors, has a meaning to old school people, and Christians more generally. Grace for old school believers is the center of our faith, and is an unmerited favor.

Grace brings God's little ones to the knowledge of the truth-the truth that is hidden in Christ Jesus the Lord. Our exercised belief, is that Grace comes to those lifted from darkness through God's loving kindness, and most importantly at God's appointed time. And those lifted from darkness are made through God's Inspiration to feast at the Master's table.

This appointed time of God's discretion rather than man's, becomes food and consolation for the believer. God's deliverance through an eye of faith is one of the greatest mysteries of the Christian experience. This walking in the light where the darkness comprehends it not, brings the believer to hunger and

thirst for God's righteousness, making the mystery of Grace the spiritual idea that it is. These spiritual rations that the believer hungers for, clearly are food that are stored and delivered at God's appointed time.

The Gospel of the kingdom of God is the very breath of life for the believer; and, enriches and enlightens our hope when blessed with an eye to see, an ear to hear and a heart to comprehend. Though our human nature is deaf to spiritual manna, this is correct because our carnal mind and body cannot lift a hand in working out the great salvation.

Though the birth of our conscience seems similar to the rebirth of our God's deliverance speaks specifically to the birth of our spirit, and makes the believer *suffer* for their sins through God's chastening power. We are all sinners by nature, of the Adam nature, and of the Adam tree. God's transformation of the believer's heart though deeply personal, is not unlike the tiller of God's Eden.

Some believe that one has a free will to accept or reject God's great salvation.

Our human natures' certainly make this seem apparent; however, the true meaning and intent of Grace is just unimaginably more powerful, and for the believer intently more beautiful. The whisper of God's grace in the believer's ear, is as broad and as deep as all life and beyond. God, the singular reality of all that exists is the great architect,

and for old school believers, the only thing that can be thought of as Holy.

Just as God designed the ebbing of the tides, the drift of the night sky, the rhythms of the seasons and the very breath of life; we believe that God's judgment in forming the church is likewise complete. It was God's holy will that disbanded Satan from heaven, and crafted the plan in all its detail to reconstitute God's, not man's church.

These mysteries of truth hidden in Christ Jesus, are the origin of the idea of spiritual paradox. Old school belief, is a hardly wrought wrangling of the pearl before the swine, over a period of several hundred years. Re-affirming God's true power and supremacy, was not an act of submission so much as an affirmation of God's brilliant love. The core of these ideas have been much misunderstood over the past five to seven hundred years to where one chooses to enter the history.

Part of the Baptist paradox is that old Baptist people, though knowing their helplessness in God's spiritual work, are at the same time completely nourished by Christ's parable of the mustard seed. Old Baptist people's hope is firmly secure in God's supremacy. There could, or perhaps should, be comfort in God's many many examples of turning the table on the human will, both within and without the Christian circle.

Christ told Peter that he would deny him before the cock crowed.

Peter really did not really think this denial would happen, basically denying his denial. Peter denied. God clearly demonstrated his knowledgeable authority.

Paul a non-Christian began a mission to Damascus to persecute God's Saints, or so he thought. God's transforming power redirected Paul's entire route and life in a single breath. The light of God in all its brilliance filled Paul's heart was a very new song.

God's song of love in the believers heart, has been penned a thousand times as the believer's candle in the darkness. These examples if not deceived, are the workings of God's Grace.

And Paul's will was made new as well. He was blind before he saw, and he saw and Paul heard; and Paul sang his new song of praise on new missions that made real the beauty of the poetry of David's Psalms. Paul's spiritual birth was an unmerited gift of grace.

Faith is the only thing that can give man both individual and collectively any adequate concept of God's breadth, and the individual's very breath. Just as ancient people named the stars and constellations variously, a conditional God based on our will as a grain of sand in the sea, is just plain shallow.

Early on, there were fewer words. And our first utterances of the great Jehovah were a reverence for our blindness in God's great universe.

Our respect for God even in philosophy was complete, and much more attached to our understanding of the wholeness of not only God's authority, but God's great immutable creative love.

These foundations of faith that inspired through Grace Jesus' disciples, them leaving their homes and families; and, provide examples that remain beyond our carnal understanding. And like the sparrow, their needs were supplied. But the greater mystery remains grace and faith, as their heart transformed as new vessels hidden in Christ Jesus.

And these foundations of faith as God instructed his disciples that his journey would continue with his father so they would not grieve, completed the paradox of God's love by instructing the disciples to rejoice in God's plan. There indeed, is a season. Our very comfort remains this season. God's season.

Carnal man's state of being dead to the knowledge of the truth, is not something that old Baptists take pleasure in, though clearly true. Ephesians 1:3-4 shows God's design in it's entirety to begin with: *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be Holy and blameless in his sight."*

So this mysterious beautiful spiritual attraction and attachment

through God's grace to God's purpose, at God's time, God knew about in creation. And the quickening of our hearts, Paul reflects on as well.

Ephesians 2: 1-2 *"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient."*

And of course Ephesians gives it's most famous comfort: *"for it is by grace you have been saved"*. This working of Grace in a noisy world taunting free will, has molded the beautiful modest church of the believing family of Christ since the Master walked in Galilee. Equally beautiful and perhaps mysterious however, is that more often than not, those who understand God's loving authority have as often as not been few if we look intently at history.

The breadth of God's creation today as yesterday, has no working of God's atonement likewise is whispered to the heart of the believer ebbing at God's instruction.

Likewise, the courage to relinquish the human will to God's authority is heavenly designed, and I believe complete. Though we may create and build, in God's eyes we are the clay and He, is the potter. And for me if not deceived, I hope to say thankfully so.

Recognizing God's supremacy in dispensation of grace and all

spiritual blessings truly seems a psalm to Elijah's still small voice on Mount Horeb. And again, I hope to say, thankfully so.

In the bonds of Love,
Riley Justice
POB 272
War, WV 24892
304-875-2960

VOICES OF THE PAST

IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

THE following article I think was written in February, 1905, but not finished and sent for publication, to the best of my knowledge and recollection of the matter now. I also have many other articles unfinished. Is Christ divided? These were the words of Paul to his Corinthian brethren, recorded in 1 Cor. i. 13.

The connections show that this church of God was living as though Christ is divided; therefore Paul's question, *"Is Christ divided?"* This was an all-important question for those brethren to consider; it is just as important today as when the words were written. O that all of God's people everywhere could be impressed by the Spirit of Christ to repeat these words: *"Is Christ divided?"* before they act in taking sides in the wars that are now raging in so many places over different

subjects that so disturb and divide God's people. Dear brethren, what do you think would be the result among the Primitive Baptists if all would consider well the words of Paul before they act harshly in declaring nonfellowship for their brethren? Paul said, *"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."*—1 Cor. i. 9. Here we learn that it is a God-given fellowship which his people have for his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Therefore Paul continued: *"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."* If this was good admonition for Paul to give and for his brethren to heed then, it is good to heed now. It yet would be good for the church of Christ to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To thus live would be to live as though Christ and his people were one in fellowship, instead of living as though Christ were divided. If God calls the members of his church (which is the body of Christ) into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, then it evidently is wrong for any man or set of men to work to cause the church of God to declare non fellowship for each other or a church of Christ.

John said: 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."—

1 John 1. 3. John was desirous that his brethren have fellowship with him, therefore he declared unto them what he had seen and heard. We note that his great reason for his brethren *having fellowship with him was, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."* O how sad would our condition be if we were seeking to break fellowship with our brethren and at the same time claiming that we had fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Evidently to make such a claim would be equivalent to claiming that it mattered not whether he had fellowship for the church of Christ; that we could have fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, just the same. We note John taught differently. He continues: *"And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."* Let us note these words. O how solemn these things are! John here is teaching first the necessity of fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus

Christ; and second, if we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. John continues: *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."* From this we learn why God's people have true fellowship, one with another. On the other hand, John says: *"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now."*

John continues to contrast between the conditions of those who are in darkness and those who are in the light. He says: *"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he doeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."* It is when the church of Christ is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither they goeth, that they are led to live as though Christ were divided.

My dearly beloved brethren, I have learned to my sorrow and shame what it means to live as if Christ were divided, yet I plead that I did it ignorantly; yes, I verily thought I must take sides, and I did take sides, to the extent that sweet fellowship which once existed was broken. O how cruel these things are, and yet they do exist in many places even to this day. I verily be-

lieve many are just as honest as I was, and yet there is no doubt in my mind, if the truth were known, many like myself are under the influence of some would-be leader who has men's persons in admiration because of advantage. Read Jude sixteenth verse. Such as these, evidently do not have true love and fellowship for their brethren, but are seeking advantage, and it is done so cunningly that some never detect their craftiness. It is such as those who seemingly have great admiration for their brethren as long as they can control and lead them; but just as soon as they find out their selfish advantage is at an end, such ones will have no more use for their brethren, and they even will go to the extent of trying to kill the very ones that they seemingly manifested such great admiration and love for, John said: *"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen,"* This is very plain language, and it seems very easily understood, if indeed we ourselves are in the light. But if darkness hath blinded our eyes, so that we ourselves know not whither we go, we fail to see aright. It is then that we are willing to live as though Christ is divided. Paul said to his Corinthian brethren: *"That everyone of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ then the words of our text, Is Christ divided?"* Paul did

not take sides with any of them, no, not even with those who said, I am of Paul. Paul attributed their condition to their being carnal instead of spiritual. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men. For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal. From Paul's argument here and elsewhere no man can justly claim to be spiritual, and at the same time laboring to divide God's people. The truth of the matter is, we are carnal whenever we try to divide God's people.

None of the apostles ever tried to divide the church of Christ. Then let me ask, O why should we work to divide the church of Christ, and at the same time claim to be apostolic both in faith and practice. At the same time we certainly know that the apostles did not teach or practice trying to divide the church of Christ. Notwithstanding the carnality and the lack of spirituality on the part of these brethren, Paul yet labored with them and said to them, *"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."* He then tells why he did this: "And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." This was Paul's way of dealing with the weak; this was true love manifested on the part of Paul toward his brethren. Now let us reason to-

gether. Suppose Paul had taken sides with those who said, I am of Paul, and they had declared nonfellowship for those who said, And I of Apollos; then suppose Paul and his faction were right, as far as doctrine was concerned, and Apollos and his faction were wrong. We see in such case Paul would be deprived of preaching the true gospel to those weak brethren who said, And I of Apollos. They were wrong and would in all probability have remained wrong, seeing they were cut off from hearing the truth. Brethren, let me ask which would be the better way, if we truly love our brethren. Would it be better to declare nonfellowship for the weak, or would it be better to do as Paul said he did for the gospel's sake one way he could not be partaker with them of the Gospel. On the other hand, Paul could be partaker thereof with his weak brethren, if no divisions were allowed to the extent of breaking church fellowship. Now the fact of the matter was, and is yet, God had given a diversity of gifts to the church. Paul said, *"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."* Both gifts were useful for the church as a whole *while undivided*. Paul continues: *"For we are laborers together with God."* In such a case there is fellowship first with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and in the second place there should be and evidently is fellowship one for the other. How would it sound for

two ministers to claim that they were laborers together with God, and yet working to divide the church of Christ. To make such a claim would be to claim that Christ is divided, and that God is the author of confusion, yet Paul said: *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."* - 1 Cor. xiv. 33. James said: *"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."* James tells from whence this wisdom comes and also tells them from whence it doth not come. It would have been vain for James' brethren to have claimed that they were laborers together with God. He told them plainly not to lie against the truth. They were living as though Christ was divided, and they wanted to live that way. James said: *"Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you."* All of James' warring brethren would condemn and kill the just. That is one sorrowful feature of those who want to live as though Christ is divided they do not want to be opposed by the just. *"Is Christ divided?"* What shall we answer? Paul said to these Corinthian brethren *"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."* It would be just as reasonable to say that Christ has two bodies, as it is to live as though Christ were divided. Christ is not divided, neither has he two bodies for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles,

whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one Spirit. Paul makes an illustration by comparing the visible church of Christ to a human body. He shows that no member of the human body can say to another member of the same body, I have no need of thee. Paul asks the question, And if they were all one member, where was the body. He then says, But now are they many members, yet one body. Paul's argument is that the body of Christ is composed of different members, yet note he says, members in particular; meaning, as the connection shows, that each member has its particular place to fill in the body of Christ, the same as the members of the human body have their particular places to fill in the human body. The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. When we divide into factions we then live as though we had no need of the different gifts of God to the church of Christ, which is the body of Christ.

Submitted in love,
Joseph Ford.

Seneca, Kans., Feb. 1, 1918.

CORINTHIANS 12:8.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another in the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

EXPERIENCE

In the year 1915 I was about 12 years old, and I was walking a farm road reading Revelations 21 :8. Many of the things mentioned in this passage of scripture I have never put into action, but I, for the first time in my life, knew what it meant to be guilty of the whole. As I walked along the road I was crying out, *“God have mercy on me”*.

I came to the place that I thought I had made my last step on earth. I went down on my face thinking that I would never get up again; that was the place that I would die and awake in hell, knowing that God was just in doing so. I feel that was the place where heaven and earth kissed. I felt that my sins were pardoned and forgiven. I arose to my feet praising God. Everything that I could see seemed to be praising the Lord. I could not believe that I would have any more troubles. Little did I know about the tribulations that were before me.

I went about 14 or more years before I ever had a desire to ask the church for a home. I was so depressed that I thought I was losing my mind. I went this way for about two and a half years. During this time I had a double burden because also I had a weight to go and preach the gospel. I vowed that I would never do it for the people would not want to hear me. Yet I had rather preach than anything. I knew that I could not of myself preach the gospel, or I would be preaching only to myself.

In the year of 1935, the fourth Saturday in May, I went before the church and asked for a home and was received. I was baptized the next day. I did not say anything about my feeling I thought I would have to go to the pulpit, but Sister John Ramsey said, *“A minister has joined the church today, and I want to hear him when he first speaks”*. I was liberated in 1937, and ordained in 1941.

Now I want to come to some of my visions and revelations. Before I ever went to the pulpit I had this double vision in a dream. I was walking in a forest of woods, and I saw a tree about 20 feet high, with blue flashes of lightening coming down to about knee high. I had to walk through it. I had a great fear, thinking that no man could go through this and live without the faith of God. I went through and was not harmed. Then I heard these words coming from the tree, *“Surely Jim has seen the hand of God”*. And in the same night, I saw myself standing in a field, and two men came before me, looked me over, and then they went back from whence they came. Then I heard the same voice say to me, *“Thou shalt have two children before that you can see my face”*. There was one daughter born, and after that my wife died. I went about thirty years puzzled over the meaning of this dream.

It caused me much trouble. In 1972 I was hunting in the woods,

and as I was walking by the trees, this dream came to me with the interpretation, and I saw that my two grandchildren were the two children. I believe that was the meaning of that dream. I came down with a gall operation, and was very nervous. I thought my time was nigh at hand; the two children had been born. I wanted to die. I have been from coast to coast more than once since that time and have met a good many of the faithful of God.

Now another vision before that I ever began to speak in public I was standing in a field looking at a hill covered with oak trees. From my right I heard a sound like mighty rushing wind and a sweet rumbling sound. As it went through the trees every tree bowed under the pressure of it, but not even a leaf fell. Then I heard these words coming from the trees, *"A God-born man can not sin. You know not who they are, but I do"*. Now when I go into the stand I never try to be the judge of the people, but try to preach the truth and let the chips fall where they will.

This vision was about 1962. I was troubled about what to do. I begged the Lord to tell me what to do. I prayed nearly three days and nights over this matter. The third night at 12:25 A.M. I heard these words so sweet and loud that the earth rang, *"Be still and know that I am God."*

I awoke thanking the Lord. I looked it up in the bible, and it was found in the book of Psalms 46:10.

I have seen myself ascending upward toward heaven shouting praise to God. I have seen behind the gloomy cloud, and what a beautiful blue sky, with a golden Sun in the midst of it.

After all of these visions it seems that I would not be so depressed as much of the time as I am.

Dear readers, please join in and let us know what the Lord has done for you.

Elder J.R. Hollandsworth

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1.

Who is this scripture talking to? Who does it have meaning to? We could answer simply by saying that it is talking *"to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* But that is not the message of the scripture. The message is that there is now no condemnation. The full meaning of this scripture can be felt only by someone who feels to be condemned. Do we not find within us sinful thoughts, sinful lusts, the working of corruption in our hearts to cause us to cry out, *"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.” Romans 7:18. Can we find anything good dwelling in our old carnal self or flesh? If you had no faulty plumbing in your house, you would have no need to call a plumber.

If your house was not on fire, you would feel very foolish calling the fire department. If you don't feel condemned by God's just and holy law, the message of “no condemnation” would mean very little to you. What is a joyful sound to one is foolishness to another. *“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness...”* 1 Cor. 1:18.

Dear sinners, how do you feel? Have you exhausted all of your own means to get out from under the condemnation of the law? Are you not aware of your sinful nature? Do you have daily conflicts within you? Are you ready to ask is there anyone like me? Why? Because you seem to stand so far from the things of God and godliness. You may say, my mind and thoughts go astray most of my waking hours. I have bouts with my temper, say and do things that are so contrary to what I feel a child of God should do. I so often lust after the things of this world, and in my thoughts and mind harbor idols that come between God and me. It seems I'm always partaking of the things that I would not and failing to do the things I would. How can I hope to be in Christ Jesus?

You see that you certainly had no control over your first birth. Then

you feel with awe that *“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.”* Romans 5:12. There are no escape loopholes in this scripture.

All have sinned. And when you look at your own sins, the guilt and weight of them seem to get heavier and heavier. You realize more and more the purity of God's law. His commandments are good, just, and holy, yet they are broken in an uncontrollable manner. *“For the good that I would, I do not, but the evil I would not, that I do.”* Romans 7:19.

Yet, dear ones, if we by the grace of God are given to feel that we are corrupt sinners, is it not true evidence that we are live sinners? Yes, we are sinners but we are not dead sinners. If we were dead sinners, we would not be so aware of the *“weights and the sin which doeth so easily beset us.”* It is through His grace that we are alive to our sins and corrupt nature. If we, through the quickening and teaching of the Holy Spirit, have been made alive to our sinful and corrupt nature, our weakness and inability to alter our condition; we are then ready to cry out with the Apostle Paul, *“O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death.”* Romans 7:24. If this be so with us, then my beloved friends, I believe this is true evidence that we are live sinners.

Your interest is sparked with Nicodemus when Jesus tells him, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. Then you realize that you have no more power over this second birth than you have over your first birth. The quickening power is completely and totally out of your hands.

And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins " Eph. 2:1. You cannot quicken yourself. If you are born again, it is "not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13

So then you are condemned in a corner from which there is seemingly no escape. But this corner acts as the most important turning point of your life. It turns you from self to Savior.

Remember in your schooldays when someone who broke the school's laws had to go sit in a corner? It could be a sorrowful place, - but usually a lesson was learned. "*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ...*" Gal. 3:24. This process may unfold rapidly as it did with Paul on the road to Damascus, or it may be very gradual over a period of many months and even years. But the results are the same: you are turned away from self to Savior.

And, oh what a turning away! When Jesus shines his countenance upon your soul and implants an earnest hope in your heart, the whole

world seems to take on a new glow! You see Jesus everywhere! His is your all in all! Many of the beautiful old songs come to life because they echo your experience:

*"Jesus! my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My lord, my Life, my Way, my
End,*

*Accept the praise I bring."
(From "How sweet the name
of Jesus sounds")*

*"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
Ev'ry sin, and temptation,
and pain!*

*I could scarcely believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer
again."*

*(From "O how happy are
they',)*

*"Bright garlands of immortal
joy*

*Shall bloom on ev'ry head;
While sorrow, sighing, and
distress,*

*Like shadows, all are fled."
(From "Sing, all ye ransomed
of the Lord")*

Now our scriptural text leaps alive with power and beauty. The meaning of gospel as good news is clearly evident. It is exceedingly good news to your soul that "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. "*You feel to be in Christ Jesus; you have no desire*

to walk after the flesh; your overwhelming desire is to worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth forever and ever. But eventually, the rich fullness of your experience seems to slip away. Cares of this world creep in. That once solid faith is being attacked by its counterpart, unbelief.

And you begin to think, how could such a sinner as I, really expect to be included in that precious flock?

Again, some of the old songs seem to express your sentiments as if they were written especially for you:

“Where is the blessedness I knew

When first I saw the Lord?

Where is the soul-refreshing view

Of Jesus and his word?”

(from “O for a closer walk with God.”)

*“I find myself out of the way;
My thoughts are often gone astray;*

Like one alone I seem to be:

Oh! is there anyone like me?”

(from “I am a stranger here below”)

It is a wonderful source of comfort to find that there are truly others like you, others who believe and feel the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man. You find considerable comfort in the companionship they give” in the songs you sing, in the preaching you hear, and in the Word you read. You feel cer-

tain that surely these people are the children of God. And your certainty is anchored in scripture when you read, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” Jesus said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5. You see that this fruit is brought forth not in order to have union with Christ, but because of a union with Christ. You have no spiritual independent existence out of him. Thus without a union with Christ, you cannot be a partaker of any spiritual fruit. So all the fruit of the Spirit, your faith, hope, love and the other graces flow out of a personal spiritual and experimental union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Every quickened child of God is to bring forth fruit. “For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Eph. 2:10.

But sometimes you wonder if you have any of these fruits. What are they? Some, for example, include fear, faith, love, and hope.

One of the first fruits ripened by the Spirit is that of fear. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.— When you first understand the consequences of being condemned, it can be exceedingly fearful. Yet the Lord sees fit to make fear a fruitful attribute. “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of*

wisdom." Psalm 11:10.

As the fruit of faith comes to mind, we can only think of the Savior. He is the author and finisher of our faith. We firmly believe that he is indeed our only way, truth, and life. And this faith must be alive. It gives us access to the promises of the gospel and at the same time it demands fruitful works. "Faith without works is dead." James 2:20, Love toward God's people is a fruit that seems to give strength to my hope more than any other. A special love for the brethren seems to flow from breast to breast. There are no strangers. *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* 1 John 3:14. *"What a comforting scripture! Hope is a fruit I believe we feel most of the time. Sometimes it seems to sink out of sight, yet even then you would not trade it for all the riches of this world. Even then, it is the "hope we have as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast"* Heb. 6:19. It is an earnest expectation of gospel promises yet unseen. *"Who walk not after the flesh"* We may all feel to walk after the flesh most of our time, but what is it to walk in this way? They that are led, or walk, after the flesh will never be led to the sight of their sins; for to walk after the flesh is to walk in darkness of this world, in ignorance of Christ and his grace, walking according to the course of this world. To walk after the flesh is

to be continually pursuing and doing the things that pleases the flesh — whether it includes the profane things of the world or whether it is a more refined and deceptive form of godliness under a robe of worldly religion that glorifies the flesh by works and limits God's power in the work of eternal salvation. *"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."* II Tim. 3:5.

"But after the Spirit." To walk after the Spirit is to walk in "newness of life." He will lead you to a sight of your sins and misery, to a clear understanding of your fallen nature. He will lead you out of self and to a crucified Christ. He will lead you into a love for the truth and a love for those who have had like experiences. He will lead you into this gospel truth. *"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh."* Phil. 3:3. If the Holy Spirit has brought divine life and light into your soul and feeling into your conscience, you will be made to realize that you of yourself have no way of putting away sin, nothing to bring you close to God, no way to fulfill the demands of his righteous law, nothing to deliver you from condemnation, nothing to remove your doubts and fears and nothing to make you mete for heaven. The grand truth is we are just as helpless to partake of divine things after regeneration as we were

before.

"But when the fullness 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." Gal. 4:4. Jesus Christ came into this world for your sake, to save his people from their sins. To fulfill the law to a jot and tittle, to satisfy justice and bring in mercy, he paid double for all the sins of his people. He is the end of the law for righteousness for you. His stripes heal you. His blood cleanseth you from all your sins. His righteousness delivered you from the curse and wrath of God. You are in a sanctuary in Christ. Your sins were condemned in the flesh of Christ and punishment fully rendered. Justice being once satisfied cannot demand a second satisfaction. Therefore there is no sentence of condemnation against you from the mouth of God because you are in Christ Jesus.

May we be forever thankful for blessed evidences, whose certainty is encouched in an all-powerful, unchangeable God. *"Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* Phil. 1:6. *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* John 10:28. *"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor*

things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38, 39.

Three words out of our text embody a force sufficiently strong to carry you past the chilly waters of death and into life everlasting. These three words are *"in Christ Jesus"* He is the resurrection, the truth, and the life. And when your time comes to face the sting of death, may that sting be removed by the loving presence of the Savior. May you truly feel to be in Christ Jesus, where there is victory over sin and the grave.

(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Middletown, N. Y., April 1876

Mr. Slauson: In fulfillment of my promise, I will state some of the most important incidents of my life. I was born in the town (now city) of Norwick, Conn., on the 25th day of November, 1800. At a very early period, and as far back as my memory extends, I was seriously impressed with a solemn conviction of my sinful and lost condition as a sinner, and of the necessity of being "born again", to qualify me to see the kingdom of God. When I think from my best remembrance of the date, I was not more than seven or eight years old, I was made

to hope and rejoice in God as my Savior, and to feel his love shed abroad in my heart. I think that at that tender age I was taught of God to know what no other being could teach me, that "*Salvation is of the Lord*". From that hour I have had no confidence in the power of men to effect or help in the least to effect the salvation of a sinner. In 1811 I was baptized by Elder John Sterry, and received as a member of the Baptist Church in Norwick. This was many years before the division of the Missionary or Fullertite Baptists from the Primitive order, and before any organized religious societies or institutions were known or tolerated in the Baptist denomination in our country.

In 1816, I came to the city of New York, and afterward became identified, by letter, with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where I was called to exercise my gift, and was finally licensed to preach the gospel, this was about the year 1818. I then traveled in several states as an itinerant preacher, and supplied the Third Baptist Church in Baltimore three or four months in about 1821-2, but it suited my mind better to be traveling. I never failed to find places where I was well received, and without any support from missionary arrangement I was fully sustained, so that I could say as did the disciples whom Jesus sent out without purse or script, when they returned, that I had lacked nothing.

In 1823, February 4, I was mar-

ried in the city of New York, and in the same year was ordained to the pastoral care of the Baptist Church of Ramapo, in Rockland County, N.Y., and continued with them until May, 1826, when I accepted a call to the pastorate of the Baptist Church at New Vernon, N.Y. This church was constituted about 1786, and my predecessor, Elder Benjamin Montanye, had served them as pastor thirty-three years. He died in December, 1825, and I succeeded him the following May. So it will be seen that this ancient church has been supplied for the last eighty-three (now eighty-eight) years by but two pastors. During the fifty years of my connection I spent the principal part of three years and a half in Alexandria, and Upper Broad Run, Va., and the Shiloh Church in Washington, D.C., but continued to visit New Vernon regularly during the time, and finally removed to New Vernon, in April, 1840.

For about forty years I have also served the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in connection with my labors in and with New Vernon.

During the half century all the members of both churches have been called to their inheritance above with the exception of about four or five. The two churches contain a membership now of about one hundred and eighty, nearly all of whom have been gathered into the fold, besides many others who have been called away, since I have been with them.

The division, or separation, of the Missionary Baptists in these parts, from those of the old order, took place about forty years ago. I stand today rooted and grounded in the faith and order on which the whole Baptist denomination in our country stood when I united with them sixty five years ago. I have found no occasion to depart from either the faith or order of the Church of God, as organized on the day of Pentecost. I cannot find by sixty-five years of careful and prayerful searching of the Scriptures, that those primitive saints who gladly received the word at Pentecost and continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, had any religious organizations as auxiliaries to the Church of God, existing among them. No Mission Boards for converting the heathen or for evangelizing the world; no Sunday Schools as nurseries to the church; no schools of any kind for teaching theology or divinity, or for preparing young men for the ministry; no pious rehearsals of the "Melodies of Mother Goose" or "Jack Horner" or the "cow jumping over the moon", among the institutions of Christ or his apostles. I am content to be considered all of eighteen hundred and forty-three years behind the progressive religious doings of the more popular religionists of the present time. I have never been identified with, nor have I had any fellowship for any religious rites, forms, fashions, or customs which cannot be found in the laws

of Christ, and practice of the apostles and primitive saints. I do not denounce those who differ with me in regard to these things; to their own masters they stand or fall; nor do I dispute that there are among them some of God's quickened *children; that is not my province. "The Lord knoweth them that are his"*, and he can bring them out of their idolatry in his own good time. But while I live I expect to protest solemnly, soberly, but not with unkind or malicious feelings, against their spiritual wickedness in high places.

The Signs of the Times, as you are aware, has been published by me nearly forty-four years. During all this time it has been devoted to the defense of what my eternal destiny rests upon as the truth as it is in Jesus. My warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world.

My race is nearly run. I am now in the seventy-sixty year of my age. My voice will soon be silenced in death, my pen will pass into the hands of another, and I hope abler writer, but the eternal truth for which I have so long contended will be lasting as the days of eternity. And when all the deceptive and luring doctrines and institutions of men shall be exposed, and all who have trusted in a refuge of lies shall bewail their folly and call for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the presence of the

Lamb, those who know and love the truth shall in the truth rejoice forevermore.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on October 3rd and 4th, 2008. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border. Those coming North or South on Route #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right. Those coming east or west on route #58, turn south on southfork loop #827, turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church location on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
 Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
 276-952-2098

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The above association normally held on the first weekend in October will NOT be held until further notice. After 162 sessions, we are no longer able to properly host the association.

We wish to thank each of you for your presence and support of the past associations and extend a warm welcome for you to attend any of our churches at their regular meeting dates.

Miles Bird
 Association Clerk
 318/687-6775

CORINTHIANS 12:6.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2008

- Douglas G. Hodges, VA 10.00
- Elder Raymond Goad, VA 15.00
- Ollie C. May, AL 10.00
- Elder Kenneth Hopkins, VA ... 10.00
- Charles Hatchett, OK 5.00
- Charlie Wood, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

CORA ILENE TERRY CLIFTON

It is with great love and sadness that I attempt to write the obituary of our beloved sister, grandmother, mother and dear friend, Cora Ilene Terry Clifton. She was born March 10, 1913 and fell asleep in Jesus June 16, 2008. She was 95 years old and we feel very blessed to have had her in our presence so many wonderful years. I felt she was "grandma" to everyone who knew her.

Sister Ilene united with New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, Sept. 17, 1966. She served as clerk for 41 years. Until her health would not allow her to do so, she faithfully attended her church and sister churches as long as she was able. Many Brethren and Sisters visited and fellowshiped in her home, and as a child I remember these precious times, having Sunday meals with her. Sister Ilene had strong belief in predestination and the Lord's will be done. She would tell you while she was bedridden in her last few months; she was waiting on the Lord to take her from this world of pain and suffering.

Sister Ilene was preceded in death by her husbands, William Hugh Terry, and Arzie E. Clifton; two

sons James Lee Terry, and Elder William Hale Terry; one granddaughter; two great granddaughters and one step grandson; her parents George W. and Emma Turner Hale. The only siblings that survive her out of 15 brothers and sisters, is a brother, Warren G. Hale and wife Pauline Hale.

She is survived by her sons and daughters in law, Elder Alan and Lorraine Terry, Tommy and Gardella Terry. Daughters and sons in law; Marie and Dale Bowman, Ruthy and Garnett Hall, Janie and Garnett Largen. Step Children and Spouses; Shelby and Chuck Cochran, David and Winkie Clifton and Linda and Roger Chilton. Two special daughters in law, Lucy W. Terry and Glenna T. Terry.

Our beloved sister was laid to rest June 19, 2008 in the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. Her funeral was conducted by Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Carl Terry, Mark Terry, Tim Mcgrady and Reverend Russell Payne. We know our loss is her eternal gain.

I feel very blessed by the Lord as does her family to have known such a precious sister. She loved her church and her family and will be greatly missed.

Written in Love,
Carla T. Horton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*I KNOW I'm weak and sinful,
My very nature's vile,
But Jesus Christ will guide me,
And lead me as a child.*

*His special care engages
To be my strength and shield
Against the wiles of Satan,
In all the doubtful field.*

*My strength is often banished,
And I'm left alone to mourn,
But then I'm made to witness
The strength of God alone.*

*His strength is only perfect
When all my own is gone,
And I am less than nothing,
Bewildered and forlorn.*

*My sins will not allow me
To merit one kind word;
They make me know my weakness;
And rob me of all good.*

*I must rely on Jesus
For all things here below,
And all my hope of heaven
His goodness must bestow.*

*I stretch my arms to Jesus,
And crave supplying grace
To lead, uphold, support me
Till I have run my race.*

J. G. EUBANKS.

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EDITORIAL

“And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent.” Revelations 12:14.



Elder J.B. Farmer

It seems that the scriptures in Revelation are especially mysterious because of the all the figurative language used there. But we are taught that *“all scripture is given by inspiration*

of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” And we are taught that *“the natural man receiveth not the things of God for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.”* So these things are as high above us as the heavens are above the earth, and we cannot know them unless God is pleased to open them unto us. I cannot help believing that He shall make them known to His people as they have need to know them.

The woman John saw was clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. The woman, I must believe, represents the church of the living God, being clothed with the most glorious imputed righteousness and grace of God, and having the less glorious fulfilled law under her feet. She has been redeemed from the curse of the law and now shines in the brightness of the glory of God. Upon her head, which is Christ, is a crown of twelve stars, which appear to be the twelve apostles, which are built upon the chief cornerstone, which also is Christ. And this woman brought forth a child, Jesus Christ, and a great dragon, the devil, was ready to devour the child as soon as it was born. But the child was caught up to God and to his throne, which I am

made to believe is speaking of the resurrection and ascension of Christ. And the great dragon persecuted the woman to destroy her. But to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

I am made to believe that the two wings of a great eagle are the same as those that were referred to in Deuteronomy 32 where it is recorded that Jacob was found in the waste howling wilderness, and was led about, instructed and kept as the apple of God's eye. God was with him as He is with the church: *"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."* Those wings, to me, represent the delivering power of God to continually make a way of escape for God's little ones that they might not be tempted above that they are able to bear. They represent the Holy Spirit of God that carries you out of danger and keeps you safe in God's appointed wilderness place all your days here on this earth.

The woman fled into the wilderness. We know that a wilderness is a desert land, where there is no water and no food to sustain life. The wilderness, spiritually, is where the

children of God now live in this world. There is nothing in the natural world to nourish that life which is in you by the Spirit. The manna must be sent down from above to feed you, and the water must be sent forth from the spiritual Rock that follows you all your life, in order to sustain you in this barren land. My mind is taken to 1 Kings 17 and the prophet Elijah. This passage is the account of the time when there was no rain in the land, according to Elijah's word, for three and a half years (a time, and times, and half a time). Everything was drying up. There was a drought and the people there were becoming destitute, having neither crops nor streams to provide for their needs. The brook Cherith furnished drink for the prophet for a season, but even it dried up because there had been no rain in the land. *"And the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee."*

So Elijah arose and went to Zarephath. And he found a widow at the gate gathering sticks. He asked that she fetch him a little water, and as she went he asked her to bring him a little morsel of bread. *"And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and behold, I am gathering two sticks, that*

I may go and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat and die." This, I am made to believe, is the experience of the saints and the church in the dry and inhospitable desert wilderness. Many times they feel that there is but a step between them and death. But God is merciful to deliver them in a miraculous way that they could not have imagined. They are given faith to believe and trust in God, and God is faithful to meet their needs abundantly, as was the case with this widow woman.

This woman was called to walk by faith, believing God was able to deliver, even when there seemed to be no way. *"And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."* So she was commanded to take what little she had and give it to the prophet first, having the promise of God that she and her son would be nourished until the Lord would send rain upon the earth again. She was like the widow woman that Jesus observed, who gave her two mites – all her living – into the temple treasury, trusting that the Lord God of heaven and earth would provide for her. Neither widow was disap-

pointed. And neither shall the church be made ashamed, believing that God is able to keep that which she has committed unto Him against that day – even her life.

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of oil wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah." Here is the picture of a woman in the wilderness, being nourished for a time, and times, and half a time (three and a half years), from the face of the destroying famine. And so is the church of the living God now being sustained in the desert place where God has put her. She is being nourished from the face of the serpent until the time of refreshing comes. I am made to believe that the time of refreshing shall be the coming of the Lord in the clouds. He will be as welcome as the life giving rain to a thirsty and seemingly perishing soul, to one who is a weary pilgrim and hated stranger in a foreign desert land. At the Lord's coming all our troubles shall be past and forgotten. The comfort and joy shall be unspeakable in His glorious presence, where there shall be no more crying or pain, no more hungering and thirsting, and no more sorrow and distress.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and

blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. 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 recompence; 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 as an hart, 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. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlast-

ing joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Isaiah 35.

From time to time we are given little seasons of rejoicing while here in the wilderness, but they soon pass, and we begin to sorrow once again. But the time of refreshing is coming in the Day of the Lord, and there shall be no end to it. Everlasting joy is yours and is laid up for you and cannot fail to come, for God has promised, and He cannot lie or fail in a promise. God has been merciful to give us a little taste of heaven here on earth, and it is precious. That taste causes us to desire the fullness of it. What shall it be to stand in His presence and look into His face and see Him as he is and to be like Him? What shall it be to hear the myriads of angels and the elect of God singing everlasting praises to the Lamb of God that took away our sins with His own precious blood? What shall it be to have no more remembrance of sin, no more sorrow and pain and no more fear of death? It shall be the eternal life of joy and peace and comfort, which God has promised and which is the earnest expectation of the creature, who groans here in this wilderness and travails until it comes.

John, in the Spirit, said, “*After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Lamb,*

clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 7:9-10.

May the Lord keep us pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May He cause us to lay aside every weight and the sin, which does so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race that is set before us. May He keep us looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. May we finish our course with joy, and may we be blessed to be faithful unto death that we may receive the crown of life – even eternal life. May this glorious hope, which is Christ in you the hope of glory, sustain us in all the days of our wilderness wanderings. May we be given grace to praise our God from whom all blessings flow while strangers and pilgrims here, then render perfect praise to the Lamb of God in glory for ever and ever.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer
8-28-2008

CORRESPONDENCE

September 10, 2008

Please renew the subscription of Barbara Runyon for 2 years.

Enclosing a check for \$30.00. Use the balance where needed.

This is a birthday gift for my mother who will be 72 years of age on September 21, 2008.

Thank you,
Reta Runyon Medford

Send to: Barbara Runyon
1803 Augusta Drive
Thomasville, NC 27360

1 CORINTHIANS Ch. 1:29-31.

That no flesh should glory in his presence.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

That, according as it is written, He that glorifieth, let him glory in the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST

FRAGMENTS.

Where to begin in writing upon the wonderful work and the wonderful experience of salvation, is sometimes a serious question. We cannot begin with the Lord's purposes and work, because we know nothing of that until we experience it. The rescued lamb, if it could talk, would not begin by talking of the wisdom and power of the Shepherd, of his ownership of the lamb and his work in redeeming it, but would begin with its own remembrance of its painful, hungry, helpless condition and then of its surprised delight in being taken up into the bosom of this wonderful man whom it came afterward to know as its shepherd. We can know nothing of the Sun of righteousness until his healing beams touch us; we see him only in his own light.

In the case of Joseph's brethren, the beginning of their knowledge of him as having been sent before them to save them, was a famine called for by the Lord upon the land where they dwelt. So the beginning, of the knowledge of salvation on the part of the Lord's people is an experience of a famine upon all this world; not a famine of bread and worldly riches, but a famine of righteousness. (Psalms cv.) The mountains and hills of human power and wisdom are made waste, and all the

herbs dried up, so that we find nothing growing there any more to feed our souls that are hungering for righteousness. Instead of rivers of salvation, which we had formerly thought of as flowing from the exaltations of worldly and fleshly power and goodness, we see only islands; no water at all, but the opposite, and all the pools of human wisdom and merit, at which we had before satisfied our thirst, dried up. (Isaiah xlii. 15, 16.) O what a terrible thing sin is and this we are going to learn more and more while we live in this mortal state.

My thoughts are much upon my unworthiness in the sight of a holy God. Unworthiness is too mild and weak a word to express what I feel concerning, myself. "*Behold, I am vile,*" said Job, but he was one pronounced perfect by the Lord, therefore we know that their expression, and the one that follows: "*I abhor myself,*" tell only what is experienced by a child of God. When one, however, sees in his own heart and mind what I am seeing in mine, it seems to him very questionable whether such a one can possibly be a child. The feeling of anguish of one in such a condition is unspeakable. He will be thinking that he is one who, like Esau, has sold his birthright; nothing that he can do can restore it to him; or that he is the one who has sinned wilfully, and now there is only a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation; or like one who has trampled under foot the Son of God by

thoughts and acts of disobedience.

It is true that Esau could not have had a birthright as Isaac's son to sell if he had not been a son, and that his sonship he could not lose, whatever rights he might sell; and so one cannot sell a birthright to the spiritual blessings, privileges and enjoyments of the church of Jesus Christ unless he has been born of God, for none other can have them to sell, and that relationship of a son cannot be sold. This may and probably does save the disobedient child from despair, but it does not take from him the terror of the Lord, nor restore to him the joy of God's salvation. So in the other cases alluded to by the apostle, we know that the one who is convicted in his soul before the Lord of having sinned wilfully, and of having trampled under foot the Son of God, by disobeying his sweet commands, is a child of God. The natural man is not "*under the law to Christ,*" and cannot sin against that law, nor do despite to the Spirit of grace, for he is not "*under grace,*" but is under the law of Moses, and is dead in sin under that law. It is because One is a child, and under grace, and under law to Christ, that disobedience and wilful sinning cast him so terribly into the depths, which close him about "*even to the soul,*" and cause him such fearful suffering. "*The man who has not been quickened by the Spirit of God does not know that kind of suffering; there are no bands in his death; his*

strength is full, he prospers in his worldly religion, and has more than heart can wish." (Psalms Ixxiii.)

But while we are shut away from spiritual enjoyment, and feel that the Lord has made our chain heavy very justly, and has shut out our prayer, there is a kind of relief in reading our state and condition of mind in the inspired Scriptures of truth, and in the hope, which cannot entirely lose its power as an anchor of the soul, that deliverance will come to us some time and in the Lord's own good way. The Lord's love and tender care will never leave his erring, wandering, disobedient child, he watches over him, he looks upon the one who says, "*I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God often times with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.*"- Job xxxiii. 27-30.

I have been thinking of the great goodness of the Lord toward such as I, who have to say:

*"O Lord! how vile am I;
Unholy and unclean!
How can I dare to venture
nigh,
With such a load of sin!*

But when I think not only of his

wonderful long-suffering and goodness in causing this vile creature to suffer such keen humiliation in order to withdraw him from his purpose, and hide pride from him, keeping back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword, but also of his glorious goodness in giving him, when the trial is complete, prevailing faith to see and feel his sins all gone, washed away in the cleansing fountain of Jesus' precious blood, how can I but rejoice and say, "*I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;*" I have by faith a deliverance from the body of this death. More than forty-two years ago my soul rejoiced in this expression of the psalmist: "*O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.*"- *Psalms: xxxi. 19, 20.* What a sweet rest is here for the poor soul who has been found by the Shepherd, helpless and undone in the mountain of worldly strength and righteousness, lost in the bewildering mazes of worldly vanity, and has been tenderly brought back upon his shoulders and hidden from the world in the secret place of the Most High, where he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

It is now the seventh day of December, 1906. Forty-two years ago a council met at my former home in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., in accordance with the request of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Orange Co., N.Y., to consider the question of ordaining me to the gospel ministry. On account of the inability of my father and mother to travel a distance, the meeting was appointed at our home, about two hundred miles from the church of which I was a member. Of the six ministers who constituted the presbytery only one is now living. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the moderator. The examination and a sermon occupied the first day. The ordination services were on the 8th. The weather was pleasant, and there was a very large congregation both days. What my feelings were at the time, a mingling of hopes, doubts, fears, zealous desires, I would like to tell, but cannot. As I look back how short the time seems, which would have appeared so long to look forward to at that time. How little I thought I should live forty-two years; Though the time seems so short to look back to, yet how few of those who were present then are living now; of those who were the council I do I not remember of but two now living. Of my father's family and the families of two brothers living near, there were eleven who were members of the church at Vanghan Hill in 1865; only two of these are still on earth: my sister Bessie and myself. What

questionings were mine at the time as to whether the Lord had called me to preach, and what questionings have been mine many times since. I was baptized on the second Sunday in June, 1864, by Elder Beebe, in Middletown, N.Y., and from that time I had but one subject to talk about, and that was salvation by grace. But it was near the last of August that I was told by the Spirit that I must preach. I had listened to a sermon in which there was no gospel, but error from beginning to end. My desire was to get up in that congregation and tell the people that this that they had heard was not the truth; that if they knew what the text meant it would comfort them. I had been a member there, and would have felt no hesitation in speaking, but the Spirit suffered me not; but in an instant it was made known to me that I must preach. My one desire was (and has been ever since) to go and tell to all the ends of the earth that salvation is of the Lord. I wrote Elder Beebe, and asked him what such feelings meant. He replied that the church had thought I had a call to preach, and was waiting till the Lord should let me know it. Well, sometimes I feel that my work has been of the poorest kind, not worthy to be called preaching, and sometimes it seems to me that it has been a glorious work, and that all the praise belongs to Jesus, the dear Savior, who has at times filled my heart with love to him, and has filled my soul with laughter and my tongue with sing-

ing.

But O, the dark nights, the terrible afflictions, the awful desolations of soul that have been mine to experience; they cannot be told. During these years I have traveled much, and spoken often, and met many kinds of people, and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I. How poor appears my work, and myself. Truly I can say I feel to be the least of all saints, if I am one. But how sweet is the fellowship of the saints to me. If I ever write of these things I hope it will surely be by the direction of the Lord, so that I may write nothing that will hurt the cause of truth or any of the Lord's people. "*Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.*" This is what the angel said to the apostles when he had brought them out of prison.

"*All the words of this life.*" What a solemn and sweet expression this is! This is the divine life; this is the life that was in the Lord, and which is the light of men; this is the life which Jesus is to his people, and in which they are all one with him. "*He that hath the Son,*

hath life." Our natural life has to do with the things of this world, and the words of this natural life tell of the wisdom and knowledge of this world, and of its interests and activities and pleasures of every kind. All of these shall come to an end with the end of this world; they are all corruptible, defiled, and shall soon fade away. But the words of this divine, holy, spiritual life tell of all that pertains to God and the things of God; they tell of infinite wisdom and knowledge and power, and of love and mercy and grace, and of salvation and all spiritual blessings; they tell of the wonderful love of Jesus, which passeth knowledge, which caused him to die for his people that they might live; they tell of his glorious resurrection and his ascension to the right hand of God; they tell of all the precious things which he hath prepared for them that love him, and of the inheritance which he hath begotten us unto by his resurrection from the dead, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. To feel these spiritual things, to know their power and blessedness, is better than all this world can give; and how inexpressibly good and pleasant it is to be given this grace to speak all the words of this life, this holy, pure and infinitely exalted life, and what an unspeakable blessing it is to anyone in this world to be favored with power to hear and understand these words, to hunger and thirst for them and the things they

tell, and to find that they are spirit and life to us, and are living in our hearts and lives.

Elder Silas H. Durand

PROVERBS 15: 1-9.

A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

"I REMEMBER THEE."

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."- Jeremiah ii. 2.

Unless you have a heart to know the Lord, the things declared in this chapter will be altogether unintelligible; you can have no apprehension of their spiritual significance. But if we are those who fear the Lord there will be found in this chapter very sacred things, which, when unfolded to us by the Holy Spirit, will move our hearts to throb with manifold emotions. I said in my heart a few moments ago, Here are love's chidings and chastenings, pleadings and grievings.

Then came the question, Is the Lord in very truth such as he is declared to be in the Scriptures and my heart said, In very truth he is. Then the question comes, How can I so confidently pen this? and this is my answer, I hope in very truth I know the Lord. O, it is I wonderful that any poor sinner should have the right to say this, and I feel it is only by a miracle of grace that I dare say, I know the Lord, or rather, am known of God. (Gal. IV. 9.)

"Loved of my God, for him again

With love intense I burn ;

Chosen of thee ere time began,

I choose thee in return."

"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." This is marvelous condescension, that Jehovah should have regard to sinful creatures, and that he should reveal himself in such near and dear relations. *"Who hath God so nigh unto them?" Deut. iv. 7. "For that thy name is near, why wondrous works declare."- Psalms lxxv. 1.* This may well excite the wonder and adoration of those who are made partakers of such distinguishing favor.

"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee." As I look into these words of God this gleams forth to my view: it is love's entreaty; it is the Lord declaring to his sinful, straying, ungrateful people that he loves them still, that he has never forgotten them, and cherishes remembrances of their love to him. Thus he speaks: *"O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me."* *"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."* This is the constancy of the love of God. But in contrast to this, look at these words: *"Can a maid forget her ornaments, or bride her attire yet my people have forgotten me days without number."- Jer. ii. 32.* While the elect of God are dead

in trespasses and sins Christ is unknown, undesired, we see in him no beauty that we should desire him. At that time (saith the apostle) "*ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.*"- *Eph. ii. 12.* As I just penned this quotation a sort of a shudder passed over me as I looked upon the dark and awful picture of man's unregenerate estate.

Ah, the whole world lieth in wickedness, pursuing its course in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, with no concern over their lost condition under the curse of the law, and with no regard for the true and living God. "*Without Christ, "having no hope, and without God in the world."* Such were we, "*by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.*" When God called us by his grace he awakened us and made us alive to our bondage to sin. Like Israel in Egypt, our life was unto us as in an iron furnace (*Deut. iv. 20.*); yes, we were in the furnace of affliction in very truth. We were alive to the knowledge that we were vile transgressors, and the frown and condemnation of the law weighed down our hearts. Like Israel in Egypt, we

toiled in the field, but our hard labors were all insufficient to accomplish our daily tasks; we could not yield to the law what it in righteousness demanded. Every day we came short, and we were beaten with stripes, the yoke of the law was more than we wretched transgressors could bear. (*Acts xv. 10.*) Then we fell down and cried in our affliction for mercy unto the Lord. The Lord did not despise nor abhor the affliction of his afflicted ones in Egypt, neither did he hide his face from them, but when they cried unto him he heard, and came in power and all graciousness, and brought them out of the house of bondage. He bare them on eagles' wings, and brought them unto himself. (*Exodus xix. 14.*)

So the God of our mercy comes to sinners whose souls he hath quickened into divine life and called by his grace. Jesus comes to us, he is revealed by the Holy Ghost in us. (*Ga]. i. 16.*) He shews himself the crucified One, our Sacrifice, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Poor, guilty sinners, we mused upon his sufferings, his wounds, his blood, we believed the story of our Pascal Lamb; his love, his sacrifice told to our sin-wounded, mourning hearts good tidings, healing tidings, we believed the Gospel, we believed in Jesus; we girded our loins, put our shoes on our feet, and with our staff in our hand we feasted on the Lamb of God, Christ our passover sacrificed for us. (*Ex. xii. 11; 1 Cor. v. 7.*) The

tribes of Israel went forth of Egypt into the wilderness; they followed the Lord, who in the cloudy, fiery pillar went before them. He led them through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought, and the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt. (Jer. ii. 6.)

The time of the soul's espousal to Christ is a sacred and memorable time. Have we forgotten? Christ has not, he will recall it to our minds, he will awaken the memories of this season of our first love. *"Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals."* Jesus found us poor and wretched, in our rags and filth, so sin-defiled.

We were sinners feelingly "ready to perish,"- Deut. xxvi. 5. There was none to help, no comforter to relieve our souls, no eye pitied us to do anything for our salvation. We must have perished in our sins under the curse of the law, but Jesus came, he looked upon us, and we looked unto him. (Jsa. xlv.22.)

His speech was full of compassion, his gospel was good news indeed, we saw in his wounds and blood that love moved him to die for our sins. We were drawn to him confessing our impurities and pleading his forgiveness. His obedience even unto death became the refuge to which in faith we fled for deliverance from the law's condemnation. With sweet to-

kens of pardon and salvation, Christ espoused us to himself, and in our soul's love to him our heart's sweet song was:

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely;

My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;

But this I can tell, he hath loved me so well

As to lay down his life to redeem me from hell."

Yes, we believed in the Son of God, we loved him. In those days our heart was ever kindly toward the Savior, so desired was he; in his gospel we caught glimpses of him, and so longed for was the Savior. Some sweet word of his gospel was sent, brought by the Holy Ghost to us, and our sin-distressed heart said, Can such a kind word be for me? We were thrilled with longings, with hope it might be so, We sought the Savior, we sent a secret petition to him, asking, Are such gracious words of thine in the gospel for me? These were the days of our espousals, love-letter days. He wrote to us, and in a return our heart moved us to send some poor, broken sentences to him. Our letters were such a mixture of sighs and longings, trust and distrust, we told him we were uncomely, and so unworthy of his regard, and after we had sent a letter to him we were ashamed of it;

we said to ourselves, It is so badly penned, it is just like myself, poor, worthless sinner, he will see it; is from an ignorant creature, and after a glance or two he will cast it from him into the fire; I fear I shall never have another line penned by him to me. His letters were so well written, so noble, gracious, full of tenderness, we could hardly believe they were written to us, so poor, sinful and ignorant we knew ourselves to be. Well, what do you think Christ has done? I will tell you; he did not throw these letters away, but he has kept them as, every scrap of them, locked up in his heart. *“Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals.”* As I have intimated, this means he has treasured up all her love-letters to himself, and now he brings them forth from the casket of his heart and reads them in her ears. *“Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem.”* Can you, O backsliding daughter of Zion, disown these letters? Did not she indite them? Are they not Zion’s own heart penmanship? Were they not addressed to him only? Was there at the time of writing them any other in her thoughts? Can she defy her own signature? Take a glimpse of these letters written by the saints or God in the days of their spiritual youth; there are photographs of them in the holy Scriptures.

“Some of them are blithesome and gay, happiness in Christ the Lord sparkles in ev-

ery word; some are tear-stained, telling the sighs and moanings of her sin-languished heart, beseeching him to come and in his pity redeem her from her miseries. All these letters have a sweet-smelling fragrance. Was it not her own hands, dropping with sweet-smelling myrrh, that perfumed them? (Song of Solomon v.5.)

O the wayward, backsliding believer cannot deny these things, and when our Lord comes saying in our tears, *“I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals,”* how we are stirred; we then remember, too, and we are ashamed and blush, and sigh beneath these memories of our early attachment to our Lord Jesus Christ. Then it was that *“Jesus all the day long was our joy and our song;”* then the heart flowed forth in its freshness, simplicity and fervor; then, O believer, thine heart was kind, thy thoughts were yearning and tender toward the Lamb of God, thine eyes were often turned to him with tearful entreaty, and his smile was then thy heaven. In the day of our espousals to Christ we were hopeful and happy in him; Sin was atoned for, we were pardoned and we had peace with God through him.

Such loveliness and desirableness had been revealed to us in him, the suffering, sin-atoning sacrifice, that we were drawn to him. (John xii. 32.)

“His loveliness hath won my

*heart;
Dear Jesus, let us never part;
I'll sound thy lovely name
abroad,
My altogether lovely Lord."*

Yes, in the love of our espousals we crowned him as our Husband, Shepherd, Savior, King; Christ was our all. It was a time of reciprocal love and gladness, it was the day of the gladness of Christ's heart. (Song of Solomon iii. 11.) He rejoiced over us with singing. (Zeph. iii. 17.) His speech, his gospel was a gladsome song, and our happy, sin-pardoned heart in all kindness and love did sing, He is the chiefest among ten thousand, he is altogether lovely; worthy is the Lamb that was slain. No stranger inter-meddleth with the joy (Prov. xiv. 10,) of Christ and the church in these espousals days. Of Jacob it is written, "*The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.*"- Deut. xxxii. 12. All gods were utterly renounced and famished out of the land, (Zeph. ii. 16.) They had cheated and mocked us, in our distresses they gave us no sustenance, afforded us no help, they were lying vanities, (Jonah ii. 8,) and we cast them to the moles, and to the bats. (Isa. ii. 20.) We now knew it had been very folly to say to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods. (Hosea xiv. 3.) Now we could sing:

"My hope is built on nothing

*less
Than Jesus' blood and
righteousness."*

To Jesus we looked, he altogether satisfied us, and all things and all others were now counted but dung, that we might win Christ. (Phil. iii. 8.) He had attracted, won us, and we would win him who had won us. For there was no other one to save a poor sinner, (Acts iv. 12,) and no other was there that we worshiped, trusted, loved; we were leaning on him alone. Are you able to enter into this sacred mystery? Christ and the believer, these two, espoused, no third one. "*I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.*" Thus it was with typical Israel; forth from Egypt they came, the Lord going before them in the cloudy, fiery pillar; after him they went into the wilderness, a land not sown. Here God nourished them with bread from heaven. (Ex. xvi. 35.) He opened the rock, the waters gushed out to give drink to his people, his chosen Israel was holiness unto the Lord, a peculiar treasure unto me, saith the Lord, above all people. In the first happy season of the believer's espousals to Jesus when he is saying, My Savior is mine and I am his, he thought, Through a delightful land I shall go with Jesus, my Redeemer, until he shall bring me into his palace on high. Is-

rael having passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, (Heb. xi. 29,) sang most joyously, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously.

(Ex. xv. 1.) From the Red Sea they went out into the wilderness of Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah."-Ex. xv. 22, 23. Then, and many times afterwards, the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way."-Num. xxi. 4.

Nevertheless a divine power drew them on; here and there they were led about in the wilderness; though unworthy and rebellious they found grace in the wilderness, (Jer. xxxi. 2,) God kept them to himself as the apple of his eye, (Deut. xxxii. 10,) and at length he brought them in rest into that land which is the glory of all lands. (Deut. xi. 12; Ezek. xx. 6.) In our first days of blissful intimacy with our Redeemer we dwelt and walked where the flowers cast forth their fragrance, and the birds were sweetly singing. (Song of Solomon ii. 12.) These were sacred moments, for we were drinking the forgiveness of all our sins of Christ, our Fountain of living waters. (Jer. ii. 13.)

*"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."*

One such, some time ago, said, *"Master, I will follow thee whither-soever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."* A believer, in the kindness of his youth feels altogether willing to go anywhere with Jesus, and sometimes in his soul's simplicity he sings:

*"Through floods and flames,
if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes."*

Ah, little does he understand what his loving heart is singing. Let me repeat once more that when Christ our Savior and King, betrothed us unto himself (Hosea ii. 19,) he did not immediately take us to his palace, into heaven itself. No, the Holy Spirit shewed us some pictures of it, and the "better country;" (Heb. xi. 16; Isa. xxxiii. 17,) we had foretastes of the heavenly felicity given us, and we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and in this comforting earnest of our inheritance, (Eph. i. 14,) by faith we journeyed in hope of eternal glory with our dear Savior. It was a terrible wilderness we came into shortly after our espousal to Christ; (2 Cor. xi. 2,) it was a waste and howling place, and there were scorpions and fiery flying serpents. Ah, how often do we find that we are in this wilderness

even to this day. While we have the felt companionship of our beloved *"Savior, while we are walking in the highway with him, (for in the wilderness an highway shall be there."-Isa. xxxv. 8.)* while we are following hard after him, (Psalms lxiii. 8,) all is well. He is our Guide and Protector, but O, when we step aside from the highway, scorpions and fiery flying serpents abound, and fears and miseries, hunger and thirst, plague our life. We thought in our youthful days our life henceforth as a ransomed, pardoned sinner was to be to live and journey in a land of corn and wine, a land of brooks and gentle rivers, flowing with the loving-kindnesses of the Lord; but only for some little moments have we found our way to be such. We have had to come into the knowledge of the dreary, howling desert of the human heart. Our vile, sinful heart we have found to bring forth only briars and thorns; truly it is a land "not sown, with any good thing, (Rom. vii. 18,) consequently we can harvest nothing there from for our sustenance and spiritual comfort. Look back, O believer, to those early days of the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals to the Lamb that was slain for thy sins; was not thy heart all kindness toward him? It was. But this coming into the wilderness assailed us, we did not know then that there could be such a horrible wilderness as it is. We trembled, we blushed we mourned, but to the Sav-

ior we were clinging; we confessed it all to him and implored his compassion and salvation. Those fiery flying serpents, our sinful thoughts, are dreadful; a child of God cannot tell when or where they will attack him, and so he is often harrassed and bitten and soul-sick indeed because of the plague of his own heart. (1 Kings viii. 38.) *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,"* breeds these scorpions and serpents, (Gen. viii. 21; Matt. xv. 19,) and surely we need to be ever watchful, and to have our healing balm near by.

*"Precious is my dear Physician,
Oft I prove his power to heal;
Curing every sad condition
When he does his love reveal.
Precious Jesus,
Much I need thy healing
power."*

The world, its trials and temptations are as a devouring waste to famish and shrivel up the ardor and blessedness of the love of our espousals; but through the rugged wilderness, through tribulation, the church of Christ must travel, and when our Lord is near, when on him we are leaning, we can hold on our way and tread temptations under our feet.

Thus saith the Lord, *"I did know thee in the wilderness."-Hosea xiii. 5.* Yes, dear Lord, thou hast owned us, pitied and succored

us in all our dreadful straits. O thou hast been pitiful indeed, so rich in mercy, ever revealing thyself in all gracious intimacy to us vile, unworthy sinners. Though rough and thorny was the way, the kind words of Christ's gospel revived our courage, creating for us here and there a grateful oasis. Out of the heart-wearying cares and conflicts of our pilgrimage we entered these pleasant places of living green. The doctrine of Christ came to us in power, in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. How transforming is the word that Christ speaketh to us! Then in the wilderness waters break forth, and streams in the desert; in fellowship with Christ we drank of the brook in the way, and our face was lifted up unto God, (Psalms cx. 7,) and thus our scenes of desolation are made to become unto us as the garden of Eden. (Ezek. xxxvi. 35.) What though we are perplexed by Satan, and our old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, weighs down our life in the dust, and with weak hands, feeble knees and fearful heart we are ready to halt, (Psalms xxxviii. 17,) soon all is changed when we are moved by the Holy Spirit to look unto Jesus. In his atoning sacrifice we see sin's destruction, our old man crucified with him, Satan defeated, death and the grave swallowed up in victory. Yes, Christ is with the church in the wilderness, (Acts vii. 38,) and through the world and all tribulation with eye of faith and love she followeth him

to the realms of immortal love. Read again with me our text: "*Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.*" Have we not recollections of it all "*Thou wentest after me in the wilderness,*" but saith the Lord, "*Have I been a wilderness unto Israel a land of darkness*"- Jer. ii. 31. No, dear Lord, thou hast not. "*O my people, what have I done unto thee and wherein have I wearied thee to testify against me.*"- Micah vi. 3. Is there a voice in all the host of Israel to testify against God? Not the first syllable is uttered, but all heads must be bowed with confusion of face before him. O there is not an instance in all our pilgrimage wherein Christ has been wearisome, a wilderness unto his people. Then why, O backslider, hast thou changed, become so degenerate, so cold, so indifferent to the things of Jesus Christ. Why art thou so far removed from the fervor of thy first love. Why are thy privileges in the church of God so neglected. Come, dear brethren, let us not put away these searching questions, it is profitable to examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Is Jesus Christ less precious, less needful, than in the days of the kindness of our youth and the love of our espousals.

Is he not still the only Fountain of living waters? What are all things

else, all others, but broken cisterns that can hold no water? Are you crucifying the flesh with the affections and the lusts? (Gal. v. 24.) Are you seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Are you seeking your carnal ease, so greedy for money, so swallowed up with the things of time? Are you so looking upon the things that are seen, which are temporal, that your eyes are become bleared that you scarcely see the things which are unseen, which are eternal? (2 Cor. iv. 18.) Can it be that temporal things have become more weighty with us than things which are eternal, the far more exceeding and the eternal weight of glory? If so, then our scales are in a wretched plight, we are miserably deceived and are in a dreadful condition. Perhaps, notwithstanding our profession of the name of Christ, we are none of his. (*Rom. viii. 9.*) *"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee."*

What, remember a sinner like me?

FREDERICK W. KEENE.
NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

HEBREWS 13:1-2.

Let brotherly love continue.

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

SOUTH RIVER, N.J.

ELDER B.F. COULTER-DEAR BROTHER:- I can scarcely realize that six weeks have passed since your letter was received. I thought I would answer immediately, but every day has brought its cares and duties, and time goes so rapidly. I cannot tell you how much your letter was appreciated, but I am afraid you will think otherwise by the delay in answering. The inclosed letter for brother Stults I delivered the same day, also I took mine and read it to him; he seemed interested, and when I came to these lines "With me the question comes, Am I a part of that perfect body of Christ?" he said, *"That is it;"* he could scarcely talk for crying. His trial has been greater, than any can imagine, but he bears it well, and says it is right. I am pleased to have you express your feeling as you did for this little church at South River, and to know you enjoyed your visit among us. I feel that we also were profited by your presence and cheering words.

How much I wish we could have such meetings oftener. You say, *"Is it not well that we can rejoice that we are born to die."* I think so. Some time ago I said to a friend, "If I thought there was not an end to this life I would be unhappy." He said, Well, I would not give much for your happiness. *"There is very little in this life to cling to, all things seem so empty and vain, and without the hope that we*

have been born again there would be but little if any comfort." The question now comes to me. How do I know that I have been born again?" *"We know that we have passed, from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* If this is an assurance, I feel that I can claim it, for I do love the Old Baptists, and strange to say, I cannot remember the time when I did not. Some of my most pleasant recollections are the times I have spent with them. I am glad I have been received among you and can speak of you as my people, for I have been a wanderer so long, and why I cannot understand. I feel that I have been brought in a very peculiar way. If I knew it was my Savior that had been leading me in this way I would be satisfied, but I have made so many mistakes. I might have done differently, but how I do not know. I regret so much uniting with the New School Baptists. My greatest desire was to be among the people of God, and I thought it made but little difference as to the denomination. I still feel that some of God's dear children are there. I only remained with them two years; I was a member there at the time of the last association here; at that time Elder Durand said to me, *"You are in Babylon, come out."* Does it not seem strange that he should say that to me at that time, and I a stranger to him? He does not remember saying it, but with me it left an impression.

You have asked me to write you

some of my experience, so I will try to comply with your request, but I feel my inability to express myself. It is a subject I love to hear, but one I can talk but little on.

I cannot tell you of my first convictions; I had serious thoughts when I was quite young and a desire to be good, and had a very sensitive nature. When I grew older and went to any amusement I would enjoy myself for a time, but there would come such a depressed feeling that I would wish I had stayed at home; I would think, I will not again. I did not want to be so different from other young people, and would try to overcome the feeling. I attended the Methodist revival meetings quite often during the winter, and would be much interested, but I did not understand them. At times I have heard them say, *"How different you would do if you knew your soul would be required of you before the morning,"* and *"If this was the last opportunity you would have to give your heart to God."* I thought it would be no different with me, for I knew I could do nothing, I felt my utter helplessness so much. One night, after hearing that kind of talk, I was speaking to my mother, and how bitterly I cried; I said, if I knew this would be my last night on earth I could do no more. Some years after, when I was so burdened, I spent such a restless night, my sleep was so broken it seemed that I scarcely slept at all; in the early morning these words

came to me, "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*" Those words did not bring me comfort, I doubt if I understood them at the time. I said to my mother, "*I would rather not have been born than to feel as I do.*" Soon I arose and went down stairs, I had been there but a short time when my burden was gone, and a sweet peace came to me; I can never forget it. I know it was peace that this world can never give.

Now this is some of my experience, and my hope that I have been born in Christ's kingdom. This was in February, 1880; the following June I was baptized, and united with the New School Baptists. The years that have intervened to the present time have been a mixture of doubts and fears, feeling I had no place either in the world or with the people of God. Have you ever been comparatively void of feeling? I scarcely think you have, and I wonder how anyone can feel that way who has experienced such joy. The evening of September 26th, after I was baptized by Elder Durand, at my request he spoke from Ephesians ii. 19. It was an expression of my feeling after wandering so many years.

"There would I find a settled rest, While others go and come, No more a stranger or a guest, But like a child at home."

I have tried to write you the best I can, and also to condense it as

much as possible, but while writing on this subject many things came to my mind, and perhaps I have written too much.

My mother wishes to be remembered to you and your wife, also to sister Craven. I hope you will feel like writing me again. Adieu for the present.

Yours in a precious hope,
EMMA MARTIN.

OTEGO, N.Y.

DEAR ELDER KER :- I have felt a desire for several days to write to you; why it is I cannot tell, for I do not know what I will say, or why such a great sinner as I feel myself to be, should even dare attempt to write to one of God's ministers, but I have you so much in mind, and thinking of the many good things you have said to my comfort in days past, I have a great desire to hear you again. A year ago you were with us here at Otego, I would be so glad if you were coming this year.

I could not be spared from home to go away and attend any meetings the past year, for Mrs. Guernsey has been very poorly, and Mrs. Beesley is feeble, she cannot get out of bed or her chair alone.

Our dear pastor, Elder D. M. Vail, was with us last Saturday and Sunday, he comes laden with the good things of the Master's kingdom, and

we have good meetings each month, and have no reason to complain. I like to hear the different gifts and ministers, and often wish I could go to meeting every Sunday. Dr. D. M. Leonard and wife were with us last Sunday, and said they were with you the fourth Sunday in October.

I hope you are well, and enjoying the presence of your Savior, which is far above anything in this world. I feel so dull and dead, I often wonder if I do really know anything of spiritual things, then my mind goes back about eleven years, when I hope the Lord did speak peace to my troubled soul, and all was joy for weeks and months; then after time that season of joy gradually left me, and it seems that I keep sinking down, down all the time, and often wonder who or what I am; but still amid all the gloom I cannot, dare not, say I have no hope; there seems to be something that holds me, a poor, weak, sinful creature, unworthy of the least of his mercies. There is such a gloom around and over me when I go to bed and when I awake. The other morning as I awoke these lines came to me:

*“Wearied of earth, myself and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free,
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be.”*

I am a mystery to myself, and often wonder why I was born, and for what purpose? I am just good for nothing and the greatest sinner on

earth, still I do believe God has a purpose in all things, and what he does is ever best, though I cannot understand it; but I do desire to be content with my lot and not murmur, for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell herein: for he hath founded it upon seas and established it upon the floods. I love to hear the people of God talk on spiritual things, but I cannot write or talk myself; it is not given me to talk but I hope I am thankful to be given to understand even a little of the great and glorious plan of salvation by grace; Truly what a great blessing to be given to hope that I have a hope.

*“What was there in me to merit esteem,
Or give the Creator delight,
'Twas ‘evenso, Father,’
I ever must sing,
Because it seemed good in thy sight.”*

I enjoy your writings in the Signs very much, and wish you would write more. The last SIGNS has much good reading in it.

I feel sure you will overlook all imperfections in this poor attempt at writing; it is only such as I have given I unto you. I felt I must write a little, and will not expect a reply, for I know your time is fully occupied with the work your Master has called and qualified you for.

From a sinner, saved by grace,
if at all,

ROSE B. TAMSETT.

October 22.

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”-
JEREMIAH xxix. 13.

AFTER the Lord has quickened our souls, for a time we often go, shall I say, blundering on, *not* knowing there is a Jesus.

We think that the way of life is to keep God's commandments, obey the law, cleanse ourselves from sin, reform our lives, and cultivate universal holiness in thought, word, and action; and so we go, blundering and stumbling on in darkness; and all the while never get a single step forward. But when the Lord has suffered us to weary ourselves to find the door, and let us sink lower and lower into the pit of guilt and ruin, from feeling that all our attempts to extricate ourselves have only plunged us deeper and deeper, and the Spirit of God opens up to the understanding and brings into the soul some spiritual discovery of Jesus, and thus makes known that there is a Saviour, a Mediator, and a way of escape - this is the grand turning point in our lives, the first opening in the valley of Achor of the door of hope. And when the soul has once seen that there is a Jesus, and once felt a measure of the power of his resurrection, it never goes to any other quarter for pardon, justifica-

tion, and salvation. When the Spirit of God begins to open up with power in his conscience that there is a Jesus, that he is the only Mediator, that the Son of God has come down and taken a holy human nature into union with himself, and is now at the right hand of the Father, it is the first break of day, the first dawn of hope; and upon that bright spot does the shipwrecked soul fix his longing eyes till the Sun of righteousness arises upon it with healing in his wings. It is a great step in a man's experience to turn wholly and solely to the Lord, and renounce all creature righteousness, all forms and ceremonies as a way of salvation. It is a great mercy to turn away from them, as the shipwrecked mariner turns away from his sinking ship, and looks to the rising sun to shew him some way of escape, and thus afford him some gleam of hope.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Approach my soul the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer,;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.*

*Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.*

*Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.*

*Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.*

*O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.*

*Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.*

Newton.

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 EDITORIAL

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, recieved not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Hebrews Chapter 11, vs 39-40)



Elder R.H. Campbell

dren of God under the law, incidentally, the word faith, only appears once in the old testament, and then it is referring to those

These are the last two verses of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, the chapter describing the faith of the children of God under

who have not faith. Israel, under the law suffered many afflictions and died not having the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham, in his day. They were blessings promised to his seed in each generation following, and were promised to him because they were his seed. In this chapter the apostle Paul enumerates many of those afflictions that were endured by Israel because of their faith, and then at the last end states that they received not the promise, meaning the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham.

They were looking for the coming of the Messiah, the prophet that Moses said would come, and to him the gathering of Israel would be. By faith they looked for his coming, even as his children of this day look, by the same indewlling faith his coming again, in all of his glory, to gather all of Israel unto himself, and present them spotless unto God as his bride. This hope enables them to the trials that they will endure, and although they are considered as the off scouring of the peoples of the earth in this day, they look by the same faith to the fulfilling of the same promise that Israel looked for when the above scripture was written.

This trial of faith was originated, by God, from the beginning when he placed enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. This has been the lot of the seed of the woman, and will be until the restitution of all things. when God sends his Son again, and this time to claim his bride. They are com-

forted in the fact that Christ overcame the serpent in behalf of the seed of the woman, and therein lies their confidence that they too shall prevail in the end.

Their belief in this fact is faith, which is the gift of God by his free grace, and not the result of any works or efforts on the part of the creature. Jesus confirmed this fact again when he told his disciples, *(John 16:33) "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."* Peter referred to this trial of faith from its positive aspect, *(1 Pet 1 :7) "That the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."* His children would not change this hope for anything that the world has to offer.

Paul goes on to say that there were better things provided for those, under the second covenant, than those things that were received by Israel under the law. The law was for natural man and pertained to natural things promised to them for their keeping of the natural law. Man could never attain unto salvation under its terms. The better things that were promised, which were not received by Israel under the law, is the Spirit of God indwelling them as it does in our day, they never expe-

rienced this blessing, because Jesus had not been glorified. I used to read this to mean that this was something that we have that they did not have nor ever would have. I now understand it to mean that those under the law had not received this blessing because, at that time Jesus had not been glorified.

Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, and this had happened to none under the law. Salvation is treasured in the finished work of Christ, and this had not been completed until Jesus overcame the serpent in his death on the cross, and redeemed his sheep from under the curse of the law.

(John 7:37-39) "At the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood up and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified. The promise that the Jews had not received under the law was the glorification of Christ in his death, and when that is fulfilled, all, both Jews under the law, and the Gentiles under grace will receive the fulfillment of the promise, that was made to Abraham, so that they with us will be made perfect.

The apostle Paul, writing to the Gentiles at Ephesus and referring to the position of those under the law versus the Gentiles (Eph 2:12-19) "That at that time ye (Gentiles) were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And came and preached peace to you which are afar off, and to them that were nigh, for through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (*Rom 11 :32-33*) *"For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."* These truths are beyond the scope of human reasoning, they can be discerned except by the revelation of God in the person of the Holy Spirit. They do not succumb to the reasoning of the natural mind, as the apostle Paul said, in his epistle

to the churches at Galatia, (*Gal. 11-12*) *"But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* This is still true today, man with all of his proposed intelligence, cannot learn them in a seminary, or any school of higher learning, for the natural man can only teach the things of nature, and that has no part in spiritual matters. This is attested to only by those who have experienced it: until then; they are even as they were born in nature, natural creatures with natural understanding, and then suddenly they are instructed in matters that they had never known nor seen before, even as the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, and he immediately began to preach the doctrine that he had previously attempted to destroy. Then Paul said that his experience was a pattern to them that would thereafter believe in Jesus unto everlasting life.

Elihu, a type of the Holy Spirit stated it this way, (*Job 33:14-17*) *"For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not, in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."* Then man awakes and proceeds to follow

those instructions, never realizing the source of the intelligence. Paul said it, on one occasion, *“work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and and to do of his good pleasure.”*

Aren't you glad of these scriptures which set forth salvation as the work of God, in all of his ways, and that your salvation is not dependent upon the wisdom of the creature. These things are sure and steadfast, and shall never be changed by man, or set of men. They are established by God who changes not, and who is of one mind, and will ever be. This is predestination in its purest form, and is the basis upon which the salvation of all of the heirs of promise is based, for the scriptures state it so very clearly, (1 Cor 3:11) *“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus”* or, as Jesus himself said it, (John 14:6) *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”*

In bonds of love:
Richard H. Campbell

ST. JOHN 5: 19.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

CORRESPONDENCE

Oct. 2nd, 2008

Mr. Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the signs of the times for 2 years.

My husband and I look forward each month to getting the signs.

Thank you,
Doris Giles

Oct. 16, 2008

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed please find a check for renewing my subscription to the “Signs” for two years, plus a little extra to use as you see fit.

I feel your selections for “Voices from the Past” have been made a blessing to this reader, along with all the good editorials that have been sent in by the Editors.

Even though I live so far from any established church, God has blessed me with fellowship with those of like faith since I became a subscriber to the “Signs” twelve years ago.

My heart felt prayers is that He will enable all of his people to worship him in Spirit and in truth, as only He can give, and to give Him all the

praise and glory.

In that hope, and in the ties that
bind I trust,

Caroline Martin

Oct. 19, 2008

Dear Tony,

I hope this finds you and your family doing well. Please find enclosed my check to renew the Signs for another year.

The extra can be used as you see fit. Thanks for all you do in getting the Signs out each month. May the Lord continue to bless all who take part in this publication that it might always be in accord with the gospel once delivered to the Saints as it has been for these many years.

Sincerely,
Mary Summers Lee
1191 Hampton Road
Eden, N.C. 27288

10-13-08

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for two years, and the rest to use where needed.

The writing is greatly appreciated and I pray for peace and understanding of it all.

Thanks,
Faye G. Brown

131 Kayla S.
Shreveport, La. 71105
Oct. 15, 2008

Bro. Tony Horton,

Enclosed please find check for \$30.00 to be used to pay for one year subscription of "The Signs of the Times", which I really enjoy reading and the rest to be used as you see fit.

I hope all is well with you and your family.

Sincerely yours in Christ I hope,
Billie G. Speir

Oct. 21, 2008

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to Signs of the Times for 2 years. I really enjoy all the writings and everyone who has anything to do with the Signs of the Times.

A little sister in hope,
Sallie R. Hodges

Brother Horton,

I see that it is time for renewing my subscription.

Enclosed is money for 2 years and the rest use as you see fit. Enjoy reading the Signs and have for years.

A brother in hope,
Elder Ronald K. Crouch

Sept. 29, 2008

Dear Editors of the Signs,

Please renew my subscription for two years.

I enjoy the dear Signs so much and I don't want to miss a single issue.

Thank you very much,
Libby Hedrick
4 Ash Lane
Altavista, Va 24517
If there is any left over.
Please use as you see fit.

ARTICLES

From "A Treasure of Hymns"
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

NONE of our hymn-writers has had a history so remarkable as that of John Newton, who wrote this noble hymn. He was born in London, July 24, 1725. His mother was a pious woman, who taught him the Catechism and many other good things but she died when the lad was only six years old.

His father was a sea-captain, and could not supply the place of a mother. He took the boy to sea when he was eleven years old, and the young fellow learned to curse and blaspheme, and became very wild.

After his father retired from the sea, the son made several voyages by himself. At one time he was forced into the navy, a war being expected, and he became a midshipman. But he was very restless and he deserted, was caught, stripped, whipped severely, and degraded to the ranks.

By this time he had become a thorough infidel, and was steeped in all kinds of sin. He fell into the hands of a slave-trader in Africa, and suffered all manner of hardships there, being continually insulted and almost starved. Delivered providentially from that terrible situation, after many strange and hazardous adventures he became a slave-trader himself, and made several voyages to Africa in that shameful occupation.

The reading of Thomas a Kempis, the fearful experiences of a storm at sea in which his ship was almost lost, his deliverance from a severe fever in Africa, these, and other experiences, at last awoke in the sinful man the memories of the religion his mother had taught him, and he turned from his sins with true repentance.

His conversion was so complete that he became a minister of the gospel. This was in 1764, when he was thirty-nine years old. He settled in Olney, England, and there it was that he formed the beautiful friendship with William Cowper which has given to the world so many splendid hymns. Some think that it was

with the desire to draw Cowper's mind away from his deep melancholy that Newton proposed that the two should compose a series of hymns together. Of the famous collection that resulted, "The Olney Hymns," Cowper is said to have written sixty-six, while Newton wrote the rest of the three hundred and forty-nine. But more of Cowper's hymns than of Newton's have become famous.

"Safely through another week" is one of Newton's hymns that is most often sung. Others are: "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," "Approach, my soul, the mercy seat," "Come, my soul, thy suit prepare," "For a season called to part," "Great Shepherd of Thy ransomed flock," "In evil long I took delight" (which surely paints his own experiences), "Jesus who knows full well," "Lord I cannot let Thee go," "One there is above all others," "Quiet, Lord my froward heart," "Saviour, visit Thy plantation," "Sometimes a light surprises," "'Tis a point I long to know"

"While with ceaseless course the sun," and still others that are found in most of our hymn-books. But the greatest of all the hymns of John Newton is "Glorious things of thee are spoken." It is a noble description of the people of God, under the protection of their supreme leader. Newton wrote five stanzas, and you will like to see all of them. The last two, however, are inferior to the first three, and are seldom

printed in our hymn-books.

*Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for His own abode:*

*On the Rock or ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.*

*See the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove.*

*Who can faint when such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?*

Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver,

Never fails from age to age.

*Round each habitation hovering,
See the cloud and fire appear,
For a glory and a cov'ring,
Showing that the Lord is near,
Thus deriving, from their banner,*

Light by night, and shade by day:

*Safe they feed upon the manna
Which He gives them when they pray.*

*Blessed inhabitants of Zion,
Wash'd in the Redeemer's blood
Jesus, whom their souls rely on,*

*Makes them kings and priests
to God.*

*'Tis His love His people raises
Over self to reign as kings,
And as priests, His solemn
praises
Each for a thank-off'ring
brings.*

*Saviour, if of Zion's city
I through grace a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Thy name:
Fading is the worldling's plea-
sure,
All his boasted pomp and
show:
Solid joys and lasting trea-
sure,
None but Zion's children know.*

“Olney Hymns” was published in 1779. In that year Newton became rector of a church in London, and died there December 21, 1807. Thus he had a long life after his conversion.

It was a very useful life. Wesley and Whitefield were his friends. Among his converts were Claudius Buchanan, the great missionary to the East Indies, and Thomas Scott, the eminent Bible commentator. He preached almost to the time of his death, asking, “*Shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?*” And he still preaches through his strong and spirited hymns.

VOICES OF THE PAST

CHRISTMAS! WHOSE BIRTHDAY?

Deceivers and deceived think that Christmas is Christ's birthday and we may expect soon to hear them making much of the occasion from their pulpits and the press. And it is customary at this season of the year to send kinsmen and friends some token of remembrance.

There is no harm in remembering family and friends at any season. It is good that we remember each other, but Christmas is NOT what we hear from the pulpits of AntiChrist it is. Besides, the Lord taught not that we remember His birthday, but that we remember His suffering and death.

Neither the Bible nor history informs us of the day that Jesus was born. Not even the year. But a study of the Bible and history will convince us that Christ was not born on or even near the day we call Christmas. This festival, and its manner of commemoration, is of pagan origin, having its beginning some three hundred years before the birth of Christ and observed by the heathen in commemoration of the wine god Bacchus, or Dionysus an Olympian god, worshipped by the heathen as the god and giver of the grape and wine, in art figured as a bearded man

corresponding with our present day myth of Santa Claus, in which character he was worshipped with rites characterized by estatic singing and dancing.

By the time Christ was born this heathen festival now called Christmas had become the greatest of all pagan holidays, and had come to be observed throughout the pagan world. The festivities began a week before the day now known as Christmas day, with that day the high day of festivities and most wanton exuberance. Singing carols, drinking, dancing, carousal and dissolute revelry, the dregs of which have come down to our day characterized the festivities celebrating the wine god Dionysus. Until this day, even right here in so-called Christianized America, people consume more liquor during the Christmas season than at any other time of the year and that in celebration of Christ's birthday! That is, they say it is His birthday. But it is NOT Christ's birthday. It would be better to call it the birth day of Antichrist. It is observed throughout the world in a manner befitting Antichrist. Christmas? Why is the day called Christmas? Well, it wasn't for over three hundred years after the birth of Christ. That made it over six hundred years from the time of its origin to the time when it began to be called Christmas or Christ's Mass, which in time was shortened to Christmas.

It was after Constantine became Emperor of Rome in 323 and pro-

fessed to be converted to Christianity and by decree compelled all his subjects to pretend Christianity, that the old pagan festival began to be called Christmas. It was made a "Christian festival" (in pretense) just as all the rest of the pagan rituals and festivals were made Christmas. It was done to please the people, who had been required by their Emperor to give up their former religion and embrace another. But the only thing it turned out to be was to change the name of their religion, and for their accommodation Constantine provided In subsequent decrees for all of their festivals, idols, etc., to be retained and continue on in their same old way but pretend that all of it was some part of Christianity, and give everything a name accordingly. Thus their old heathen wine god day (Bacchus day) became Christ's Mass, or Christmas. And until this day the people are being told that it is Christ's birthday!

The ancient festival of the wine god was, according to history, the greatest holiday of the Roman Empire when Christ was on the earth. Then, as now, the people were not required to perform duties to the government on their holidays. But it was the decree of Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed, and this is the reason that Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem when Jesus was born (Luke 2:1-5). The Emperor's decree would not have required them to be in Bethlehem

during the festival of wine god, Bacchus, the biggest of all Roman holidays. Also the heathen wine god festival came in mid-winter when shepherds did not keep their flocks in the fields by night, as they were doing when Jesus was born (Luke 2:8).

The birthday that should be of concern to Christmas is the day of our spiritual birth, the day we are born again. This, to me, is the true birthday of Christ His birthday to everyone in his time. We are not due to observe Christ's birthday. His birthday would be only ONE DAY a year, but we are due to observe Him behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and observe Him EVERY day. Let us keep Him and all that He sayeth in memory every day. If we do this and find joy in it, the pagan revelry and carousals of Antichrist will be of no appeal but rather of disgust to us.

True Christianity requires full time and a different kind of observance. Which best do we enjoy?

Elder J. L. Kimbro
Kinston, Ala.

SAVED BY HOPE.

Hope is the Christian's anchor. He is saved by hope, but not in the sense that he is saved by the blood of Christ. The distinction is very broad and easily seen. However he is not saved by hope independent of the blood of Christ, but

he is saved by the blood of Christ independent of hope in Christ as his Savior: There could be hope independent of Christ as the Savior. He is the hope of all who believe in him. Hope is that precious God-given grace that has for its origin the gift of eternal life. It is born of eternal life.

The blood of Christ saved at the cross all for whom it was shed. It was in order that he should save his people, that he gave his life a ransom for them. Time will develop through the gift of eternal life who they are. Hope lays hold upon the work finished on the cross and rejoices in the victory through the Lamb of God that was slain. This is salvation by hope; it saves the believing one from gloomy despair, from unbelief, but does not save a soul from death in sin or from eternal perdition. Doubts and fears oftentimes seize the child of God and he feels he cannot claim the promises of God; feels he is a stranger and without hope. But, nay, hope is the anchor that is sure. *"It rests in nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness."* Men must and will ever fail to provide such refuge for the faint and weary ones. God has set before you a hope which is sure and steadfast and it enters into that within the vail, and that is to Jesus your Savior.

This hope of homeward-bound saints has stood amid the storms of centuries an unfailing support, an impregnable fortress, the imperishable rock of safety. It is the one hope

of their calling, and will abide until death shall remove them, and they shall "*know as they are known.*" Then they will have passed beyond the power of hope to save, but not beyond the efficacy of the blood of Christ, the reedemed sinner's only plea. By the patience of hope they here wait the fulfillment of the promise of God, and though it tarry, they wait for it, knowing that he who promised is faithful and true. Is this my hope? It is the Christian's beacon light, reaching out over the dark clouds of sin and death; abides amidst the wreck of thrones and kingdoms of men, and finds its victory over every obstacle in the one God and Father of all, to whom be glory and dominion for evermore.

R. W. Thompson

THE DEAD IN SIN.

The Scriptures frequently use the word "dead" or "death" to properly convey to us what is the true state of the unquicken sinner. Various theories are advanced as to the real condition of one who is dead in sins, and hence the contention among the masses as to the means to be applied for his restoration, or rather his salvation. It is readily admitted by those of sober deliberation that if the sinner is totally depraved—dead in sin—then conditions of salvation cannot be complied with by him. But in-

consistent and contradictory as it is, many deny that his state of death is such, as to render him unable to comply with "the terms of the gospel," the conditions by which he may obtain his eternal salvation. Most of the professed religious world hold this view, from the Catholics to the Mormons, the Primitive Baptists excepted.

"Dead in sins." This form of expression is used in the Scriptures to show what is the condition of those who are willingly the servants of sin, being lead of the prince of darkness. The Holy Spirit would not have made use of this strong expression had it not fitly stated the sinner's lost condition, previous to regeneration. It is used a number of times and places in the Scriptures and this should impress us with the importance with which we should regard it. We have an eternity of existence to spend somewhere. Are we dead in sin or are we dead to sin? If we hate our sins it is evidence we are dead to sin and alive unto righteousness. This is a blessed state, "*Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord, imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile;*" Ps. xxxii, 2.

There is another class we wish to call attention to. They differ from those of whom we have just spoken in that they are not dead in sin, but are asleep. In outward appearance they bear strong resemblance to the dead in sin, but these are admonished to awake and arise from the

dead. This points out the difference in the two classes. It requires more than exhortation to the dead in sin to quicken them - arouse them to spiritual activity. They must have life from God: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" Eph, ii, 1. This is a very different work than that of "waking" one out of slumber. It can only be effected by the irresistible power of God: "*It is the Spirit that quickeneth;*" John vi, 63, "*I give unto them eternal life;*" John x, 28. "*The gift of God is eternal life;*" Rom. vi, 23. When the call is to arise from slumber, "*awake to righteousness and sin not,*" it is not a call to the dead in sins, but to those who are asleep to gospel privileges and the commands of righteousness of life. They are living saints, but have their dwelling among the dead. How much better it would be for them to awake from sleep and arise from the dead, and Christ will give them light! "*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;*" 1 John i, 7.

R.W.Thompson

Acts 2:1.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

SCRIPTURAL PRAYER.

By request of a humble saint of God, I will try to give my views to the MONITOR readers on the above subject, "*Scriptural Prayer.*" I desired to give the name of the one making the request, but was asked to omit the name.

Believers were enjoined by Christ to pray, with assurance that they would receive. All necessary encouragement is given true believers to pray. Scriptural prayer never fails; it availeth much. It is the expression of the motion of a righteous soul to God; the expression of the real felt needs of the dependent soul. The truly penitent soul pleads and begs in prayer for God's forgiveness and blessings. In wisdom penitents confess their sins and plead for mercy. They believe the knowledge and goodness and mercy of God are infinite. James admonished his brethren, saying, "*If any of you lack wisdom, let, him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him, but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like the wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord;*" James i. 5-7.

What must the believer believe to ask in faith, nothing wavering? He must believe the Lord can grant his request, if it is his will to do what he asks him to do. And, behold, there

came a leper and worshipped him, saying, "*Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed;*" *Matt. viii, 2, 3.* Jesus prayed in the garden, saying "*Father, if thou be willing remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done;*" *Luke xxii, 42.* Jesus, the Son of God, understood that his Father, God, knew best, and said, "Not my will, but thine be done.

The knowledge of our God is infinite; he cannot be informed. Great is our Lord and of great power: his understanding is infinite;" *Ps. cxlvii.* He knows what we need before we ask him, and he knows whether it will be good for us to give us and do for us what we ask before we ask him. "*Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things;*" *Matt. vi, 32.* But Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew all. And needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man (*John ii, 24, 25*). He knew his thoughts and desires before they were expressed in prayer. Our heavenly Father knows far better than we do what favors we should have from his hand. And as all his blessings to us are blessings of mercy and grace, it is not becoming to ask him for anything; only conformable to his perfect will. And whether we always

word our prayers as James instructed his brethren: "*If the Lord will,*" etc., or not, it should be in our hearts, "*If the Lord will,*" *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst;*" *Thy will be done.*" Our will should be that his will be done at all times.

In prayer we should address God as our superior in every way as having a perfect knowledge of all things, past, present, and future; our thoughts, our actions, our needs, and whether we will be thankful for his blessings, praise, honor and serve him. He knows whether they will be remembered or forgotten. How ungrateful his people have been! How forgetful of his mercies! What we poor finite, imperfect, erring creatures might think would be a great blessing, might prove to be a great curse. Paul said, "*We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*" This becomes us as unmeriteous recipients, to be reconciled to God. What he does for us or with us will be right; being too wise to err, and too good to do wrong. Then, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, come with confidence and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in times of need. Pray for grace, for the blessing of wisdom from above, that we may know how to pray; pray for grace to help, that we may have spiritual strength to conform our lives to his revealed will; pray God to increase our faith, that the fiery darts of the wicked may fall harmless at our feet, and that his

whole armor may be our vesture, and that spiritual weapons may be our defense and success.

J. M. Thompson

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left. (Isa. 30:21)

As I endeavor to write something from this text, I would pray that the Lord guide my every thought, for I often turn to the left or right and do not follow the straight and narrow path when left to myself: and invariably I go wrong and fall into many traps and errors. I would desire to pray as David, Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.

We know there are many ways to use the word 'walk', but it is my desire to apply it as a way of life. The things that we think, the things we say, the things we do, and the attitude toward these, formulate our walk before men and God.

It is of variable importance to each of us what our neighbors and friends think of us, and, because of our vanity, we sometimes say and do things to improve our image or esteem in the eyes of others for false reasons. When we do this, we turn out of the way and are not walking as we should before our Maker. We

may deceive our fellowman, but God is never deceived, for He knows our thoughts and intents of our hearts from afar. There is not a word in our tongue that our Lord does not know before we ever speak it. This is what causes the children of the Heavenly Father to fear, and desire to walk before Him in truth and humbleness. It is only His people who desire to walk righteous in His sight, and they are the only ones who hear, "*This is the way, walk ye in it.*" In my youth I was taught that if I would walk in the straight and narrow way I would find Jesus and walk thru those Pearly Gates with him. But I found that I could not walk in a way that I knew nothing about. I did not know Jesus, therefore I did not know the way, nor the truth, nor the life. It may be that I do not know him now, but at times my heart rejoices in the hope that I believe he has given me. I was also taught a system of works, and I applied myself vigorously, expecting to be saved and blessed for doing these good works. Naturally my efforts were for naught, and eventually I was made to see what a great sinner I am and that all of my works of self-righteousness is as filthy rags in His sight. Every child of grace is brought to this knowledge at some point in his life; and from that time forward he constantly begs for mercy. He is made to realize that if he is saved it is by grace thru faith; and that if he has this faith it is not of himself, but is a gift of God. Consider the two thieves who were

crucified with Christ. Had either done any good thing that he could plead before God? One of them railed on Christ and said, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other was made to see in that last hour that he was justly condemned, and pleaded for mercy: Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. You know the answer Christ gave. And this is the way every child of grace feels when he is made to know that he is justly condemned.

But there is a vast difference between self-righteous works and works of faith. James tells us that faith without works is dead. The work that Abraham did in offering up his son was a work of faith. He believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. On the other hand, Saul thought he was doing great works for God as he went about persecuting the church. This was the works of the flesh and a carnal mind, but on the road to Damascus he was taught a great lesson. When that light from heaven shined round about him, he fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? He had been working in the name of One he had never known. It seems to me that is what most of the world is doing today. We should never criticize them for their belief, but have compassion. Remember who maketh us to differ. It is these same people, however, that charge that Old School or Hardshell Baptists are a 'do nothing' people; but I do not believe this

for one moment. God's people will do every good work appointed unto them; For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. As surely as God hath ordained our works, we will walk in them; for His word returneth not to Him void, but it shall accomplish that which pleases Him, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it.

God's children walk by faith, not by sight. They are blessed to work, not for working; and they are blessed to hear the joyful sound, 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' And, Blessed is the people that hear the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

There was a time when you were dead in trespasses and sin, and walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: but God, who is rich in mercy, has quickened you. You are no longer in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. If you are in the spirit, you will walk in the spirit and not in the flesh. Paul tells us, There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. However, there is always conflict between the flesh

and the Spirit; they are contrary one to the other so that you cannot do the things that you would. Therefore, as Paul admonishes us, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. What are the works of the flesh ? Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and all such things. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Brethren, let us heed Paul's admonition: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Brethern, I ask you to accept this only as far as you find it to be in accord with the Holy Scriptures. May God bless you to hear His word, This is the way, walk ye in it.

Your prayers of faith are greatly needed and desired.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

ROMANS 8:1.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Beloved in the Lord, as the Holidays approach, there is a rush, here and there in anticipation of what is called Christmas, or Christ-mass, this is supposed to celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ.

We find no record in the Bible, to establish the birthdate of Jesus Christ. Only a few will pause, to even think of his birth.

I like to refer to this time of year as a holiday, instead of Christmas, regardless of how it was established though we do not join the "Merry Christ Theme", such occasions can prove a blessing to God's humble poor.

If the pause for the holidays, bring us closer together, causes some to open their heart to those in need, brings families together in closer ties, and leads us to express and manifest our love for our saviour and each other more, it is blessing.

The question is not the date of the birth of Jesus, but rather an examination of self. What is the evidence that He has been born unto us?

Have we been born of that incorruptible Spirit? are we blessed to love our brethren, with a pure heart fervently? We have a forgiving Spirit? are we blest to forgive one another, even as our Lord has forgiven us. Are we patient under trial? As the New Year approaches, may he bless us to re-dedicate our lives to His service, more and more. May

we be given to hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering, knowing that he is faithful that promised. May he lead us, more and more: to seek first the Kingdom without wavering, knowing of God, and his righteousness. May we all in the coming year, be brought closer to him in our walk, our conversation and our hearts, that we may be found in him, not having our own righteousness which is through faith in Him.

It is not the date of the birth of Christ, that is important, but the power of Him, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet took on him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He who became poor, that we through his poverty, might become rich, that left the glory of his Father's presence, and was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem us from its curse. What a great blessing it will be if during the coming year, we are blessed, more and more to live separate from the world, as not partaking of its worldliness. In the past, you may have heard Him say to you, when you were under trials, "*Be not afraid, it is I*". As we examine our hearts, our prayer would be unto Him, lead us more and more, to adorn our profession with the fruit of the Spirit, which are, "Love, Joy, Peace, Long Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance.

Adding to our faith virtue: and

to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity; for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gal. 5th Chapter, and second Peter, first chapter. Several of our members and dear friends have been called to be with Him during the year. May he who suffers not a sparrow to fall without him, comfort those who mourn, and if we are called before another year, May we be blessed to say; "even so come Lord Jesus"

May his grace and love abound in our hearts.

Elder & Sister D. V. Spangler.

PERRY Kansas.

MRS. MARY ELLISON, R. L. AND DELLA DAVIS,--DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHER:-- Received your letter a few days ago and I was glad to hear from you, but sorry to know Della is so ill again, and hope this will find her much improved. But whether in sickness or in health, I wish we could be resigned to the will of our Maker, for he works all things and never errs. His works, all of them, are laid deep

in divine wisdom, and just a portion, a very small portion is given to us to understand. Through his gracious providence he has arranged to send both sickness and health, and has appointed a time to every purpose under heaven. The night as well as the day proclaims his providence, The winter as well as the summer bespeaks his infinite wisdom. He has created man for his own glory, and therefore if he has appointed one to strength and vigor and another to pain and suffering, his glory is accomplished in the one just the same as in the other, for each one must fill the sphere allotted to him. No one can do more nor less than that. All things are the work of his creation, and he has created nothing too small nor too great to be subservient to his will. The ants are not beneath his notice. They are a people not strong, they have no guide, overseer or ruler, yet they gather their meat in the summer, and gathereth his food in the harvest. The conies, the locust, the spider, they all have no leader nor king, save their Creator, and they all dwell in their respective habitations. Behemoth moves about and dwells in his jungle, as he is ordained to do. Leviathan, that crooked serpent, is just as much subject to the will of his Creator as any other creature, small or great, weak or strong. I have been impressed with the language of the one hundred and fourth Psalm: "*O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou*

made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." He has ordained the moon and the stars so that "they move with amazing regularity. He placed the sun in its orbit. It has always ruled the day, and always will, according to the earliest word spoken concerning it. Once upon a time it stood still, according to the command of its Creator, and hasted not to go down about the space of a whole day. It shines in dazzling glory, but can shine on only half of the earth at once. Its Creator far excels it in glory and his brightness shines to the four corners of the earth. The winds and the waves obey him. Is he a complete Sovereignty? We may say he is. "*Life, death and hell and worlds unknown, hang on his firm decree.*" Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. They cannot come forth to prey upon us until God himself shall send them forth. Satan is cast into the bottomless pit and the angel of

the Lord holds the key. He was bound with a great chain, which no doubt represents the lethal tenets which bound the beast. He must remain bound with this great chain until God in his wisdom and providence sees fit to loose him for a little season. Sometimes it looks as if these legal shackles were about to be taken off, but when they are, whether it be soon or a long time hence, it must be remembered that the angel of God shall have turned the key.

Speaking of the wind and waves obeying him, I tried to speak from Matthew xiv. 25, where it is recorded that Jesus came to his disciples walking on the sea. It impressed me as a wonderful example of the way he traveled while here on earth, for whose sake he traveled and the final result. A master mechanic will build a machine, and oftentimes he sends forth a small pattern, an exact duplicate of his machine. If he receives a patent it is an evidence that his machine is a good workable machine and he has the sole right to it. This may be a rather crude illustration, but when I think of that little band of disciples in the ship in the midst of the sea, and Jesus walking on the sea, it seems to be an exact pattern of the great work of salvation which he came to accomplish. It was necessary that he walk on the waters to accomplish this. The waters, an emblem of tribulation and affliction. This is the way he walked while here, I am man of sorrows, and ac-

quainted with grief. He trod the winepress of the wrath of almighty God alone, and of the people there was none to help. It was alone for the sake of this little band of disciples that he walked out upon the boisterous sea. To accomplish their salvation was his whole intent. Did he reach the ship in time? He did. Glory to God in the highest, their little barge did not sink. It would have been the utmost folly to have urged this little band to exercise free agency, for they were utterly helpless; or to make the start and Jesus would meet them half way. Peter did try that, only to find that he was entirely at the mercy of Jesus after all. Hear his pitiful cry: "Lord, save me." Their whole salvation depended entirely upon Jesus coming to them. He came, and when he had entered into the ship immediately they were on the land whither they were going. The pattern is admirably workable, but no more so than the whole work of salvation which he wrought while here, and it is his. He worked it out himself, and therefore it is his. Anyone else claiming any credit for this great work is an impostor. The pattern has been accepted of the great Master Builder, and he has granted to Jesus the Sole right to all the praise, honor and glory of it. Hear the Father speak of him: "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" Hear the Son's triumphant sponse: "*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou*

gavest me to do." He must walk upon the waters of affliction to accomplish all this. He must be reviled, persecuted, crucified. He must go down in death and rise again before he could sit in triumph at the right hand of God. But ought not Christ to have suffered these things and entered into his glory? It is certainly good, but solemn tidings, to know that Jesus has walked upon the waters for us. In all our afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. He has come in and suffered with us and we with him. Our Jesus has walked on the water. This truth is most sacred to you.

"Twas sacred to those few disciples who tossed on the boisterous Red Sea. He walked on the sea of affliction, He trod the winepress alone, He murmurs not reproaches, but graciously comes to his own.

And when we come down to death's river. We dread the dark waters to cross; but Jesus has walked on those waters."

And softened the billows for us.

You may take the foregoing thoughts for what they are worth. They are like myself, quite imperfect.

With much love for you all,
L. L. SCHENEK.

HURRICANE, W. Va.,
July 1, 1928

DEAR BROTHER BIRD:— I feel at times that I have a hope, although I cannot see why God would be so merciful to as weak a worm of the dust as I to give me such a precious hope of eternal salvation. I feel to know that if I am one of God's little ones that it is not because of anything good which I have done, or will ever accomplish, but through the tender mercy and divine love of God who reigns eternally on high. I know I am full of wickedness and sin, and knowing this how could I believe that I could ever merit a place around God's throne singing praises to his high and holy name, I hope I am thankful for the few bright hours which I have, for there are so many dark and stormy days in which I despair and feel I have probably been deceived in my experience, and that my desire to be with God's children is only a fleshly desire, and my love for those people only earthly love and not the love which is born of God. Then comes a bright day, and I feel that God has been very merciful and good to me in giving me a little hope. I do not know whether I will ever go to the church or not. At the last meeting, on Saturday, I could hardly stay away. I had the greatest desire then I have ever had to unite with the church but I could not, for something held me back. I stood and trembled as a leaf shaken by the wind and could not keep the tears

back. I was miserable. I felt like I imagine one would feel to have to see some one drown, or burn to death and not be able to help them, so great was my desire to go home to the church. That shows very plainly that we are governed by a higher power, *“for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”-Phil. ii. 13.*

Excuse these few broken thoughts. I did not aim to write to you when I sat down at this table, but was so led. We will be glad to hear from you at any time, for we get so few letters.

Yours in hope,
EULA B. BYRNSIDE.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church on the 5th Sunday in November. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2008

Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Oscar Pickral, VA	5.00
Doris Giles, VA	5.00
Elizabeth Hedrick, VA	15.00
Susan Shelton, NC	5.00
Ronald Crouch, WV	15.00
Jim Campbell, CO	5.00
Faye Brown, NC	10.00
Algie Martin, VA	5.00
Caroline Martin, WA	5.00
Mary Lee, NC	5.00
W. W. Hudson, LA	3.00
Billie Speir, LA	15.00
Sallie Hodges, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER SYLVIA WILSON CONNER

We once again bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing from our midst our beloved Sister Sylvia Conner. We miss having her with us but feel our loss is her eternal gain. Our beloved Sister was always present at her church, Salem Primitive Baptist, with a cheerful word and smile for everyone. She was a firm

believer in salvation by grace and grace alone. She believed that God is and has all power in heaven and in earth.

She quietly breathed her last breath on Saturday July 5, 2008, making her stay here on earth 91 years. She is survived by her daughter, Rushie Conner and husband, William (Bennie) Conner, Check, Virginia; one sister, Rushie Violet Smith, Roanoke, Virginia; six grandchildren and spouses, William Glenn and Sue Conner, Calvin Ray and Barbara Conner, Leslie Dale and Shawn Conner, Randall B. and Melissa Conner, Donna Reynolds, Jeffery and Ginger Conner, twelve great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday July 8, 2008 at the Salem Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Don Wilson officiating with interment following in Restvale Cemetery.

Written by one who loved her.
Mary Poff, Clerk

OBITUARY FOR BROTHER PHILLIP HUGHES COX

One of our members at Old Union Church has been called to rest, awaiting the second

coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; Brother Phillip Hughes Cox.

He was born August 10, 1941, and fell asleep in Christ on September 20, 2007, at 66 years of age. Elder B. O. Thompson baptized him the 4th. Sunday in May, 1966 as a member of Old Union Church. Brother Phillip was severely injured in an automobile crash when he was 19 years old, and was afflicted in body because of this, for the rest of his life. He loved the church and his Saviour. His funeral service was conducted at 2:00pm at Mayberry Funeral Home Chapel, September 22, 2007, by Elder Larry Hollandsworth and he was laid to rest at the Sumpter Cemetery in Floyd County, VA. He is survived by; Sister and Brother-in-law Effie and Troy Higgs, Glenda and Arnold Dehart, Reba Wade, Brother and Sister-in law Brother Bernard Cox and Sister Bessie Cox, Coleman L. Cox, Allen and Geneva Cox, and many Nieces and Nephews. May we all be made submissive to God's Holy will. One copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times, one for the family and one for the church record. Done by order of the church in conference on Sunday, September 23, 2007. Written in Love by: Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth,
acting Moderator
Sandra Hollandsworth, Clerk

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