

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.

Route 7, Box 483 Burlington, N.C. 27215

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/78
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MYSELF

Dark my mind, and unbelieving,
Anxious, restless, full of fear;
At the past and present grieving,
Distant troubles bringing near.

Like a shadow, life is fleeting;
Feeble is my house of clay;
On it wintry storms are beating,
Tending to its last decay.

Burden'd oft with sin and sorrow,
To a throne of grace I go;
But, alas, the coming morrow
Undiminish'd finds my woe.

God his face of love is hiding,
Darkness veils his awful throne,
And the solemn voice of chiding
Is the voice I hear alone.

Shall I, then, with heart desponding,
Cease before that throne to bend,
And to Satan's wiles responding,
Strength to his temptations lend?

Would this moment saw me dying,
Waiting at that throne for peace,
Rather than my heart stop crying,
Or its feeble praise should cease!

Feeble ever, and unstable,
In myself I ne'er confide;
But, Lord Jesus, thou art able
Still to keep me near thy side.

Health and peace my soul refuses
From all sources here below;
From the wounds, dear Lord, and bruises
All my hopes of comfort flow.

Deign, then, Lord, again to hear me,
Be my tower, shield and sun;
Let thy presence guard and cheer me
While the race of life I run.

From my breast vouchsafe to banish
Darkness, unbelief and sighs;
Bid the gloom of night to vanish
And the star of hope to rise.

Let no evil thing delight me
While life's journey I pursue;
Nor the face of death affright me
When the grave is full in view.

Draw me, Lord, and keep me near thee,
Raise my heart to things above;
And when dying let me hear thee
Speak in accents fraught with love.

(J. R., 1859)

(INTRODUCTION TO THE BANK OF FAITH
BY WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.)

TO THE CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCHES OF CHRIST

AT

PROVIDENCE CHAPEL IN LONDON

AND AT

RICHMOND IN SURRY.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord Jesus, and longed for in the bowels of Christ, whom I love in the faith, and to whom the love of Christ hath constrained me to become a debtor,—Grace, mercy, and peace, be multiplied among you, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I chose to dedicate this little treatise to you, because sometimes those providences which appear rather out of the common line are hard nuts in the mouth of a weak believer; but some of you have known me from the beginning, and have been eye-witnesses of most of the facts which I am going to relate. And, if you will allow me to make an honest confession, my conscience has often lashed me for not keeping a diary, or rather minuting down the many conspicuous providences of God which have appeared to me in time of trouble; but, like ungrateful Israel, I went the only way to forget His works, and to be unmindful of the Rock of my salvation; and now I have nothing to trust to on this occasion but my own treacherous memory, unless the Lord be pleased to send the Comforter to me; and, if He come, He will "bring all things to my remembrance", whatsoever God hath

said unto me in a way of providence.

I am sure "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and all that is therein; all the cattle of the forest are His, and so are the flocks of a thousand hills; yea, the corn, and the wine, the oil, the wool, and the flax;" yea, and even the wicked deceiver, as well as the deceived, are the Lord's; and it is He that maketh one man poor and another rich; that bringeth down and lifteth up; and no man can add to the stature appointed by God whether the stature be in grace or in providence.

"The battle", saith the wise man, "is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift, nor bread to men of skill." The weak are often seen to win the field, and the cripple to win the heavenly race; and even fools to accumulate the greatest fortunes. There is no adding a cubit to this stature, even in the least circumstance; then why take we thought for the rest?

I believe God never intended me to be a preacher to the rich, because He has ever kept me dependent on His providence. Had I been rich, I might have been tempted to trust in uncertain riches; and I know well that "where the treasure is, there will the heart be also" It must be a hard task to preach against covetousness while the heart is trading at the stocks. I fear this is the case with some who are called ministers; but sin always brings its own punishment with it. Such can have no communion with God, nor peace of conscience; for it is sin that separateth between God and the soul; and the love of money is the root of all evil. Nor have I any reason to believe that God ever intended me for a preacher to please Pharisees, because He hath for many years given me a humbling sight and a deep sense of my own wretched depravity; so that I dare not place any confidence in the flesh, nor even in the fruits of faith; knowing that a man can merit nothing, allowing that he were able to keep the law

perfectly: "When ye have done all these things, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done no more than it was our duty to do." But I come infinitely short of doing all, therefore can never boast of doing a part. By nature we are all fond of a specious form of religion; and God permitted me to use a dry form for many years; but He never regarded any of those prayers put up by me, nor removed the guilt of my sin, in answer to them; therefore, to use an English proverb, "I shall never speak well of that bridge, because it never bore me safe over the stream."

I know that God tells us to turn away from those "who have a form of godliness," but deny the power thereof. And dry forms of devotion, used by people who deny the grace and Spirit of God, are no better than a state for anit-christ, a varnish for sepulchres (Matt. 23:27) an apparel for harlots (Isa. 4:1); a winding-sheet for Pharisees (Isa. 30:1); a bribe for dead works put into the hands of an honest conscience (Heb. 9:14); a trading stock for blind guides (Isa. 56:10); a dish of husks to stifle convictions (Luke 15:16); a mongrel service offered to God an mammon (Matt. 6:24); the mimicry of hypocrites (Matt. 15:8); a starting hole to shun the cross (Isa. 42:22); and infidelity's last refuge.

God permitted me for many years to try what a form of devotion would do for me; but, like the poor woman in the Gospel, I got worse instead of better; therefore was obliged to lay it by, and let the words of my mouth be the meditation of my heart. In this way the Holy Ghost helped my infirmities; therefore I must preach up spiritual prayer; and, as Christ answers the Spirit's call, I must preach Jesus as the eternal God that hears and answers prayer. This is a part of the ministry which I had received of the Lord; and I hope, through grace, to take heed to it, and fulfil it.

I believe God intended that I should

preach faith; because He has kept me dependent by faith on Himself both for spiritual and temporal supplies. And I am persuaded that He intended me for a minister to the ignorant and the poor; to the ignorant, because He sent me to preach, and gave me many seals to my ministry, before I could read a chapter in the Bible with propriety; to the poor, because He sent me without a penny in my pocket; therefore as a minister of the poor I hope to magnify mine office.

The vanity of worldly wisdom, the excellency of divine knowledge, the uncertainty of worldly riches, the preciousness of faith's wealth, the blessed religion of Jesus, and the insufficiency of human inventions, all these seem to be some of the things belonging to the gospel which is committed to my trust. And I know that it becomes a steward to be found faithful, and not to waste his master's goods.

What further convinces me of my being appointed by God for a preacher to the poor is this, that the many seals of my ministry consist chiefly of the poor, both in town and country; so that I can adopt with propriety the language of the apostle, and say, "Ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence" (I Cor. 1:27-29).

Although my ministry is chiefly among the poor, yet it is a copy the Saviour has set, and it is very much like His own; for no man can prove Jesus a rich man after the flesh, nor a scholar after the flesh, nor a doctor after the flesh, nor a bishop after the flesh. And

as for the followers of His personal ministry, they were poor, for "unto the poor the gospel was preached"; and those who received the glad tidings were babes in human knowledge: "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; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight." Let us, then, take all the encouragement which God has given us to be contented in our respective stations, even though it be in servitude; for Jesus was among men as one that serveth. As Christ Himself, then is entirely on our side of the question, let us evermore rejoice in this glorious pattern.

One reason for my writing this treatise is, because we are often tempted to believe that God takes no notice of our temporal concerns. As the thoughts of the salvation of our soul lies near our hearts, and as that is of the greatest importance, we think God will not forget that; but, as for our private concerns in life, we suppose that they are beneath His notice and inspection. This latter is a temptation from the devil; and such, I hope, I shall make appear in the following treatise.

Another reason why I have written this book is, that the Word of God abounds with many similar circumstances of the divine providence of God; such as, changing the colour of Jacob's flocks and herds, the Lord making Abraham rich in cattle, feeding the prophet by a raven, multiplying widow's oil and meal, sending the apostles out without purse or scrip, feeding Israel in the wilderness with manna, and cutting off that rich glutton Nabal, in order to relieve poor hungry David. All these are striking instances of God's tender regard for the poor of His flock.

I shall only treat of what has occurred in the course of my own experience, of which things many of you are living witnesses. And may God bless the work

for the encouragement of His children's faith, patience, and watchfulness. To this end I shall descend to the most minute circumstances, in order to show the narrow inspection of God into the affairs of those who put their trust in Him.

I am aware of the reproach that will be cast upon such a work, as also upon the author; but this doth in no wise concern me. I only wish that I were as free from every sin as I am from the carnal fear of man; I believe I should then shortly preach up sinless perfection. If we preachers get proud, worldly, and lifeless, we generally fall into disesteem with the most lively Christians; and, if the presence of God doth not keep up our reputation among these righteous ones, we generally begin to undermine the reputation of those who cleave closer to God than ourselves, and endeavour to establish a character upon the ruins of other men's reputations; and, while we are carrying on this business, God sets others to undermine ours. "As ye mete, so shall it be measured to you again." This is God's balance. And the wise man's appeal to conscience is, also, "Take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: for oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others" (Eccl. 7:21, 22).

The first little treatise which I wrote was condemned by many, who at the same time never understood it; but God blessed it to several souls, to their happy deliverance; and if God sets His seal to it, we have no cause to look to the approbation of any other. When the "Skeleton" first appeared, the complaint was that it was written in a bad spirit; that the divinity was tolerable, but the spirit was bad. Sound divinity and zeal for God flowing from a bad spirit, is like the old contradiction we read of, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" However, although there were many who condemned it in private, yet I

rejoice, because several of them plundered the very bowels of it to preach in public. I should like to see a treatise upon the operations of the Holy Ghost written by some of those who are infallible, and then I should know, according to their views, how far the blessed Spirit ought to go in His operations, and where He ought to stop, according to their decree. If Elijah was on earth, I believe he would be loaded with as many reproaches of uncharitableness as I have been. But why should I wonder at this when Christ Himself was accused by the doctors of old of preaching and working under the influence of a bad spirit? They said that He cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils. I would caution these infallible gentlemen, however, not to be too hasty in ascribing a work which God owns and blesses to the dictates of an evil spirit, "lest haply they may be found even to fight against God the Holy Ghost." I much question if they are very well acquainted with that blessed Spirit's tuition; for, if they were, they would not talk at that rate. Natural affections are often mistaken for the operations of the Spirit of God; but Christ sharply rebuked Peter for savouring the things of men more than the things of God. And I know that all the affections of nature are contradistinguished from the influences or fruits of the spirit, by one who is an infallible Judge: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." The new man must come forth, and the old man must be crucified throughout.

I own that natural affections are some of the best rags of fallen nature; but as they are natural, they must not be mistaken for, nor coupled with, the Holy Ghost. "All mortality shall be swallowed up of life" when He who only hath immortality shall appear. There-

fore make not that your celestial covering which is to be no more than your grave-clothes. All these cloths and napkins must be wrapt together by themselves when Christ mystical shall awake and sing; for we hope to be delivered from the whole body of sin and death, because it is under this we groan, being burthened. Some, indeed, have no brighter views of heaven than Mahomet in his Alcoran. "I speak this to their shame;" for some professors are ready to repeat the old inquiry, "How are the dead raised up?" and with what crop of natural affections do they come? To whom I answer, The old, the natural grain must entirely die, that the new and spiritual harvest may take place. "The seed which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain."

However, God hath blessed the "Skeleton" to many souls, which satisfies me. And whether men approve or disapprove of the work it matters not; for I find by history that the book of the Revelation, written by John the Divine, though it contains a certain and full prediction of all future events both in churches and states, and a concise recapitulation of all past occurrences, was almost universally rejected by infallible prelates in the primitive church of Christ (though Christ sent His angels to testify it to them), they being wise above what was written, though perhaps too ignorant to understand the writing; therefore it was kept out of the church as uncanonical. St. Jude's Epistle also, appearing such a foe to universal charity, as well as to spots in their feasts of charity and other counterfeit errors, and being expressive of so much zeal and warmth for God's glory, was kept out of the church for many years; and the excuse was as weighty as some in our days make against mine - that it was written in a bad spirit, and that he had quoted an unscriptural expression, namely, that of "the devil contending

for the body of Moses," which, in my opinion, seems scriptural enough to any discerning Christian; for if the body of Moses be the offspring of Hagar, and figuratively the children of Jerusalem, which are in bondage; and Jerusalem, the desolate, without God, and without a husband, and her children without a father; these children are bond-children under the law, and being under the law, are consequently under the curse. No wonder then if the officer, the devil, accuseth them to Justice, and contends for this mystical body of Moses, when Moses himself accuseth them even before God. I hope these divines will show me some lenity, although I may be of a bad spirit, because I have not gone quite so far in the trial of Universal Charity as to execute him. Neither have I cut Agag in pieces, nor slain any of the prophets of Baal, as some have done at the command of God, and under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost. But although I had, it would have been no crime, seeing God Himself is a swift witness against sorcerers.

My first pamphlet being condemned as nonsense, and the second as the product of a bad spirit, so this will possibly be condemned as savouring too much of self; more especially as I treat only of the kind providences which occurred in the course of my own experience. However, I hope to rest satisfied till the great day arrives when God will make manifest the secrets of the heart, and show whom He approves and disapproves; and then it will be seen that neither universal charity nor natural affections shall be found among the redeemed of God; for it will not be said that natural affections shall be all, but that God shall be All in all.

As for the kind advice which some of you have given me, I thank you, and can bear with your weaknesses, knowing that "I (once) spake as a child, thought as a child, and understood as a child; but when I became a man, I put away child-

ish things." I have no notion of getting a renowned preacher to preface any of my poor scribbling; it appears, in my opinion, too much like the Satanic art of puffing at an auction. The fewer human inventions the better in divine things. Besides, I believe that many precious ministers of Jesus have in their young days put prefaces to commentaries and other works merely to please a bookseller, who, when possessed of a riper judgment, were ashamed of the doctrines which they had formerly recommended to others; yea, some whom I hear have condemned my book have written prefaces to works now in my possession out of which I defy all the masters of arts in Christendom to distil one thimbleful of evangelical divinity, exclusive of the holy name of God. Upon this principle I do not desire any good man to expose his judgment to contempt by puffing off my abilities; for I have not a single doubt but kind Providence will defray my expenses at the Press as long as God intends that I should write anything for Him; and when this cruse of oil fails, you will hear no more of me from thence. Besides, if I was inclined to beg or cringe for a preface, I have no such tip-top ministers to go to; for I find by blessed experience that I can creep into the very bosom of my dear Redeemer with more ease than I can touch the robes of a dignified clergyman. I have sometimes indeed been admitted into the pulpits of some of these great men; but if the power of God has been present to heal, and the people have been happy under me, I have been admitted there no more.

I am informed that it is common among horse-jockies to cry a horse down if his heels are too light. This custom may well become the turf, but it ill becomes the pulpit. However, God has given me a pulpit of my own, so I have no cause to borrow; and this fulfils an ancient promise once applied to my soul with power, even from God Himself:

"Thou shalt lend to many, but borrow of none."

(Continued next month)

Snow Hill, Maryland

Dear Elder Smith,

My subscription to the *Signs of the Times* is up December, 1977. I am sending a check for \$10.00 for 2 years. Use the other \$1.00 as you see fit.

We were sorry you were not able to attend our Association. We were blessed to have several visiting ministers, and all were blessed of the Lord to give all praise to His Holy Name.

We wish to give thanks that the dear Lord brings up young ones to take over where our elder feel they are not strong enough to continue.

At present I am able to attend services each Sunday. Yet what a joy to receive the *Signs* - a letter from so many of the dear saints.

May it please the Lord to continue to show His loving kindness and bless each of you connected with the *Signs of the Times*. May He continue to bless the writers, too.

Hope you can visit us soon.

In love and sweet fellowship,
Agnes Truitt

Heflin, La.

Dear Editors,

The *Signs of the Times* opens for me a new world of comfort, to give me a small hope that God does love, does redeem, does justify His own by the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son.

Please use the little extra after a two years subscription as you see fit.

May God continue to bless you with the Truth of His word, printed so well for us to read, to ponder, and to try to absorb.

Evelyn C. White

A LOVELY MEETING

Meadows of Dan, Virginia

Dear Editors of the Signs,

It seems I must write a little concerning the services I was blessed to be in yesterday at Union Meeting House in Indian Valley, Virginia.

I am not ashamed to say there was rejoicing in the song service and also in prayer by Elder Amos Hash. He was lifted on high by the descending Spirit, and fed us poor worms of the dust. I do want to say that the others, Elder Hale Terry, Elder Larry Hollingsworth, and Brother Willard Cox, were also blessed. As the door of the church was opened three women came forward with meekness, asking for a home with these people. Two women had been received on Saturday afternoon, but I was unable to attend on Saturday due to ill health. One woman came at the water, which was a beautiful river flowing in the valley.

As these six honorable women were led into this river this hymn came to me:

"Beneath the sacred Throne of God
I saw a river rise;
The streams were peace and pardoning
blood,
Descending from the skies."

Although we were singing another hymn, these words above were clear in my mind. As I looked upon this beautiful flowing water, it seemed I was blessed to see the salvation of sinners, pure and clear. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb." I hope I also saw the Tree of Life, which is God Almighty.

"I stood amazed, and wondered when,
Or why this ocean rose,
That wafts salvation down to men,
His traitors and his foes."

And I was showed again that this is the only way a little child can enter into the Kingdom of God, and all who are climbing up some other way are thieves

and robbers. And I saw again that this pure River of Life is free and does take away sin, and leaves a pure and undefiled hope within His chosen seed.

“Triumphant grace, and man’s free will,
Shall not divide the throne;
For man’s a fallen sinner still,
And Christ shall reign alone.”

Five women were laid in the liquid grave by Elder Hale Terry and one by Elder Larry Hollingsworth.

There was no other God worshipped there that day, as this was a pure thing and His servants served Him and His chosen seed. I feel to say, “Why such love for me, to be blessed to be in the midst of these people and behold the wonderous works of God.”

This is part of what keeps us pressing on and I feel to say, “What a beautiful day the Lord hath made and stamped into our hearts to remember from time to time.” My brethren, my household duties have gone undone today as I have been blessed to rejoice from time to time and I want to say, I love you all dearly, and remain a helpless sinner.

Mrs. Pauline Spencer

Franklin, Ohio

Signs of The Times,

Enclosed find \$5.00 check for a one year subscription to your paper. I’ve been acquainted with it all my life. It was always at home in our home when I was growing up in West Virginia. In May 1976, I united and was baptized with the Cincinnati Primitive Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Before and since then I’ve hunted up every *Signs* I could find to read. My brother-in-law, Virgil Byrnside, in Hurricane, W. Va., gave me a box of them dating back to 1911. I’m sure enjoying reading them. I hope there will always be a *Signs of the Times*. Maybe if they are around here all the time some of my family will want to read them, too, sometime.

Mrs. James W. Johnson

Rising Sun, Maryland

Dear Editors,

Please cancel the subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for Mrs. Ida Farmer, Route 2, Rising Sun, Maryland. Mother passed away April 26, 1977, after a long illness.

Mother had such a sweet hope in Christ, that we feel our loss is her eternal gain. Still we miss her. She was a kind and loving Mother.

My husband and I enjoy reading the *Signs*. I have enclosed a check for 2 years subscription to the *Signs of the Times*.

Very truly yours,

Alean B. Carter

(Note: An obituary for Sister Farmer will appear in a future edition of the *Signs*. Editor)

Dear Brothers in Christ,

I see my subscription is out so here is a check to renew for 2 years. Use the rest where needed. I really enjoy the sweet sermons and letters because we have some wonderful ministers and other writers. I have been a member of the Primitive Baptist since I was only 11 years old.

Our Dad and Mother and 12 children were all members of Poplar Spring in Roane County, Tennessee for a number of years.

Keep up the good work and may God bless each of you.

A Sister in Christ,

Mrs. Ben Fields

Dozier, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the wonderful *Signs of the Times*, which I am so wonderfully blessed to receive once a month. Enclosed you will find a check for \$12.00 for 2 years renewal. Use the balance as you see fit to help someone else to read

the Good News.

There are not as many old "Hardshells" left around here, but we had a very good Coneche River Association this year. We sure missed some of the preachers that usually come to visit with us at that time, but the six or seven we had were wonderfully blessed by the living God to deliver the truth and revive the hopes of us all.

I have been trying to write a lot for the last few days, but I have so many pages until I am ashamed to send them. I am 75 years old and feel like there are not very many people who would enjoy reading about the experiences such as I have been shown for 66 years. I don't know if many of our Primitive Baptist would believe that a 9 year old would be blessed to try to pray, but I do, because it was me. I tried with all my heart and was blessed to see the answer. I just don't think my praying was very much help, but the Power of God showed me that there was a living God, and I have been blessed to believe that all my life.

A poor sinner,
J. Fred Clark

Oakland, Miss.

Dear Editors:

I want to subscribe to the *Signs of the Times*. I have read this publication for a long time as my parents and other relatives from Greenville, Alabama have always subscribed to it. I think it is the best.

Since I don't know exactly what the price is I am sending a check for \$3.50 for one year.

Thank you,
Lee Burt

Death to God's people is but a ferryboat. Every day and every hour the boat pushes off with some of the saints, and returns for more.

Toplady

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." II Cor. 5:10. We must receive the bad things we have done as well as the good. This is a severe judgment for a living soul who hates sin, but it is a just one. We hate and loathe these bad things, they are terribly distasteful and nauseous to us, and to have to carry them along with us wherever we go, to have them in our minds all the time, to be obliged to look at them, to receive their ill odor and to feel their bitter taste, this is indeed a sore punishment, this is reaping in tears what we have sown in self-confidence to the flesh. We might think that the apostle is here declaring that the Lord punishes his people for the bad things they do by taking away their property and their relatives, and afflicting their persons with some dreadful disease. Job's friends thought so, but they were mistaken; the punishments visited upon the Lord's people for disobedience are not such as the world could see or appreciate.

"Fragments" by Silas H. Durand

The same infinite power which was in the words, "Let there be light," is in the words of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Fragments" by Silas H. Durand

NOTICE OF CORRECTION

Elder Stewart McColl's Editorial
Vol. 145, No. 10, October, 1977

Page 228, third line from bottom of page, left column---omit word, **not**.

Page 231, second paragraph, right column, line 13, add the following between the word ark and the word when---**lest they be struck dead as Uzza was when he put forth his hand to hold the ark**---

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Mill Branch, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1978.

All lovers of the Truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pitman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Malmaison Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January. A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Elder O.K. Tench, Moderator
Peggy Wells, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS
TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE
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TO SEPTEMBER 1977

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| J.C. Foster, Ala. | 6.00 |
| Bernice Greer, Va. | 1.00 |
| Rena E. Smith, N.C. | 1.00 |
| Jesse A. Ramsey, Va. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Reuben Everett, N.C. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Ben Fields, Tenn. | 1.00 |

EDITORIAL

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH

Dear brethren - we greet you in the Name of our Lord with this new volume of the *Signs of the Times*. This marks the beginning of Volume 146. Many publications have come and gone since 1832, but the *Signs* remains.

If we may inquire into the matter, let us see if we can discover the reason for our paper's longevity. We know at once it is not owing to the sagacity or cleverness of the publishers, for in these many years numbers of men with great talents and wisdom have gotten up periodicals only to see them shortly fail. Also, from time to time the enemy shot his poison arrows at the *Signs* and yet the cause was still maintained.

Upon proper reflection we can sum up the paper's continued existence with three words: Cause, Contents, and Consistency. Other descriptions might be applied, but they would still be couched in these three words. May we then look a little closer.

CAUSE - When David came to the camp of Israel and saw the army of God in disarray, terribly frightened, and none to lead, and on the other hand the mighty Philistines led by Goliath defying the God of Heaven, he was stirred to say, "Is there not a cause?" (I Sam. 17:29)

Though a youth, David was no novice. Though ruddy and fair, he was no coward. He saw a cause. Why? Because God had raised him up for that very purpose. He was equal to the cause on the same principle. God qualified him. And again, he was victorious because he was sent out in the Name of his God.

We offer this piece of Bible history to make a comparison. When our church was troubled by hoards of uncircumcised Philistines 150 years ago, was there not a cause? Most certainly, and

equal to the cause was the purpose of God to raise up leaders among us who met the enemy with the sword of the Spirit. Chief among them was Elder Gilbert Beebe. With much difficulty and tribulation he sent forth among the scattered faithful this publication known as the *Signs of the Times*. Many things have changed in this world since then, but many have not. There are still many foes on every hand. There is still a need for unity among our brethren and churches, and foremost there is the same hungering and thirsting now as then. Dare we deny then that there is a cause?

Who then is sufficient for these things? If the *Signs* has continued and is to continue, will it not be in the strength of God? We had better close up and print no more than to believe that this little cause can be maintained by us. The four and twenty elders who are before the Throne (Rev. 4:11) cry, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." May we, with fear and trembling, from an honest heart, say the same. Yes, this cause is the Lord's cause. What a wonder of His love that it is so.

CONTENTS - As the twelve tribes began to lay hold of their possessions in the land of Canaan they set up the tabernacle at Shiloh. (Joshua 18:1) The central figure or piece of furniture in the tabernacle was the ark. The ark had two primary names, the ark of the covenant, (Num. 10:33) and the ark of the testimony. (Ex. 25:22) These names were derived from the contents of the ark. The contents were, first, the tables of stone; second, the golden pot of manna, (Ex. 16:33, 34) and third, Aaron's rod that budded. (Heb. 9:4) It is interesting to observe that in Solomon's day when they erected that grand temple, that there was neither manna nor the rod of Aaron in the ark. Only the two tables of stone were found therein. (I Kings 8:9)

The Lord forbid that we try to compare our paper to the ark. But let us draw again from a figure, an answer to our question, "Why has the *Signs* been sustained?" The ark was set up in the midst of Israel and its contents was the covenant, or testimony of God. When God instructed Moses to make the ark, the dimensions of it foretold that it would be a receptacle or container. Its contents was God's Holy Law for national Israel. Take out the contents and the ark was empty of meaning - void of testimony. I feel the illustration is appropriate. The *Signs of the Times* is supported and upheld by our God because of its contents. The contents are the source of value to sin-weary travelers who look in its pages. We need not go into detail describing the contents for our readers, because they know them very well. Testimony of God's goodness and mercy to poor sinners is found therein. Sound doctrine and order is there, too, as well as the experience and walk of God's children. But above all these, shining as the light of the noon-day sun is the testimony of Jesus. Is this not the chief content? Has not God always maintained the honor of His Name? And is not this the very reason that spiritual Israelites love the *Signs of the Times*? Yes, the contents of the *Signs*, like that of the ark of old, is the covenant and testimony.

CONSISTENCY - During the period of about 400 years between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New, a great falling away appeared among the Israelites. Faith was replaced with form, and a love to God all but ceased to exist. The order of the Pharisees grew stronger and the true priesthood diminished. There were priests, true enough, but for the most part they were hirelings gratifying their self-lust.

It was at this time, when the heavens seemed darkened, that the following record describes a few of the Lord's

consistent and faithful servants. "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Luke 1:5, 6)

Also at this time there was a man whose name was Simeon, "And the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him." (Luke 2:25) And then finally we have the record of the aged Anna, a prophetess, "which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." (Luke 2:37)

These four faithful saints all had in common a faithful waiting on the Lord. They turned neither to the right hand or to the left. They made straight paths for their feet. They were consistent in that they were not looking for the praise of men one moment and the presence of God the next. No matter what others might do, they waited on the consolation of Israel. Consistency marked their daily lives. Yet we know that they had absolutely nothing to do with being different from the inconsistent masses for, "Who maketh thee to differ?" Grace took them every step of the way in their consecrated walk even as it does today.

These illustrations somewhat serve as an example of the consistency of the *Signs of the Times*. When other papers sought more circulation or a wider publicity, the *Signs* sought to remain faithful to its original prospectus. And may our God be praised; we have been consistent now for 145 years. The cause has been the same. The contents have been the same, and the results have been consistency. Dear readers, we confess before you that consistency is a mark of God's Grace. This consistency, which we believe to be

from God, is an evidence that the Lord has been pleased to sustain our paper for our good and His glory.

We will close the remarks by saying that it is a pleasure to serve the Lord's people in this capacity. We hope to see the *Signs* continue as long as it is God's pleasure for it to do so.

J. F. Poole

(The following is an exact reproduction of the original Prospectus of the *Signs of the Times* published in 1832. We are happy to say that this is still our doctrinal position and is subscribed to by the entire Editorial Staff and Board of Trustees.)

Proposals for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the *Signs of the Times*, devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah - the Revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." (I John 5:8)
2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.
3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.
4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.
5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.
6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.
7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.
8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.
9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R.M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The *Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, etc., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XVI. 19-31.

A sister living in Texas and a brother living in Kansas have written asking our views on the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus. Both ask whether this is a parable, and they want to know if the rich man represents the Jewish nation and Lazarus the Gentiles, as they both have heard it so explained. Treating this subject symbolically, we have ourselves presented this history of these two persons as signifying the one the Jewish nation, the other the Gentiles. In this present article, however, we shall not take up the symbolic line of thought. We wish to present some facts of truth that are so plain on the face of the narrative as to be almost self-evident.

(1) The narrative of the rich man and Lazarus is not said to be a parable. Christ does not say it is a parable, the Holy Spirit does not say so. Whatever parabolic significance it may have as differentiating Jew and Gentile, the interpretation of it cannot be confined to such. Nor shall we so limit it to that meaning at this time. Jesus Christ is the one true and faithful witness of all the truth of God. He was from eternity with the Father to make known God unto his people. With the one exception of Jesus

Christ, no man has seen God at any time. But this Man Jesus has inerrantly declared the Father to us. None of God's people who have gone from this world into the world beyond have returned to tell us about it, but Jesus has told us some things which await us after death, and His testimony is by no means to be ignored or treated lightly. In this narrative, he sets forth for us a glimpse of what awaits the saved and the unsaved after their departure from this present life. That is the line of thought we now wish to pursue.

(2) Jesus' narrative of the rich man and Lazarus is outstanding among all his narratives and parables for the reason that this is the only narrative of all of them in which Jesus designates a person by name. In no other of his citations does he ever give the persons therein a definite name. And in this one he gives no name to the rich man, but names the outcast. How opposite are his ways to the ways of man! Men would give a name to the rich man, not to the beggar. That is not God's way. The things that are despised, the things that are not, are named by him. Those whom the world names are nameless with God. Precious in his sight are the world's nameless ones. They, for the most part, are worn on his heart, their names written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. That which is despised and set at nought by the world, is esteemed by him: not because mere namelessness is any merit in his sight, but for the reason that namelessness from the world's point of view is most often a mark of divine favor and of saving grace. The beggar, Jesus names Lazarus. And what a name! Lazarus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Eleazar. As most Jewish names have significance, so does this one. It means "God-helped." His very name indicates that, humanly despised as the beggar is, he is marked with the help of God, a subject of God's gracious favor in

Christ. Not the mere fact that Lazarus is a beggar and afflicted and hungry, marks him as a child of grace; for not every literal beggar, however sore and hungry, is a child of God. The fact that God has named his own name upon the wretch as being an object of divine help settles his standing as a subject of grace. So while misery and poverty and rags are not in themselves by any means passports into divine favor, the standing of the believer in a gracious state is evidenced by spiritual poverty and by hunger for righteousness and by the filthy rags of his condemned self-righteousness. The name Lazarus here given to the beggar by Jesus further links him with that other Lazarus in John eleven, whom Jesus raised from the dead. Evidently there was significant design in so naming this beggar as to link this poor sinner with the great truth of resurrection.

(3) The primary application of the rich man, clothed in fine linen and purple and faring sumptuously every day, is no doubt to the pharisaical class whom Jesus is addressing. And that spirit of pharisaism is largely in evidence in the world to-day. The picture of the rich man here presents a self-righteous ease and contentment and a satisfaction with this present world. Jesus does not give us here to believe that it was the rich man's duty to feed the beggar, nor was it for lack of compassion for wretchedness and misery that the rich man awoke in torment after death. In verse twenty-five, we are told his punishment resulted alone from his having had his good things in this lifetime, while Lazarus had his evil things. The rich man's "good" was in this present world. He wanted nothing better than this present life could afford him. With that he was content. Self-satisfaction and worldly contentment are ever marks of unregeneracy. The awakened soul cannot possibly rest in self-righteousness or in worldly ease and

contentment. The bliss of the rich man realized itself in this present lifetime, and not in any hungering or longing for a better world to come. He had his good things here, even as do all those who remain dead in their sins unregenerated by the Spirit of God. This rich man reminds us of that other in Luke xii. who, so well pleased with his largess, planned to tear down his barns and build larger, so increased in earthly abundance had he become. No thought of ever having to leave his possessions entered his mind, but he communed with himself regarding "my barns," "my soul." No mind had he at all toward God, no thought whatever that all he had was bestowed upon him and was not his own. How different this from Job, who though one of the richest men of the east, felt that he had nothing at all but what he received, and could call nothing his own of all his riches. He believed he had been given his good things from God, and later cursed not when God deprived him thereof and gave him trouble instead. This rich man further carries us back in thought to that Nabal, the husband of Abigail, who refused sustenance for David's men, saying, "Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?" And what was his end? Much as the rich man's in Luke xvi. His heart died within him and he became as stone, and the Lord smote him that he died. How dreadful is the end of the impenitent wicked! Mere riches of themselves do not prove demerit in any sinner, but the riches of self-righteousness and ease and satisfaction therewith do evidence an unregenerate state.

(4) Both the rich man and Lazarus die. The same event comes alike to all. Yet with what a difference! The rich man died and was buried. It is not said that the beggar was even buried. No man noted his passing nor cared aught about

it. To the rich man was given burial, and we may conclude his funeral to have been in keeping with the flamboyant ostentation and satisfaction in which he had lived all his life. Doubtless men said over his dead body his eulogy and acclaimed him a good man, a worthy member of society. Doubtless they wondered as to his wealth and how much he was worth. "Men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself."—Psalms xlix. 18. Nevertheless, whatever encomiums may have been heaped upon the rich man, he went to torment. As for Lazarus, he had no funeral, possibly was not even buried. History tells us that poor beggars who died in the streets of Jerusalem were often gathered up by the scavengers and hauled out to the valley of Tophet, their bodies thrown there on the piles of refuse and dumpage from the city, the fires of which were always burning. This may well have been the earthly end of the poor beggar. But what about his state after dying? To him was sent an escort of angels to accompany Lazarus into bliss in fellowship and communion with Abraham, there for him to rest in peace until final resurrection should call him into the fullness of eternal glory in the presence of God. As for the torment of the rich man after his dying, could he have any escape therefrom? No, for him there could await but that other resurrection, the resurrection of the unjust, of the wicked dead, unto the resurrection of damnation and the lake of fire of the second death. Lazarus stands for all the children of God, for all of whom this world is but a pilgrimage, a temporary abiding-place. He pictures forth true believers who know well the plague of their own heart, the loathsomeness of the leprosy of sin. He represents God's afflicted, tried people for whom the world to come shall amply recompense for all trials of this life, because the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to

be revealed in them when Christ shall appear for them. The rich man stands for the impenitent wicked, those who die in their sins: that unregenerate portion of mankind who always dead in sin shall forever remain in eternal punishment from which there can be no escape.

(5) If there is one fact more than any other that plainly stands out in this narrative, it is this: there is no such thing as a place for repentance being given after death for those who die impenitent. This destroys the theory of the "second chance" which some religionists teach. It is a fond and foolish hope that those who pass out of this present life unbelievers, will be given after death an opportunity to savingly repent. No such place for repentance came to the rich man after death, nor will it ever come to any. The theory of the "second chance" is not scriptural. Plenty of remorse indeed the rich man had in his torment, but repentance he had none. Remorse is never repentance. Remorse is merely human, true repentance is the fruit of the Spirit alone. After dying, as while he lived, the rich man calls not on God for help, but on Father Abraham. It does no good to say one has Abraham to his father, that relationship avails nothing in the way of salvation. In reply, Abraham acknowledges the natural relationship, but also makes plain his inability to do anything to change the state of the rich man in his woe. Between the children of God after they leave this world, and the wicked dead after they leave here, there is an impassable gulf fixed. While here on earth, sinners are brought to repentance by the Holy Spirit and are translated, passed over, from the kingdom of darkness and of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, there can be no such passing across from one state to the other after death. If one is not manifested as a child of God during his or her lifetime here on earth, one will never be manifested as such hereafter.

What a solemn thought this is! How heart-searching! No wonder we are admonished to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith! Very apt indeed is the exhortation of the Holy Spirit by Peter to make our calling and election sure. For if heaven be not begun for us while we are here below, assuredly it will never begin for us hereafter. " 'Tis a heaven below, the Redeemer to know." Indeed it is. "He is an heir of heaven whose bosom glows with love." The love of God shed abroad in our hearts is the indisputable seal of the Holy Spirit given us in earnest of the fullness reserved for us in the presence of God. If there be needed any further proof of the rich man's continued impenitence after death, it is his daring to contradict Abraham, as in verse thirty, where he blasphemously gives Abraham the lie. "Nay, father Abraham." Nor would repentance be effected in the impenitent by any visible demonstration God might give them. Nothing short of the new birth, a miracle wrought within, will bring men savingly to repentance. John xi. 53, proves that even though Jesus showed them openly a man raised from the dead, they but went about the more determined to kill Him. The demonstration of his power in resurrection, that resurrection being not effected within them, did the more intensify them in their plans to put him out of the way. Yet that all men must meet him face to face and have meted to them either judgment or forgiveness forever, is a tremendous and awful fact from which there is no escape. Human laws may be evaded or annulled, but God's holiness and justice cannot be escaped.

(6) Another idea prevalent among many these days, and which is exploded by Jesus in his narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, is that, for the wicked, death ends all. Death does not end all for anybody. For the true christian, Christ has made death the gate of endless joy.

For those who die out of Christ, death is the dread portal into torment. Thousands have doubtless committed suicide because deluded into believing that death ends misery instead of beginning it. This modern age has heard much teaching to the effect that, for the wicked, there is no consciousness after dying, that death is but a state of oblivion. That the devil has used this terrible error to tempt many to get out of their difficulties in this life by way of suicide, there is no doubt. They fly from ills that beset them here, not to oblivion as they fondly hope and expect, but to ills they know not of. The revealed will of God in his law is, "Thou shalt not kill." And this law has never been revoked from over the wicked. For the redeemed, God did not make void his law, but magnified it and made it honorable in that he himself in the Person of his Son rendered obedience thereto in every jot and tittle. Hence, the law is not made null and void, but perfected in the kingdom of God because through the enablement of the Spirit its righteousness is fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Hence, neither for saint nor sinner, is dying an exit or escape from the presence of the inescapable facts of eternity.

(7) Now, to bring this to a close, may we call attention to that section of the London Confession of Faith adopted in 1689, and later adopted as the Philadelphia Confession of Faith in 1742, dealing with the state of man after death, as founded upon Bible proof and as formerly believed and held and preached by all true Baptists. We well know that articles of faith are not inspired infallibly as we believe the Scriptures to be, yet they constitute a correct valuation of what our spiritual forefathers believed and taught. For ourself, we believe in our heart what we are about to cite from this ancient document, not because we are unduly

overawed by what the fathers believed, but because we believe this to be what the Scriptures do teach upon the subject.

"The bodies of men after death return to dust, and see corruption; but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence immediately return to God who gave them: the souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into paradise, where they are with Christ, and behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness reserved to the judgment of the great day; besides these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none."

Is not the truth of this ancient statement given out by the Baptists of over two hundred years ago, substantiated by the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus, as well as supported by many other Scriptures? Whatever parabolically that narrative may mean relative to the Jew and Gentile, it plainly sets forth the state after death of both the elect of God and of the wicked dead. So we leave the matter with you in the measure in which we are blessed to believe it. We pray for more assurance that, by the enduring grace and mercy of God in Christ, we have ourselves been rescued as brands from the eternal burning. May he under the shelter of his shed blood, keep us safe from the coming wrath.

May, 1935

H.H.L.

Cavilling publications are not always to be regarded. Who would be at the pains to kill an insect of a day? Let the poor creature alone, and it will soon die of itself. Do not make it considerable by taking notice of it. If a child of four years old comes against me with a straw, that is no reason I should knock him down with the poker.

Toplady

As the setting of the sun appears of greater magnitude, and his beams of richer gold, than when he is in his meridian; so a dying believer is usually richer in experience, stronger in grace, and brighter in his evidences for heaven, than a living one.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

MAYME GREEN

After a lingering illness, God in His infinite wisdom and mercy called to rest Sister Mayme Green, a beloved member of our Little Flock Church in Altus, Oklahoma.

Sister Mayme was born May 20, 1899, at Waxahachie, Texas. She passed away February 3, 1977, in Okla. City.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Delores Alexander, and Mrs. Margaret Newell; 3 grandchildren; 6 great grandchildren; one brother, Ross Robinson; and two step-sisters, Mrs. Mabel Reynolds, and Mrs. Ellie Smith. Her husband preceded her in death in 1966. He was the son of the late Elder W. N. Green, who was pastor of Little Flock Church for 30 years.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood, on February 5, 1977, at Hahn-Cook, Street and Draper Funeral Home, Okla. City. Interment was in Memorial Park Cemetery, Okla. City.

She joined Little Flock Church by experience, along with her husband, on October 28, 1950. Both were baptized on May 12, 1951. She was a beloved and devoted member of her church all these years.

Only God can comfort and console her loved ones and friends left to mourn her death. Failing health prevented her from attending her church regularly during her last few years. Her daughter wrote the church after her death, "Mother was not able to attend church much the past few years, but my son, Bill, always filled her heart with joy when he visited her after attending church and telling her about each of you." Brother Bill Boatnum, her grandson, is also a member of Little Flock Church.

Written by request of the church.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Ava Stewart, Church Clerk

SISTER LESSIE LEE JOHNSON

God in His infinite love and mercy saw fit to remove from our midst our dear Sister Lessie Johnson. She was born in Johnston County, a daughter of the late Monroe and Mary Lee. She was 94 years of age and was the widow of Elder L. A. Johnson, long time pastor of her church. Sister Johnson joined Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church the second Saturday in September, 1906, and was a true member who attended faithfully as long as her health permitted.

Her funeral was conducted at Rone Funeral Home Chapel in Benson, North Carolina, on April 15, 1977, with Elder W. D. Godwin and Mr. Leroy Whit officiating, with burial following in the Johnson family cemetery on Route 2, Benson, North Carolina

Surviving are four daughters, Mrs. Alice Lee of Four Oaks, Mrs. Inez Best of Dudley, Mrs. Georgia Hobbs of Portland, Md., and Mrs. Ella Richards of Goldsboro; two sons, Samuel of Benson, and Henry Monroe of Chesapeake, Virginia; 22 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren; and 4 great-great grandchildren.

We feel Sister Johnson is now resting in that peaceful sleep never to have any more pain or discomfort. May our loss be her eternal gain.

Be it resolved that 4 copies of this resolution be made; one for the Church, two for the family, and one for the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written August 31, 1977 by the committee.

Gertrude Royal
Kathleen McLamb
Leacy Beasley

SISTER BETTIE TART STEWART

On August 16, 1977, God called from our midst Sister Bettie Stewart. She was born May, 1891, and her parents were Nathan and Callie McLamb Tart.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder C. D. Turner and William Owen at Rose Funeral Chapel. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery beside her husband, Lazrus A. (Bud) Stewart, who preceded her in death in 1939.

Survivors are two children, Alva Pearle

Simmons, of Fayetteville, Nathan Weldon Stewart, of Raleigh; three step-children, Mrs. James (Eva) Tadlock, Mrs. Liddie Stewart, of Dunn, Alin Stewart, of Benson, Sister Phebie Stewart; one brother, Tra B. Tart, Benson; six grand children, nine step-grand children, and 13 step-great grand children.

She had been afflicted and wanted to join the Primitive Baptist Church for some time. She joined at her home in Benson, after a called meeting, on July 6, 1974. She was baptized June 1, 1975, (while sitting in a chair) by Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by deacons of Liberty Church.

We say to the family, "Weep and mourn not as those that have no hope." We believe she is resting, waiting the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We agree a copy be put on our church record, one sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Committee: Sister Bessie Hall
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James G. Young

 OBITUARY OF
WILLIAM TAZEWELL WARD

As requested by Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, I will write a few words in memory of our Dear Brother. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove Brother Ward from our midst on August 14, 1977 at the age of 84 years. He died in Virginia Baptist Hospital, Lynchburg, Virginia.

Brother Ward was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia to the late Henry C. Ward and Susan A. Ward. He is survived by his Dear Companion, Sister Etta Hammock Ward, six sons, Adison of Hurt, Va., Austin of Mt. Airy, N.C., Woodrow of Rocky Mount, Va., Ernest of Danville, Va., Isaac of Lynchburg, Virginia, Stuart of Altavista, Va.; also surviving are two daughters, Sister Wilmouth Dalton of Gretna, Virginia, and Mrs. Doris Dearing of Lynchburg, Virginia.

Brother Ward was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on May 23, 1970 and was a faithful member. He was not permitted to attend his meetings several months prior to his death due to his health. He will be greatly missed by his Church, Family and Friends.

Although our hearts have been made sad, we feel God's will has been done. May we all be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by his Pastor Elder O.K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad. His body was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious Resurrection.

Written By: Marvin Brumfield
Elder O.K. Tench - Moderator
Brother L. H. Doss - Clerk

SISTER MARGARET McCOLL

It was the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from this life our beloved Mother, Sister Sarah Margaret McColl, on July 3, 1976. She was born on September 21, 1890 in Ekfrid Township, Middlesex County, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Samuel McLean. She was the beloved wife of the late (Deacon) David A. McColl. Surviving are three sons D. Samuel of R.R. 3 Glencoe, D. Alex of London, and J. Stewart of R.R. 4 Appin, as well as 10 grandchildren, one granddaughter-in-law and one nephew Alex Patterson of Appin. She was predeceased by two sisters Mrs. Dougald (Kate) Patterson and Miss Minnie McLean and two brothers Donald L. and John McLean.

Mother was a faithful member of the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada. She was baptised by Elder George Ruston in 1933. Both she and Dad loved the Truth and enjoyed entertaining the brethren in their home. She continued to attend meetings regularly until the time of her death.

Mother's remains rested at the family residence until Monday, July 5 when the funeral service was held at the Ekfrid Meeting House with Elder Donald Smith and Elder Wallis Smith of North Carolina officiating. Interment was in Mayfair Cemetery adjacent to the meeting house.

Mother will be greatly missed by her many relatives, friends and brethren in the faith. Throughout her life she was steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints and was blessed with a wonderful hope.

Respectfully submitted,

D. Alex McColl
J. Stewart McColl

CHURCH MEETING DIRECTORY

ALABAMA

BETHLEHEM, Malvern, Alabama meets each second Sunday at 10:30 a.m. with Elds. D. W. and H. H. Collins.

HOPEFUL, Ozark, Alabama, meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

J. J. Watson, Pastor

NEW HOPE, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each 1st Sunday 10:30 a.m.

V. C. Hartzog, Pastor

RAMAH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

A. B. Chumney, D. W. Collins, Pastors

The churches of which Elder E. E. McCool is pastor meet as follows:

MACEDONIA, Sulligent, Alabama, meets 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

MT. ZION, 16 miles south of Fayette, Ala., on Highway 159, meets 1st Sundays at 2 p.m.

SALEM, 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala., meets 2nd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

MT. CARMEL, 14 miles north of Reform, Ala., on Highway 17, meets 2nd Sundays at 2 p.m.

ZION, 7 miles north of Gordo, Ala., on Highway 159, meets 3rd Sundays at 11 o'clock.

BETHEL, 4 miles west of Fernbank, Ala., meets 3rd Sundays at 2 p.m.

PLEASANT RIDGE, Moore's Bridge, Ala., meets 4th Sundays at 11 o'clock.

E. E. McCool, Pastor
Rt. 1, Steens, Miss. 39766

ELAM OLD SCHOOL, located two miles north of Goshen, Pike County, Ala., meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

J. P. Morgan, Pastor

A. C. Carter, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane, Montgomery, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a.m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.

A. H. Brock, Pastor

EPHESUS, Slocomb, Ala., meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m.

V. C. Hartzog, Pastor

WRITES CREEK, 5 miles south of Slocomb, Ala., meets each 4th Sunday and Saturday before.

E. B. Hughes, B. A. Anderson, J. A. Tew,
Pastors

J. T. Collins, Clerk
Slocomb, Ala.

MT. CARMEL, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a.m.

W. A. Williams, Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL, six miles south of McKenzie, Ala., meets the 2nd Sundays in December, February, April, etc.

Elder W. C. Stanley, Pastor
Route 1, Duncanville, Ala.

E. C. Weaver, Clerk
Route 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Alabama

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL, 7 miles north east of Andalusia, Ala., meets the 2nd Sundays in July, September, November, etc.

Elder W. C. Stanley, Pastor
Route 1, Duncanville, Ala.

Nora Lee McLeod, Clerk
Route 3, Red Level, Ala.

The churches of which Elder C. C. Hand is pastor meet as follows:

OLD UNION, meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a.m.. 6 miles S.W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. Hand, Pastor

HARMONY, meets each Sunday at 11:00 a.m., approximately 10 miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala., near Belk, Ala.

C. C. Hand, and W. D. Griffin, Co-Pastors

NEW HARMONY, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a.m., near Hiram, Ga.

C. C. Hand, and W. D. Griffin, Co-Pastors

Glen Ragsdale, Clerk

NEW PROSPECT, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m., near Sulligent, Ala.

C. C. Hand, Pastor

HOPEWELL, meets each 3rd Sunday at 2 p.m. approximately 5 miles north of Fayette, Ala.

C. C. Hand and W. D. Griffin, Co-Pastors

MT. ZION, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a.m., in the Westwood section of Forrestdale, in Birmingham, Ala., 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

Allen Bailey, C. C. Hand, Pastors
Rt. 8, Box 57D, Jasper, Ala.
Phone 387-7477

We welcome our brethren and friends.

ARKANSAS

PILGRIM REST, located six miles north of Fordyce, Ark., (leave Hy. 167 on Hy. 273 - church is located about 3/4 mile from Hy. 167) meets each 3rd Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday before at 7:30 p.m.

J. C. Townley, Pastor

NEW HOPE, near Patmos and about ten miles south of Hope, Ark., meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a.m.

W. W. Hudson, Jr., Pastor

GOOD HOPE, in Arkansas, about one mile north of Oakland, just across the State Line, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

G. W. Jones, Pastor

Ina Newsom, Clerk

CALIFORNIA

SECLUSIA, Compton, Calif., meets each 4th Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

DELAWARE

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a.m. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Del., just off Highway 896.

James F. Poole, Pastor

LITTLE CREEK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, is located about 3 miles north of Md. State Line, on U.S. 13, and then approximately 3 miles east on Smith Mill Road, and meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a.m.

Jack Dawsey, Pastor

Patty Krewatch, Clerk

ILLINOIS

SALEM, Benton, Ill., meets every 1st Sunday at 10:30 a.m., with communion services 1st Sunday in May.

All lovers of truth are invited to be with us.

Wayman Chapell, Pastor

James Cunningham, Clerk
5921 W. Park Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63110
Celia Pinson, Asst. Clerk

KANSAS

PLEASANT VALLEY, Kingman, Kans., meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C., on each 2nd Sunday.

W. A. Winfrey, Pastor

KENTUCKY

LOST CREEK OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN, meets 1st Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Ky., 10 miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

BOAZ CHAPEL CHURCH, on State Line Road, 2 miles east of Fulton, Ky., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

H. R. Prince, Pastor

LOUISIANA

CONCORD, about 12 miles north of Bastrop, La., one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, and Hamburg Road, meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

G. W. Jones, Pastor

Geneve Pettis, Clerk

NEW HOPE, Spearsville, La., meets 1st Sundays and Sat. afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. Smith, Pastor

C. C. Barron, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL, located six miles northeast of Farmville, La., 1/4 mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each 4th Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each 2nd Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. Hudson, Pastor

UNION, located near Linville, La., meets each 3rd Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 p.m.

David E. Turner, Pastor

MARYLAND

EBENEZER, Baltimore, Md., meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m., in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

John D. Wood, Pastor

BLACK ROCK O.S.B., Butler, Md., meets each 1st Sunday afternoon at 3:00. Butler is on Falls Rd., about 20 miles north of Baltimore.

John D. Wood, Pastor

FOREST GROVE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each 4th Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. The meeting house is located about 6 miles east of Salisbury, Md., and one mile south on Forest Grove Road.

Jack Dawsey, Pastor

Elbert Robbins, Clerk

SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Salisbury, Md., meets 1st Sunday of each month at 11 a.m. and Wed. before at 7:30 p.m., and also 2nd Sunday at 7 p.m. Meeting house is located off U.S. 50 at corner of Church and Baptist Street.

James F. Poole, Pastor

Mildred V. Dykes, Clerk

NASSAONGA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, is located on State 12, between Snow Hill and Salisbury, Md., and meets each 3rd Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m.

James F. Poole, Pastor

Francis Parrish, Clerk

SNOW HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Snow Hill, Md., meets each 3rd Sunday morning at 11 a.m., and Wed. evening before at 7:30 p.m., and also 4th Sunday mornings at 11 a.m. The meeting house is located on Washington Street.

James F. Poole, Pastor

Maude Truitt, Clerk

INDIANTOWN OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Powellville, Md., meets each 1st Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m.

James F. Poole, Pastor

Williams Adkins, Clerk

MISSISSIPPI

BETHEL, located three miles N.E. of Steens, Miss., on Millport Road, meets 3rd Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m.

H. C. Moon, Pastor

Hanceville, Ala.

Eulie McCool, Asst. Pastor

NORTH CAROLINA

WILSON CHURCH, N.C. meets each 2nd Sunday at 3 p.m. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 p.m. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

D. B. Stokes, Pastor

Preston Gay, Clerk

P.O. Box 117, Black Creek, N.C.

FALLS OF TAR RIVER, Rocky Mount, N.C., meets each 2nd Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings Mar., June, Sept., and Dec.

D. B. Stokes, Pastor

Nina Pearson, Clerk

MOON'S CREEK, located near Providence, N.C., Rt. 86, on Park Springs Rd., meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m.

Kenneth Key, Pastor

BUSH ARBOR, Caswell County, N.C. off Highway 62, about 17 miles north of Burlington, N.C., meets each 2nd Sunday morning, and Saturday before at 7:00 p.m.

Wallis A. Smith, Pastor

Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

MT. ZION, Halifax County, N.C., meets each 3rd Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

W. L. Everett, Pastor

Sister, M. Ward, Clerk

The churches of which Elder D. V. Spangler is pastor meet as follows:

MONTICELLO, on U.S. Highway 29, between Greensboro and Reidsville, N.C. Services 1st Sundays at 11 a.m.

REIDSVILLE, Lindsay Street, Reidsville, N.C., meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a.m.

DURHAM CHURCH, Durham, N.C., on Pacific Ave., west of town, just off Hwy. 501 leading from Durham to Roxboro, N.C. Services every 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday afternoon before at 2 p.m.

DAN RIVER, at Mayfield N. C., on Highway 700 leading from Eden, N.C., to Danville, Va., about ten miles from Eden. Services each 4th Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 p.m.

OKLAHOMA

LITTLE FLOCK O.S.B., Altus, Okla., meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 a.m., and Saturday before at 2 p.m.

C. M. Haygood, Pastor

Anne Stewart, Clerk

OREGON

BIG SPRING, Elgin, Ore., meets each 1st Sunday at the home of Brother Lloyd C. Spikes at 290 N. 7th Ave.

Ben F. Preston, Pastor

Lloyd C. Spikes, Clerk

PENNSYLVANIA

ROCK SPRINGS O.S.B., Lancaster Co., Pa., meets each 1st Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on Highway 222, about 1/4 mile from the Maryland-Pennsylvania State Line.

John D. Wood, Pastor

Chas. B. Osborne, Clerk, Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL O.S.B., Fulton Co., Pa., meets by appointment on 5th Sunday afternoons.

John D. Wood, Pastor

TENNESSEE

THE FIRST P.B. CHURCH, Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. The church is located on Andrews Road, 7 miles east of Memphis, off Highway 70, in the Ellendale community.

H. R. Prince, Pastor

Mary Phillips, Clerk

CANE CREEK CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday, and is located 9 miles S.W. of Martin, Tennessee.

H. R. Prince, Pastor

W. E. Prince, Clerk

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN, Nashville, Tenn., meets each 1st Sunday at 10:30. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Rd., in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

WALNUT FORK, near Cottage Grove, Tenn., meets on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

R. L. Veasey, Sr., Clerk

UNION P.B., Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 a.m., each 2nd Sunday. We are located about 15 miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

N. E. Lay, Clerk

The following churches compose the Original Powell's Valley Primitive Baptist Association:

UNION, Union, Co., Tenn., meets 11 a.m., on the Sunday following the 2nd Friday each month.

Orda Davis, Moderator

MOUNTAIN CREEK, Claiborne Co., Tenn., meets 11 a.m. on the Sunday following the 3rd Friday each month.

D. R. Cabbage, Moderator

DODSON'S CREEK, (Formerly Powder Spring Gap) Union Co., Tenn., meets 11 a.m. on Sunday following the 1st Friday each month.

Orda Davis, Moderator

FRIENDSHIP, Jefferson Co., Tenn., meets 11 a.m. on Sunday following the 4th Friday each month.

D. R. Cabbage, Moderator

TEXAS

SHEPHERD FOLD, 815 Little York Rd., Houston, Texas, meets the 1st Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m., for its regular monthly meeting and business conference and each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for regular meetings.

C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Jerry Evers, Asst. Pastor
Robbie Hollaway, Clerk

MT. ZION, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a.m., 7 miles west of Weslaco, on Highway 83.

Gerald Shipman, Pastor
E. B. Ault, Clerk

ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST, Lawn, Texas, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m.

C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Mrs. Nola Stewart, Clerk

AN ARM OF PILGRIM REST, meets each 2nd Sunday and Saturday night before at Earth, Texas.

C. M. Haygood, Pastor
A. A. Chambers, Clerk

MACEDOINA PREDESTINARIAN, Rising Star, Texas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday before at 2 p.m.

MT. OLIVE PREDESTINARIAN, Stockdale, Texas, meets on 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month at 10 a.m., in the meeting house at intersection of highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Gerald D. Shipman, Pastor
Lela Culpepper, Clerk

OLD SALEM, four miles south of Teague, Texas, meets each 1st Sunday and Saturday before.

Maggie Elmore, Clerk

SAINTS REST, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 a.m., at 2710 Engle Street.

C. C. Morris, Pastor
D. G. Connell, Clerk

HOPEWELL, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a.m., and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m.

Joe L. Hamrick, Pastor
Audrey Hamrick, Clerk

The churches of which Elder Lloyd Wall is pastor meet as follows:

MT. ZION O.S.B., meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 p.m., Cash, near Greenville, Texas.

Guy Sisk, Clerk

FELLOWSHIP meets each 2nd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m., near East Mt., out of Gladewater, Texas.

C. E. Camp, Clerk

PROSPECT, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m., and is located on Hwy. 67 West of Texarkana, Texas, about 28 miles.

Paul Daniel, Asst. Pastor
W. B. Burkhalter, Clerk

PROVIDENCE, meets 3rd Sunday afternoons and Saturday afternoons before at 2 p.m.

PLEASANT HOPE, meets on the 4th Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m., 8 miles south of Atlanta, Texas, off F.M. 251.
H. S. Hill, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PARON, meets 1st Sunday morning and Saturday before at 2 p.m., 5 miles N.E. of Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets 2nd Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N. of El Dorado, Ark.

Neila Ryan, Clerk

1601 Emmett, El Dorado, Arkansas

ANTIOCH, near Camden, Arkansas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2 P.M.

Myrtle Alexander, Clerk

R., Camden, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets 3rd Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N.E. of El Dorado, Ark.

Barney Evers, Clerk

Box 116, Norphlet, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets 4th Sunday morning and Saturday before, 7 miles N.E. Winnsboro, Texas.

Gertrude Jones, Clerk

905 Y Dr., Winnsboro, Texas

VIRGINIA

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m., and is located on Centreville Rd., between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia. Arthur Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY, meets each 5th Sunday at 11 a.m., and the meeting house is near Lucketts, about 8 miles north of Leesburg, Va.
Mrs. Robert Duke, Clerk

MT. ZION, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a.m., and is located about one and 1/2 miles east of Aldie, Va., on Rt. 50 between Washington and Winchester, Virginia.
Mrs. Ray Hawling, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D.C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

John D. Wood

RICHMOND P.B. CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield Co., Va., meets each 1st Sunday at 11 a.m. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 for 9 miles to Court House Road; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363, one mile to church.
D.L. Simpson, Pastor

Mrs. William Lee, Clerk
4407 Clairton Road, Richmond, Va. 23234

DANVILLE P.B. CHURCH, meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday night before, on State Road No. 1515, near Hughes Memorial School.

H. W. Wray, Pastor
R. T. Holley, Clerk

The churches of which Elder Leonard Brammer is Pastor meet as follows:

LAUREL RIDGE (Formerly Belleview) meets 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday night before at 6:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about 4 miles from Roanoke, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

UNION, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday before at 2 p.m. This church is located on Rt. 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All Visitors are welcome.

NORFOLK P.B. CHURCH, Norfolk, Va., meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday before at 8 p.m. at Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

LEBANON, Bracey, Va., meets each 2nd Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday night before at 8 p.m. The meeting house is located off Interstate 85, Bracey exit 637 east, turn left on 619, one mile to meeting house.

C. B. Davis, Jr., Pastor
Florence Martin, Clerk

WASHINGTON

PLEASANT GROVE, Naches, Wash., meets at 11 a.m., each 2nd Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the Clerk.

Ben Preston, Pastor
The Dalles, Oregon

Mildren A. Simpson, Clerk
Rt. 8, Yakima, Wash. 98902

BETHEL, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 a.m., and Saturday before at 2 p.m. For information write the Clerk.

Ben Preston, Pastor
Mrs. Opal Hunting, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

A brother was lamenting his limited knowledge of the Bible. "It is true," he said, "that I get now and then a lovely glimpse of spiritual truth, and see some new and precious unfolding of the word of God's salvation, and occasionally have a sweet drink at the fountain of the water of life; but there is so much that I do not know, and so very little that I do understand, that I cannot help but cry." "Well," I said, "what would you think of a very thirsty man who has unexpectedly come to a 'brook in the way', and after drinking till his soul is satisfied begins to cry because so much water is running by that he cannot drink?" You cannot drink that brook dry. Be satisfied and thankful that you can ever have even a sip of its refreshing water.

"Fragments" by Silas H. Durand

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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All notices of meetings and obituaries should be mailed directly to P.O. Box 1250, Salisbury, Md. 21801. Articles for publication may be mailed to either address.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 7, Box 483

Burlington, N.C. 27215

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/78
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THIS MOTHER

To this Mother, that I borrowed,
Who loved me like her own.
Who gave me love and tender care
And a warm and loving home.

She taught me how to laugh and sing,
And to love all Nature's things,
And told of God's eternal grace,
How it sweet comfort brings.

She taught me of a Precious God
And sang — "Amazing Grace",
And thru her tears of love would shine,
A happy smiling face.

Now, she's gone from this world of pain,
To her glorious and heavenly home,
And thru my tears I see her face
With God, upon His Throne.

Within my heart, a special place
Of love, there'll always be,
For this Mother that I borrowed,
Who gave so much to me.

Lauraine Huber

This was written as a tribute and in memory of a wonderful and loving mother, Ida B. Farmer, a few days after her death, by her step-daughter, Lauraine Huber, on April 28, 1977.

(See Obituary in this issue)

BANK OF FAITH

(Continued from January)

I choose that my doctrine and reputation should stand and fall together. It never shall be the Coal-heaver & Co. All that I preach or write, that is divine, God Himself taught me; for I never learned it of man, nor did I bring any of it into the world with me; therefore it is not my own except the

errors, for I have nothing nor am nothing, by nature, but sin; of course I think it is my duty to be faithful in delivering what I have received to the benefit of others, and to be laborious, watchful and faithful over those whom God hath committed to my care.

I must beg leave to lead my reader a little farther on, in addition to the dedication, in order to show him what different receptions the "Bank of Faith" has met with in the world. Indeed, I did not expect that it should be in equal esteem with the Bank of England. No; I know the greater part of the human race have their portion in this life, whose purses and bellies God fills with His hid treasure. These have so far cast off God as to call their lands by their own name, to the dishonour of God who gave them; and leave their substance as a trap to their posterity, who are too apt to praise their sayings, and go to the generation of their fathers without seeing light.

The greatest curse under heaven is an impenitent heart clogged with the sorrow of this world. "Give them sorrow of heart, Thy curse unto them" (Lam. 3:65). And the next curse is an independent fortune in the hands of such graceless souls, whose infidelity turns every providential blessing into a curse. "If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto My Name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart." (Mal. 2:2)

The "Bank of Faith" has dropped into the hands of some of these gentlemen, and it has acted the part of Samson; that is, it has made sport for them; and no wonder, seeing they have attributed the government of the world to blind Fortune, and the glory that is due to God is ascribed to a phantom on a wheel.

But who would have thought that men calling themselves gospel ministers would have bought my book to ridicule

it, and pour contempt on the providence of God? Can such be called ministers of God's Word, who laugh at the fulfilment of it. If they deny the inspection of God into our temporal concerns, they must deny half the Bible, which informs us that God adorns the lilies, feeds the ravens when they cry, and gives the lion his prey; when He opens His hand they are filled, and when He takes away their breath they die. Strange that professors of Christ should rob Him of His glory, of which He is so tender, which He will never give to another, and which is due to Him from all the human race; but much more so from His professors, who pretend to renounce all confidence in the flesh in point of justification, and all pretensions to a portion in this life, when compared to the blessed earnest of the portion in the future. Surely such must differ much in spirit from the apostles, who seemed so zealous for the honour of Christ that they would let no miracle of His slip unnoticed, unacknowledged, nor unrecorded. They tell us of the five barley loaves and the five thousand fed; of the seven barley loaves and the seven thousand fed; of the baskets of fragments that remained; and of the Saviour's strict command that nothing of the produce of these miracles should be lost.

They inform us of the Lord's condescension in coming to them on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, and of His baking bread and broiling fish upon the coals to supply their wants; of the liberality of those who were converted by their ministry; of their selling their inheritances to support the gospel and feed the poor of Christ's flock, and of Ananias and Sapphira being struck dead for mimicking the hospitality of the children of God.

Israel's forty years' journey in the wilderness abounds with the miraculous providences of God, and so does the Book of Ruth. To ridicule, then, the mystery of providence is to make

sport of one-half of the Bible. But these gentlemen have got a stock in hand, like the prodigal at his first leaving his father's house; therefore they laugh at those who are obliged to fetch the supplies daily from the fountain head. But alas! an independent fortune is too often like the manna that Israel kept, which bred worms and stank, while that which was gathered daily was sweet food. This Paul applies to providence: "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." Let there be an equality (says Paul) in your contributions; not one eased, and another burdened.

Some have affirmed, since they read this little book of mine, that we have no warrant to pray for temporal things; but blessed be God, He has given us "the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;" yea, the promise of all things pertaining to life and godliness, and whatever God has promised we may warrantably pray for. Those that came to the Saviour in the days of His flesh, prayed chiefly for temporal mercies; the blind prayed for sight, the lepers for a cure, the lame for the use of their limbs, and the deaf for the use of their ears. And surely, had they prayed unwarrantably, their prayers would not have been so miraculously answered. Elijah prayed for a temporal mercy when he prayed for rain, and it is clear that God answered him. Elisha works a miracle to produce a temporal mercy when he healed the barren plains of Jericho. God hath said that He "will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel" (Hos. 2:21, 22). If some professors are favoured with an abundant stock in hand, it is not given them that they should requite the bounties of providence with contempt. If they have got houses to eat in, they are not to shame them that have not; and if they have bottled up a store of the goat's

milk, they are not to cut off the breast from the poor that have none (Prov. 27:23, 24, 27).

Is my reader a poor Christian? Take it patiently. God maketh the poor as well as the rich. Envy not the rich. Riches are often seen to be a canker-worm at the root of a good man's comfort, a snare in his life, and an iron pillar at the back of his pride. Agur prayed to be fed with food convenient for him, and you may pray for the same; and what God gives you in answer to your prayers you will be thankful for. That state is surely the best which keeps you dependent on God and thankful to Him; and so shall you find it in the end. Go on, poor Christian, trusting in the providence of God. God promised a preceding blessing on the Israelites who were to keep the year of jubilee; and though they were neither to plough, sow, nor reap in this year of release, yet they had the promise of old store for food for the following year. (Lev. 25:20, 21) God's blessing on the sixth year was to produce food for three years. And shall not God provide for Israelites indeed, who are released by the gospel trumpet from spiritual bondage, and made free by the Holy Ghosts? Surely such shall eat of the old store; yea, in a twofold sense, for every scribe instructed in the kingdom is like an old householder who bringeth things out of his treasures new and old; and all this to feed the Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile!

In Egypt we find that God's blessing on the seven years of plenty was sufficient to serve Egypt, and numbers more, through the seven years of famine which followed. Surely, these wonders of the Lord of hosts shall never be blotted out of the Bible by a few independent gentlemen, though preachers; nor shall Zion's blessings be chased from the poor of her family by a few worldly professors, who "trust in uncertain riches", and sneer at the daily provision that God makes for the poor of His

household. Reader, trust thou in the Father of all mercies, and the God of all comfort, for every supply. Independent Adam and the independent prodigal came both to bankruptcy and beggary; therefore trade thou with the stock of God, and thou shalt never fail.

Use no unlawful means either to avoid having, or the care of, a numerous family. This is the root of God-dishonouring and damning unbelief; and the effect is Onanism, which God views as an act of infidelity and distrust cast on His providence, an injury done to a fruitful womb, and the sin of murder committed on unsinning innocence, which He hath twice visited with immediate death in the very action. (Gen. 38:7-10)

I have been married upwards of twenty years, have had thirteen children, just Jacob's number, thirteen to the dozen; and instead of being a beggar, am as rich as ever I was; and do believe that, were I to die this day, if all matters were properly settled, I should be clear of the world. And I am sure that faith is satisfied with an honourable discharge through this world; but if we aim to supply the wants of infidelity, all the world is not sufficient to satisfy her demands.

I have been acquainted with several professors of considerable property; but, as God liveth, after a strict observation of their conduct, I never envied their happiness, nor wished to exchange situations: for I found some, who were warmly attached to the form of prayer,

and to the walls of the Established Church, would give a thousand pounds to support the forms and walls of the Church of England, before they would give five shillings to support those who enforce the Spirit's work on the souls of men. And others, who were filled with head notions from commentators, rather than the grace of God in their hearts, expectd every preacher that partook of

their liberality to say as they did, and offer both conscience and affections (due to God only) to their purse; which compliance being denied, has caused great offence, and the honest servants of Christ have received many wounds both in their reputation and labours; thereby making the cross of poverty the more heavy, stirring up the corruptions of the honest suffering saint to be more rebellious against God, and causing his mind to recoil with indignation against the aspiring rival of Christ.

To be short, among all the rich professors that I have known, upon a proper reflection, I have found that they expended the greatest part of the bounties of providence in support of their own humours, their bigotry, their prejudices, and their own personal honour; being most liberal where their liberality was received by those of dignity, and where it was to appear in print.

Such as these have their reward as they proceed, but can have no reward of their Father which is in heaven. I believe it will appear, in the great day, that the greatest part of the liberality of rich professors has been expended more in their own cause than in the support of the spiritual reign of the Son of God. This has been made evident by the many apostates who have been long held up by the spirit of bigotry and the purse of wealth; whom, notwithstanding, God hath cast down, in defiance of all their sanction, patronage, and liberality.

I am much deceived if the purse of worldly professors is not a snare in our days to many a servant of Christ. The liberal purse, and the besetting sin of the squire, has muzzled the mouth of many a poor labourer in the vineyard; while the preacher has died in his ministry, the flock in their souls, and the formidable squire, who appeared as a column, was ripening for damnation, under a muzzled gospel preacher. For

my part, I have never yet seen anything in a rich professor that could in the least draw me to envy his happiness; but contrariwise, to pity him, as being a trap to others, and an ensnared person himself. The common industrious persons are, in general, the happy recipients of grace, and such are the chief supporters of the gospel; and such I have found my friends rather than my traps.

In this narrative I shall set forth all the circumstances of God's providence, which He hath brought to my remembrance. May His kind providence shine to His own honour, and to the comfort of His poor flock, who are obliged to trust in Him or starve. O blessed Object, worthy of all trust!

I doubt, reader, we shall give a second offence for chatting so long together by way of dedication. Cavillers will be ready to say that we are "like children in the market-place, calling to their fellows," therefore we had better part than give any offence to them.

Good morning to you, Mr. Parson; God bless you.

I thank thee, Christian; but beseech thee not to put any titles or compliments upon me; give them to those who can make a meal of them. Coal-heaving is hard work, and coal-heavers require better food than compliments. Reader, fare thee well. Thine to serve, in the bowels of Christ. W. H.

THE BANK OF FAITH

When I was about seven years of age, I heard a person say that God took notice of children's sins. The wonderful workings of my mind upon these words I shall not at present descant on; neither shall I mention the many trials I underwent at the bar of my own.

conscience while the impression dwelt on my mind. I also remember to have once heard a person say that all things were possible with God; which words I secretly treasured up and pondered in my heart; and as I had great desire at that time to live in the capacity of an

errand-boy with a certain gentleman in the place, being very poorly brought up, and knowing much the want of the common necessaries of life, it came into my mind that, if all things were possible with God, it was also possible for Him to send me to live as a servant boy with Squire Cooke; though at the same time he had a boy who I believe was well approved of. Notwithstanding this last circumstance, I privately asked God, in an extempore way, to give me that boy's place; and made many promises how good I would be if He granted me this request. For many days I privately begged of God this favour, which nobody knew but God and myself, till now I relate it. I believe I went on in this way of praying, sometimes under a hedge, or on my bed, for a week or two; and I thought, if God granted me this favour, I should know whether all things were possible with Him or not. Having prayed for many days, and finding no likelihood of an answer, I readily concluded that there was no God, and therefore I had no cause to be so afraid of sinning, nor had I any occasion to pray to Him any more. Accordingly I left off praying for some time, and then began again, till at last I left off entirely. Some few days after this, there came a man to my father's house, and said, "William, Squire Cooke wants a boy; why don't you go after the place?" I said, "John Dungy lives there." He answered, "No, he is turned away." I asked for what? He replied, "Old Master Coley, the oyster-man, went there a few days ago to carry some oysters; and while the old man was gone with a measure of them into the house, the boy robbed the pads, as they hung on the horse while he was tied up at the gate; and the mistress, seeing him, discharged him for it.

The compunction which I felt, the thoughts that I had, the various workings of my mind, the promises I made, and the petitions I put up, as I

went after the place, I choose to conceal; for I think they would hardly be credited, considering I was no more at this time than eight years old. However, to my astonishment, I got the place, and the bargain was struck at twenty shillings per annum. For many days and weeks an uncommon impression about the power of God lay fresh on my mind. But soon after this a sudden temptation brought me to believe that there was no God; that if there was, He took no notice of such creatures as we are, nor of any of our affairs; and that it was by chance I got the place; wherefore I imagined that I had no occasion to pray, nor to pay the vows which I had made. This temptation made a sufficient breach for me to creep out at, and proved an awful inlet to vice and vanity, which for some month I gave way to. Soon after this I offended my master, was discharged from my servitude, and went home as deeply stung with guilt for my folly as I had been before lifted up at the sight of God's mercy.

After this period I had sharp work in my conscience for some years, at certain times, but was still pursued with deistical principles, that God took no notice of our proceedings; til at last it appeared rather fixed in my mind, and insensibility and stupor naturally followed. Now it was that I got wholly out of all fear of God, or thoughts of futurity, and very soon learned to dance; which is just as servicable a net to ruin souls as devils could invent, or frail mortals drop into. However, God put a stop to this by laying a fit of sickness on my tabernacle, which I had never before experienced. I laboured hard, rather than submit to go to bed; and made a shift to keep about my business as long as I was able to move a limb; but at last I was forced to yield. Then my conscience began to do her office, and the wrath of God to alarm me; so that I was fully convinced God took notice of my

conduct in this life, and would reckon with me for it in the next. I lay in this state of mind until I had an earnest of damnation in my heart; and I had not a single doubt of my portion in everlasting burnings, if I died in that state. God brought me so nigh the end of all flesh that the rattles of death stopped my breath twice. I tried to fly from death, and got out of bed to run away, but could not; for I fell on the floor, and there lay till my fellow servants found me, and put me into bed again by force. Soon after I heard one of the maids say, "Poor William will die." "Yes," said the other, "Doctor Wilson has given him over." They knew not that I heard them. I tried again to fly from death, but found I could not. So I began to whisper a prayer to God, which conscience would not allow me to do before. As I began to pray I gathered strength and in less than a month was out of doors. I quitted my servitude, went home to my parents till my recovery, and never danced from that hour to this. Soon after I got well I was informed that one Squire Pool, of Charren, in Kent, wanted a servant. I went after the place, and took courage to ask of God the favour of success; as He had been pleased to punish me for my past folly, and brought me to believe that I had highly offended Him, I went under a hedge and put up a solemn prayer to Him, to give me success in my journey, and make me an object of His care for the future; and I cut a stick half-way through, and bent it down in the hedge, which I promised to look at on my return, and render praise to God, if He granted me this favour. Somewhat like poor Jacob, in his trouble, when he anointed the pillar, by pouring a little oil upon the top of it; and promising, if God would keep him, then He should be his God; and of all that God should give him, he would give God the tenth part. God heard my prayer, and I got the place. Though there was a servant in the parlour with the gentlemen, and though

they had partly agreed when I came in, yet he broke off the bargain with him, to my astonishment. The reason why he chose me in preference to the other was, because he was a married man and I was not. This was the secondary cause; but I resolve it by the primary one. At my return, I looked, with many tears, at the stick which I had marked, and offered up an imperfect tribute of praise to the God of my daily mercies, whom I had neglected and much offended.

For some time I endeavoured, while in this place, to walk so as to please God, as I imagined; but alas! the vanities of this world are too strong for any but those "who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation;" which power I knew nothing of; therefore my resolutions were soon broken, and I forgot my God. But soon after this He again put His afflicting hand on me, and laid me on a sick bed for many months; nor did I recover effectually for three years after. But still distress of mind, at times, followed me; and, blessed be God, He did not wholly leave me without some convictions, till he brought me to know the truth as it is in Jesus. One particular instance of Providence I here recollect also; which was, I had ordered my box of clothes to be left at the Star Inn, at Maidstone in Kent, for the Cranbrook carrier to bring to me; but he said it was not there. So I went to search after it, fearing it was lost.

At this time I was so poor in pocket, that I had but one shilling left in all the world. However, I thought I should be able to go out and return again in one day, therefore that shilling would bear my charges; but when I came to Maidstone, the box was not there; I was obliged to go farther; and, in my return, I found myself so very weak and low that I could not get back that day. The shilling was gone, my strength was gone, and the weather was very wet and cold; night too, began to draw on apace,

and at this time I was nearly two miles from Maidstone, which was fourteen from Cranbrook. While I was thinking of, and mourning over, my miserable situation, I thought, if I were one that feared and loved God, as others in old time had done, I might have any thing at His hands; but as for me, I had made Him my enemy by sin, and therefore He would take no notice of me nor of anybody else in our days, for parsons and people were all wicked alike.

Presently after this it came suddenly on my mind to go out of the foot-path, which led through the fields, to go into the horse-road; though, at the same time, the foot-path was by far the best. I had been in the road scarcely a minute before I cast my eye on the ground, and there lay a sixpence. I took it up; and before I had walked many steps farther there lay a shilling also. I took that up, and it supplied my necessities at that time very well. These manifold providences, and answers to prayer, did, at times, deeply impress my mind that God had some regard for me; but when sin was committed, all these thoughts were blasted.

However, I never could entirely, after this time, get rid of all my thoughts about the awful day of judgment, the dreadful consideration of an endless eternity, the tremendous tribunal of God, the woeful state of a guilty sinner before Him, the certain conquest of triumphant death and certain approach to God's bar, the wretched figure that a guilty soul would make when all his secret and open sins were exposed to God, angels, and men, and the miserable punishment which souls must feel who have their doom fixed in the gloomy receptacle of the damned. These things were, at times, uppermost in my thoughts; and though I pursued many pleasures, in order to stifle them, yet I had felt enough to fix a lasting conviction of the truth of them upon my soul.

Having wandered about for some years in this solitary way, seeking rest and finding none, it happened that I once went to work at Danbury Park, in Essex, for one Squire Fitch. I had been there but a few days before I fell sick, and was carried to the sign of the Bell, where nobody knew me, and with only two shillings in my pocket; but Providence sent an old widow, whose name was Shepherd, and whose deceased husband had been a butcher. This woman, being much of a doctress, doctored me, nursed me, watched over me, and fed me, though she never saw me before or since, nor had she anything for her trouble, and yet took as much care of me as if I had been her own child. A few years ago I was determined to go down and see her, and restore her fourfold for her labour, and tell her what God had done for me; but, upon inquiry, I found that she had died about three months before my arrival, which I was very sorry for.

(Continued next month)

Dear Brothers, Sisters, and friends,

I just had a mind to write a little of my experience, as I know my time to leave this world will soon be over, but that will be alright. As I told my pastor not long ago, I don't fear death.

I have been in the church for over 30 years now. I had a dream one night that I just had a few days to live and I would soon pass away. But I had so much more to die for than to live for. I used to dream so much about trying to fly to heaven. Night after night I would dream this. I would turn over trying to get it off my mind, but that didn't help. I just kept dreaming over and over again. I would lay and cry. I wet my bed with tears many a night. I didn't know what would ever become of me, but finally as I was still flying, trying to get to heaven, and I got there. What a sweet dream it was to me.

I just wouldn't tell anybody about my troubles. I didn't know which way to go or where to turn. One day I was so worried I felt I had to get out of the house. I started walking the streets and trying to get these things off my mind. I thought that if I went into town maybe I could get some relief. I decided to go to a show. I went in, and I tell you that I got the hardest whipping I ever got in my life. I sat there a few minutes and got up and left. That was my last show.

Nothing but the church was on my mind, but I thought I would never be fit to join. I knew I had to do something or I couldn't live. The time came and I had to join, and I'm sure the good Lord put me there. I couldn't have gone by myself, and I was so happy to be there. I don't think I have ever missed over two or three second Sundays going to Bush Arbor Church, and I go somewhere else to church most every Sunday. The Good Lord has blessed me with health and strength and I hope I am thankful.

I realize I have been going down ever since my dear husband passed away. I still miss him but I wouldn't want him back here in this old world, for he suffered so much, and I feel he is better off than I am.

So many people ask me if I stay by myself. I tell them that yes I do, and then no, I am not alone. The Good Lord is with me, and I am not afraid, for He is everywhere present and nowhere absent.

Love and kindness,
Bettie Chandler

(Sister Chandler was spending the night with her daughter in McCleansville, N.C., after writing the above letter, and she dreamed she was looking up to the sky and she saw the sky filled with trees and a hand reached out of one of the trees for her. The hand appeared to be the hand of Christ. She called out to her daughter, with whom she was sleeping, but she never

answered. We can only feel that God is continuing to call His people apart and blessing them as He did Abraham of old. D.E. S.)

Snow Hill, Maryland

October 22, 1977

Dearly beloved in the Lord:

I have just come in the house after carrying the woman home who helped me this morning prepare for some of the saints planning to attend our Association this week at Forest Grove.

The exceeding joy to be enabled to take part in this lovely occasion. The thought of seeing many of the dear ones tomorrow and to greet each other with love and affection. That is a Godly love, much deeper than the love we have for friends and neighbors. However, that is not why we assemble together. It is to hear the precious truth of our Saviour Jesus Christ presented to us by the various servants of God each in the way God has directed them.

As I was coming through the woods, the foliage of a certain tree attracted my attention. One small bough was beautifully adorned in color by the paint brush of God. Why just one and all the others left out? Isn't that the way with His own, just one here and there? Is that the fruitful bough in nature touched by His mighty hand? That bough had nothing to do with its coloring, and we have nothing to do with our salvation. We have to be touched by Him. It is all of Him. I am made to wonder do I show any of that fruit? Like the trees, the winter is growing nigh, with me life will soon be dormant. Do I have that everlasting life of Him in me? If so, like the beautiful boughs, I will come forth in His likeness in His time. The thought is so great it over shadows all aches, pains, and loneliness we have in this vile and corrupt world we are passing through.

My mind goes back to the Associations of the past. A few days before the

meeting my father would butcher a pig or lamb, sometimes both. The day before the meeting he would carry provender to the church for the horses. The house was filled with activity, fixing extra beds and cooking everything we could find on the farm. How I would love to steal in the living room to hear the dear ones speak of the goodness and greatness of our Lord and Saviour, when my Mother had other things for me to do. I could not tell her how much I wanted to hear more of these precious things and would have denied it if she had asked me. Through many years these thoughts were like the ebb and flow tides of the mighty ocean, but the drawing grew stronger and stronger. How I prayed for strength and guidance. My strength was gone I found it was all in Him our adorable Saviour.

How happy I am that it is this way.

Humbly, a sister I hope,
Maude P. Truitt

Rocky Mount, N.C.

Dear Elder Poole,

It was good to have you at our Association this year and in our home on Friday evening. Much of my time during the past week has been spent reflecting on the Black Creek Association. We were blessed to have three days of beautiful weather and good fellowship. It is a blessing beyond measure when brethren from many different parts of the country representing so many different Associations can come together in love and fellowship to worship our God.

I enjoyed the Association as it was being held; however, I have relived it more fully this week. So many meetings are held in even greater sweetness for the week after the meeting than actually during the meeting.

My prayer is that we may be made thankful for the opportunity to meet in such a manner as an Association. As is true with many of our blessings, we tend

to take the meetings for granted and maybe at times dread the burden they may put upon us. These blessings are far beyond what words we could utter in thankfulness, but we should acknowledge them in our weak way. To me, the acknowledgement of God's loving kindness upon us is what prayer is all about. So many times we get caught up in our begging for natural things that we tend to forget what we profess to believe. I pray that God will make us mindful of His many blessings. Our meetings are a blessing beyond measure and I hope our people will support our Unions and Associations that they may flourish. So many people are not able to meet as we do for fear of being punished by the natural law.

Again, thanks for your attendance at our Association and I trust you will be given a mind to visit with us again soon.

A thankful one, I hope,
Harold Pittman

(We appreciated Brother Pittman's feelings regarding the blessing of assembling together and felt our subscribers would enjoy reading his views, also. Editor)

Riner, Virginia

Dear Brother Smith,

I am sending my renewal for two years, and you can use the balance as you wish.

My husband has been ill since April, and we want to express our love and thankfulness for the wonderful gospel that is so uplifting to us at times like these.

When the doctor told me my husband would have to have treatments, it was so painful for us to even think about it. I told the doctor we would have to pray about it. I came home and tried to pray, and I opened the Bible to Eph. 3:20, and read, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we

ask or think," This scripture meant so much, and I had thought I would never be able to smile again.

Then we went to our church at Valley View, and our dear pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, prayed some comforting words. I just had to tell him and his wife what it meant to us. Elder C. B. Davis was also with us at Valley View. He preached so wonderful. That day will be long remembered.

We hope that Brother Spangler and Brother Woods and others who have sent the message through the *Signs* will continue to write, if it is the dear Lord's will. However, we are thankful God is sending the young Elders to carry on the work of the *Signs*. May God's will be done.

Remember us in your prayers. We trust that you will be blessed of God to continue to stand for the Truth that is now set forth in the *Signs*.

A Hope in Christ, if one of His
Asa and Beulah Wells

Benton, Kentucky

Dear Editors,

Enclosed you will find a check for renewal of the *Signs of the Times* for Warnard Locke, Roy L. Locke, and Ronald Locke for one year. The names and dates are enclosed.

May the Lord continue to bless you to stand for the truth as we hope we are made to see. I use the word "made" because I don't believe this is a doctrine of choice. Of yourself, you can't pick it up and you can't lay it down. It is God who works the will and also the do of His own good pleasure.

Mrs. Warnard Locke

Houston, Texas

Dear Editors,

Enclosed is a \$15.00 check for two year subscription renewal to the *Signs*. Please use the remainder of this amount

as you wish in the circulation of the *Signs*.

Thanks for the printing of more old English writings as I have noticed in recent months.

May the Lord continue to richly bless you in your labor.

By His mercies,
(Elder) Jerry Evers

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist church, Floyd County, Virginia, a Presbytery met November 5, 1977, at the church for the examination of Brother Lonzie Nichols, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of a Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Hale Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Roy Agee, Amos Hash, Hale Terry, Noel Conner, Rufus Brown, Marvin Garner, Lane Carter, Larry Hollandsworth, Raymond Payne, Wallis A. Smith, and Donald Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Roy Agee as Moderator, and Wallis A. Smith as Clerk. Elders Hale Terry, and Raymond Payne were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate, Deacon Harry Cannaday, having been duly appointed by Paynes Creek Church in Conference on November 5, 1977, spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Lonzie Nichols to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Hale Terry and Raymond Payne using scripture reference I Timothy 3, Acts 6. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The Ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Marvin E. Garner. Elders Amos Hash and Rufus Brown delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference used was Paul's writings.

The Moderator asked Paynes Creek Church if the church approved the work of the Presbytery, which answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Lonzie Nichols and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood was given. The ordained was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Paynes Creek.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Donald Smith.

Deacons present were as follows: H. B. Cannaday, Brammer C. Nichols, Coley S. Strader, Claude R. Hopkins, Grey Ingram, Zeb Whittaker, Claude Johnson, Nelson Reed, W. R. Bernard, And Guy E. Conner.

Elder Roy Agee, Moderator
Elder Wallis A. Smith, Clerk

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 EDITORIAL

II TIMOTHY 2:15

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

I will, as blessed of God, divide the text into three parts:

1. What it is that Timothy was commanded to do.
2. What obedience to the command brought about.
3. The result and the consequences of it.

The text is an important one. It is given by a great man and an able man. The One that inspired the message is greater than all, even the Creator of all. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. What is our conception of His work? Is it less in this case than in any other passage of scripture? This is a part of that which is given to the man of God. (II Tim. 3:15, 16) Are some of the other points of scripture more important to the man of God than is this? Is so, who among us has the authority to disseminate among men the more important parts of the inspiration of God as given in the scriptures?

If not sadly mistaken, I welcome earnest inquiries from interested brethren about any portion of this holy inspiration of God. For a great many years, when asked what this or that scripture means, my answer has been, “It means what it says.” My mind is led back in reflection fifty-two years ago. As far as I am able to discern, no boy was ever any more wicked than I. I had heard about God, but I am sure that I had not heard from God. I had called in question His being, and thus questioned His action. During that transition from a state of death in sin, to a state of life in Christ Jesus the Lord, I was brought to the end of the world, that is, my world. I

fought with hands raised up high, but He put down my hands; He took the fight out of me. He brought me into complete subjection to His will, and I believe now, after all these years, and the sad conflicts of the journeying (2 Cor. 11:26) that often I have been made to love Him, His written word, His kingdom (church), and His dear people. Yet, as sad as it is for a professed follower of such a heavenly Benefactor, I have often been in the slough of unbelief and doubts about the genuineness of this experience, and even of His existence. Yet, also, time and again I have been brought back to that sacred spot in Southeast Missouri when I was brought low at His feet. These times are a source of deep concern and anxiety to me, and I long for the moment to come when I shall be leavened soul, body, and spirit to say, "Have thine own way, Lord, have thine own way."

In the days of my youth, in this glorious ministry, I was so ignorant as to be fiery and impatient and filled with an impetuous spirit. So often I spoke first, and considered (studied) afterwards, which, within itself was directly against the scripture. (Jas. 1:19) Again, it is sad that I find so much of the time I am still this way. I am still the same needy sinner that I have ever been,

"If you wish to know of me,
How I am, or what I be,
Here I am - behold who will,
Sure I am a sinner still.

Finding such a spirit in me daily, I need the constraining love of God to keep me conscious of this deplorable condition as I journey in what I hope is a heavenly way, and I need and desire the patience of those lovely brethren and sisters and friends who are journeying with me. I think sometimes that perhaps this impatience and brashness has been subdued and consumed by the fiery Spirit of the Lord, forgetting that this fiery consumation is one of continuity because of the continuity of works (not

fruits). Yet, I beg for tolerance and patience, and if I am begging in His name, I will not belittle nor besmirch any one that differs with me. At the same time I will quote and insist on the reception of what the Holy Ghost has inspired the writers to write to us.

As I have travelled around among the Primitive Baptists for these fifty-three years, generally speaking it has been the lamentation of them that nearly all of our troubles originate in the group called "ministers". Yet, many of those

people find fault with me because that I insist that much of it is the result of churches not giving apostolic charges and demanding an observance of them. What do you thing of finding fault with a group of people, and yet also finding fault with a non-observance of the rules governing that group?

I heard one noted elder say, "Charges are worth nothing. God knows how newly ordained ministers are going to act, furthermore, He predestinated everything they say and do, and therefore giving charges is useless and superfluous." (2 Cor. 9:1) I heard

another noted elder say that he did not believe in public prayer because God already had everything fixed. I do want to have patience with my brethren, but I do not want to be patient with that brand of predestination (which, after all, is not predestination). These things are not a part of the ministry of one called of God to preach the gospel.

Now in this lovely charge to Timothy by our dear yokefellow, he is charging him how that he may know how he ought to behave himself in the house of God. I believe with the ability that God has given me that Paul said what he

meant to say, and that he meant what he said. I further believe that this admonition of Paul to Timothy was inspired of God, and that He inspired him to write what he meant to inspire

him to write, and that He meant what He said. If that isn't the doctrine of the Primitive Baptist people, then I do not know the first thing in regard to it. However, so convinced am I of it being the will of Him concerning His ministers, that if I have been mistaken in what they believe, and what the policies of the *Signs of the Times* for these nearly one hundred and fifty years has been, I kindly ask that this never be published.

Upwards of a hundred years ago a noted (and one that was loved and cherished) elder wrote a lengthy article to one of our sister publications in which he labored to prove that Paul did not mean to say for Timothy to study. He belittled that as a preparation for the ministry. To me, that is incredulous to think about. To me that is denying the inspiration of God; that is not following on to know the Lord. But if it is not a command to study for the ministry, then I am guilty for the last fifty-five years, and if so, then it is an offense against the Lord and against His people, and the sooner I am dealt with for my arrogance the better off they all will be. Because if He blesses me with a continuation of my present mind, I will continue to study the scriptures.

Is there any way for a minister to be approved of God by not studying? If so, what is the way? And if there is a way other than by studying to become approved of God, why is it that Paul did not tell Timothy what that way was so that he would have spared the young minister a lot of work, when he could have been doing something else? By the way, what else? (2 Tim. 3:14, 15)

What Primitive Baptist minister (and primarily, I write to them) does not desire approval of God. Is it obtained by not studying? If not studying is as good as studying, then by all means face Hymenaeus and Philetus, who Paul (by inspiration) referred to sharply by way of condemnation. I beg my Maker that He might enlighten me more and more

that I join in with the apostles in saying that we ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29) He did not begin this learning and this studying under Paul. He already had learned the scriptures, and in the text he is commanding a continuation of this study.

This is not a mercenary or trade school. It is not a place where Timothy is trading his studiousness for approval like trading food stamps for groceries. It is not like a farmer with a cellar of potatoes swapping his surplus for some other commodity. This is the school of grace. This is where children are brought up under the auspices of the leadership and the guiding directions of the King of all His royal subjects. This is that general assembly and church of the first born, the solemn assembly gathered together in one, having been raised up by grace, and made to set down in heavenly places by the same grace. (Zeph. 3:18; Eph. 2:6; Heb. 12:23) This is the royal family of God, with Him resting in His love in the midst of them. (Zeph. 3:17) This courting of them by His love causes them to love Him with the same "manner" of love with which He has loved Him. This reciprocity of love is from Him to them, with the same love back to Him. He is delighted in His people, and His people are delighted in Him. The church is not inferior to her husband. She is heir to all that He is heir to. His word, His commands, are laws of Zion to her. He has washed her in His blood and made her fit to be the bride of such a royal King. Their delights are equal in Him. All that He is, and all that He commands is her delight. (Psa. 1:2) "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments:

and his commandments are not grievous." (I John 5:1-3; Matt. 11:30)

One thing is certain. God does not accept our sacrifices of earthly and sensual and fleshly things. His kingdom is not dependent on these things, and we will not come into the fulness of our joy until Christ becomes that fulness, (John 1:16) and until we have been made to count all of these things as dung. (Phil 3:7, 8) Those thus brought into the manifest kingdom of heaven will never come laying down their gifts in nature, and commending them to the church for her benefit. One brought to this place by the grace of God will not do this. They will come as much empty-handed as any new born babe has ever come into the natural kingdom, and they will leave the same way - they will not carry earthly cunning, ingenuity, or prowess into immortal glory. (I Tim. 6:7)

What God does is forever; none of it is to be neglected; none of it is to be denied or rejected. Whatever it means (leave the meaning of it to those that change it), it leaves a dire prediction for those that take from it or add to it. (Rev. 22:18, 19)

Recently a gracious and able defender of the truth as advocated by the writers in the *Signs* for the last one hundred and forty-four years said, "I am at a great loss to understand the apathy of our people to the admonitions given us by the apostles." That is exactly why that Peter wrote as he did, (I Peter. 1:1, 15) but why brethren are belittled that have the same mind today, I do not know. Do you? That is exactly the reason for Paul giving all of the advise to Timothy that he did, and I say without fear of any man, that if we are the people of God in a manifest way that we are as much under what Paul commanded Timothy as he was himself. It is useless to dissect and take out, explain (away) and add to. It means today what it meant then, no more, and thank God, no less. (See the whole books

of Timothy and Titus.)

God said by the mouth of His servant (apostle) to another one of His servants, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." God did not say that to him until he was of age, and when He said it, it was effective then. It became (manifestly) the rule in Zion and if I am not mistaken (and I am not) it is still the law in the Kingdom of Heaven. Sad to relate, I have sought to please men (or, to tell the truth, I feared men), but the shadows are lengthening out for me. My race is nearly finished. The time of my departure draws near. Even now the singing on the other shore becomes clearer and my poor soul leaps with joy at the heavenly prospect that ere long I shall join them in an unbroken hymn of deliverance. Such divine ecstasy floods my soul, and I write, if not mistaken, because I love you. I am not afraid of anything nor anybody anymore. I look back over the meandering pathway and there are so many Bethel spots. So many times when I thought He was clean gone forever, and He has returned (manifestly, for He had not gone) again and again. His word along the way has been, "Fear not". I reverence Him, as I humbly hope, but I do not fear Him as a Goliath nor a leviathan. This gracious communication has included the faces of perishing men. I do not fear men anymore. If not mistaken, I love men (men, women, the children of God) but fear them - never.

If studying is to please men, leave it off now. It is pleasing for the ministers especially, and for His people in general to study and to meditate on the good things of His kingdom, and it is thus pleasing Him, He makes our enemies to be at peace with us. (Pro. 16:7) It is His approval that they are seeking. If having His approval does not mean anything to us, what would? Studying assures us of His approval.

The thing approved of Him is the workman. He is calling and making

manifest to one already called in Christ, to go forward in the field of labor to which He has sent you. (Acts 20:28) The declaration of this laborer contains the whole counsel of God. There is not a whit of difference in what this writer wrote to Timothy and Titus (and I fain hope this poor sinner), and what he said to the elders at Ephesus. I am not afraid, nor am I ashamed, to say that the things that Paul said to Timothy and Titus and to the elders at Ephesus are as much a part of the whole counsel of God as any portion of the first chapter of Ephesians and the eighth chapter of Romans. May it be my Father's holy will to give us all grace to contend for it.

If studying approves us as a workman before God, isn't it a lovely thing to study the written word of God? If not, where would you find a lovely thing? A builder studies before he builds; a planter studies before he ever places a plow into the stubble land; as various tasks come up before men, they make preparations for it. Show me the man that plans nothing and I will show you a man that accomplishes nothing. (Eccl. 11:1, 6) Show me a man that professes to be called to minister in the kingdom of heaven that treads under his unhallowed feet the instructions, admonitions, exhortations, commandments, yea, every word that proceeds out of His mouth, and I will show you a man not approved of God.

It is one thing to be ashamed of our thoughts and deeds. I tell you the truth, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, (Rom. 9:1) that thoughts come into my mind that I would not have on the mast head of the *Signs of the Times* for anything in this world. I am still a sinner, poor and needy, and need delivering from this body of death each second of my time, but God is not ashamed of His ministers, for they have been, and they now are, wrought upon and within by the power of God unto (not for) salvation. Their salvation is in

the work. My garden produces because it is my salvation to work in it. Saving ourselves from the untoward generation is in the work of fleeing from and shunning and avoiding them. As I write my precious companion reminds me that I am not supposed to do so much typing and research. She loves me, and she loves you, and she desires to take care of me for you, but my life, my joy, my peace of mind, my satisfaction, my daily salvation is in doing the very thing that the doctor tells me not to do. I do not want you to think that I treat his caution with disdain. I believe with all my heart that the Lord gave me a kind and interested physician, but I feel to hope, and at times can say with Job, that I know that my Redeemer lives, and that because of His living in me, that is in my life in the flesh (inner man), and that His kingdom and His people and His commandments supersede everything else.

When a man's pursuit of heavenly things is carried out it is evidence of wisdom's work in his life. It brings him before great men; it gives him an insight into great things; it will be by such things that he live, (Isa. 38:16) as will those that hear him.

This study (which is a great blessing from God) enables and qualifies him as a workman who His Maker is not ashamed (Heb 2:11), and enables him to rightly divide the word of truth. The division of truth will be to all the flock - there will not be any giving to one a choice morsel and withholding it from another. It will be the whole flock that he will be blessed to divide good wholesome food in its proper aspect before that flock. He hasn't any commandment to learn the difference between truth and error nor to divide one from the other. His sole work is to feed the whole. The lesson learned at the feet of wisdom is the division of the word of truth. He (both Timothy and you and I that this charge has been delivered to)

will be found seeking acceptable words; (Eccl. 12:10) all will present this truth in love (Eph. 4:15, and in connection with this as a proof text, let it be solemnly noticed that these are all denominated as ministers of Christ). Furthermore, when rightly divided (that is the truth) the minister is not authorized to preach a goodly portion of the time about how great a sinner he is. Every teachable man and woman under the sound of his voice already knows that, and God already knows that because with Paul it took place on the Damascus Road, and with us, it takes place also on the road of experience. But he is to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. When that is preached the whole of it, both flesh and bread, is divided equally among the whole assembly. At least that is the way that Christ fed in His natural life, and I want to take the care of the flock assigned to me as much like unto Him as I am blessed to do. (Luke 9:16)

They had learned at His feet. When He brake the food He gave to each disciple that portion that belonged to each member of the flock. They divided it among them accordingly. Not the first hint is left on record that they gave the five thousand any more or any less than was given to them. Even so it is today in the gospel field. The Lord has many servants that, to Him, are elect vessels chosen to minister, but to us, are diamonds yet in the rough. He has them in reserve. They are being taught to minister, to teach, to divide, to comfort and shield and to protect the people of God. Once they begin this study, it is never laid down. (Phil. 1:6) Their experience teaches them that they know nothing as they ought, (Rom. 8:26; I Cor. 8:2) but it also teaches them that anything else that is needful for them to know that He will also reveal that to them. (Phil. 3:15, 16)

W. D. G.

“Salvation is of the Lord.” (Joh. 2:9)

VOICES OF THE PAST

“He being dead yet speaketh”

ISAIAH 45:1

“Thus saith the Lord, to His annointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut.”

Sister Harriett L. Gray of Houston, Texas, has requested we write upon the two-leaved gates mentioned in the above text.

In doing so we shall exercise the privilege of enlarging upon the whole verse at the head of our article. We feel that we have no right to take any Scripture from its context, and therefore must consider the two leaved gates, relative to the conquests of Cyrus. Most ancient cities had gates which were strongly fortified and yet wide enough for the populace and troops to pass in or out of the city. It is said that there were many gates of brass in the city of Babylon. Gates where the river Euphrates entered the city and where it had its exit must have been very wide, and there were gates where streets came up to the river and they all were closed at night or when they were under attack. There were also gates to the palace which must have been guarded at all hours. Babylon takes its name from Babel which means confusion, and to the people of God, when led of the Spirit, it is also a type of destruction. We are told that “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.”

The Lord’s people had been carried captive and they had not power to deliver themselves, and would have been swallowed up in their captivity just as the Lord’s people would be swallowed up of this world, but for the purpose and mercy of God. Thus saith the Lord cannot be overthrown, and there is a thus saith the Lord concerning

His people and concerning all flesh. In our text God speaks of a man who was yet unborn, who would conquer Babylon, and while the Jews were in Babylon, He calls them His captives and that Cyrus would let them go, "Not for price nor reward." Isaiah 45:13.

The various names given to Cyrus as, the righteous man from the East, Isaiah 41:2, my anointed, Isaiah 45:1, my shepherd, Isaiah 44:28, and the ravenous bird from the East, Isaiah 46:11, do not make him a subject of grace, but rather set him forth as a man raised of God to execute the righteous judgments of God, anointed a king, not by his fellow-men, but as a sovereign act of God. He was appointed God's shepherd to direct and provide for God's people to leave Babylon and trek about eight hundred miles back to Judah, leaving Cyrus in his natural state, which is spoken of as "a ravenous bird from the East." He was not changed any more than the ravens were changed into clean birds because God caused them to carry, morning and evening, bread and flesh to the prophet Elijah.

I Kings 17:6. God upholding Cyrus's right hand would be enough to keep him from doing anything contrary to His will. Cyrus had overcome many kings

iest of them being Croesus, who, though not mentioned in the Bible, ruled over the Lydian empire, of which Sardis was the capital, and there were many kings supporting Croesus.

Cyrus had no desire or craving for gold and silver. It was true of him as Isaiah, in Chapter 13:17, says of the Medes, "They shall not regard silver and as for gold, they shall not delight in it." He swept through kingdoms, conquering as he went, until he came with his armies before Babylon, which was a great city, well fortified and capable of standing with confidence a long siege. The Babylonians were able to raise much of their food within their

walls. For quite a long time, (some historians say for two years) his armies were stationed around the city. They were laughed and jeered at from her walls, but during this time Cyrus had large trenches dug, and his plan was to turn the waters of the Euphrates from going through the city. "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up." Jeremiah 50:38. There was a low spot called a morass, perhaps the place from which the material came to build the tower of Babel, and the trenches led to this spot. Surely God had blinded their eyes, or those in the city would have known what was taking place.

In Jeremiah 50:24 God says, "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware." How true God's word is "that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." Through their revelry and drunkenness the guards probably forgot to close the gates, for God had said "I will open the two leaved gates before him and the gates shall not be shut." In Daniel 5, it tells "Bel-shazar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand." This impious man, inflamed with wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, taken by Nebuchadnezzar from the house of God, which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein. "They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled

him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." The king was alarmed and cried aloud, for neither he nor his wise men could, with all their wisdom, read that which God had written, whether it be in judgment or mercy. God had His servant Daniel there who could read it, even though there was nothing but judgment in it. What confusion reigned in the palace! Drunkenness and frolics had taken full hold of the city. The hour that judgment was pronounced by God's prophet was the hour that Cyrus commanded an advance, the water was turned into its new channels and the troops and horsemen marched into the city up the bed of the river. The two leaved gates were left open that night.

Jeremiah, speaking of this very event, says "One post shall run to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that the city is taken at one end." Jeremiah 51:31. The waters, pouring through the new channel, filled an area of fifty miles in circumference and made it seem to look as in Jeremiah 51:42. "The sea is come up to Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof." Nothing could stop their victorious advance and what had taken place at the palace left them paralysed, and Daniel tells us, "In that night was Bel-shazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." Thus Cyrus, whose right hand was upheld to accomplish God's purpose in overthrowing Bel-shazzar, saw that the two leaved gates were left open, and without doubt, was given a mind and determination that the gates should not be shut.

There has much been written about Cyrus that we need not speak of here, but to make it easier for the reader to understand following events, we will say that Cyrus's mother had a brother whose name was Cyaxares, who had thrown in his lot with Cyrus. He, being an uncle of Cyrus, was made king and

took the name of Darius the Mede. He was threescore and two years old when he ascended the throne and reigned two years, being in full sympathy with Cyrus in keeping the gates open for the return of the captivity. Brevity demands that we omit many things that can be read in secular history about Cyrus and this period, but what concerns the children of Israel during the reign of various kings from Darius and Cyrus to Artaxerxes is covered by Ezra and Nehemiah and other prophets. During the reign of those kings the gates were left open for the return of the captives. Only during the seven months that a usurper was on the throne (Gomates, who called himself by the name of Artaxerxes) was the work of building the temple stopped.

In the second year of Darius (son of Hystaspes) who had overthrown the usurper, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the people to continue the work, which was immediately reported to the authorities by their foes who were always spying on them. Ezra tells of search being made and the written proclamation of Cyrus being found, and so the work went on. Darius not only encouraged them, but also demanded that from the very places of those who would hinder the work, that they supply them with tribute, with cattle for sacrifices and with wheat, salt, wine and oil, and commanded also that whosoever would hinder the work should be put to death. Read Ezra 6. The work went on so that the temple was finished ready for worship in the sixth year of Darius and in the twenty-first year after its commencement.

We have felt for years that Ezra and Nehemiah were lovely characters, and the more we read of them the more wonderful they seem. They were zealous for the worship to be according to the pattern that Moses saw in the mount. They insisted upon Israelites making no affinity with the nations around them.

They stand as an example to all true servants of God to-day who would help and encourage God's humble people who would come out of Babylon, The mother of harlots, to go to the Church where God's honour dwelleth. Surely the zeal and integrity of both these men, with their determination to stand and worship according to the word of their king is needed to-day in most places. To return to Cyrus and his proclamation. 2 Chronicles 36:23. "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and He hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up."

Here in Cyrus we have a type of our Lord Jesus, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, to whom God said, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Without Cyrus there would have been no deliverance, The Jews, the natural brethren of Jesus, would long ago have been swallowed up among the nations of the earth, but that could not be, for their God was able to perform the things His prophets had spoken. Without Jesus there would be none that could ever sing the song of the redeemed. Our Lord Jesus declared that His Father had given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him.

Babylon of old was a type of Babylon the great, the mother of Harlots. Revelation 17:5. This city seems to-day like a creature from the deep that has its tentacles spread all over the earth, diffusing the poison of error into every corner of the globe. Whether it be in the press or over the air or in public assemblies the name of God is blasphemed. The sacred vessels of the temple, the prophets, apostles and writers of God's word, which were used

by God's sent servants to pour out to His chosen people, are now in the public press as well as in public places, claimed by an apostate church, claiming that she alone has the right to be the interpreter of the Word of God.

We would here say that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." His Son who said "Upon this rock (of divine revelation, not on Peter, who was but a stone) I will build my Church; and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." Whenever our Lord is revealed in a person, wherever they are, they will no more be at home in Babylon, any more than Daniel was. He may be kept there for the purpose of his God, but he will pray and praise his God with his windows open toward Jerusalem, morning, noon and night, and in his worship he will feel that he would rather his right hand forget her cunning than he should cease to remember Jerusalem above his chiefest joy. There were many left in Babylon, and we would not be their judge. None would have found their way out of Babylon of old had it not been God's will and pleasure for them to do so. There are many, as of old, who will live and die in Babylon. That is not our business. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Paul is not speaking of those who blaspheme the name of Jesus. You may be sure that those whose eyes and ears were open to the name and purpose of Cyrus who were God's children, would realize that when a king who is absolute, says "Let," that word has the power in it of the One who speaks.

Naming the name of Jesus is a sweet and blessed favour that His children alone enjoy. "And they that know Thy name will put their trust in thee." Esther

was in Babylon, so was her cousin Mordecai, left there for the purpose of God. How wonderful for such who might be left in Babylon, though they could not sing the Lord's song in a strange land, yet to have evidence enough that their God is a prayer hearing and answering God. That He hears the cry of the destitute and will not despise their prayer. The plan of their enemy Haman was well-laid, he would destroy them all at once, but the Lord controls the lot that is cast into the lap, and while his plan was made in the first month, the lot fell on the last month of the year. Thus, in the meantime, Haman was hung on the gallows he had made for Mordecai, and there was still plenty of time for the Jews, in all the provinces, to be warned to defend themselves. Such evidence of the wisdom and power of a sovereign God "makes e'en the captive's portion sweet."

Those who went on the journey with Ezra and Nehemiah were but a remnant. They seem to us like those few who are chosen to go forward and do the bidding of their Lord. There are many dangers along the road, in professing a hope in Christ they have told what their hope is and have confessed that they are strangers and foreigners, that is, they do not belong to this world.

The 18th chapter of Revelation, which tells of the apostasy and final overthrow of modern Babylon, is not a prophecy given to us by one of the prophets, but it is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass." In verse 4 of this chapter, John said, "And I heard another voice (a voice of mercy) from heaven saying, come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues."

June, 1958

George Ruston

hands. This is eminently true of Christ, the King of Saints. He has a long hand to reach His enemies in a way of judgment, and a long hand to lay hold on His elect, and to bring nigh those who once stood afar off from Him and His righteousness.

Toplady

EXPERIENCE

Blairs, Virginia

Shortly after my baptism in April, 1955, I felt a strong desire to write what I hoped to be some of my experience. I never did and the desire somewhat left me. Now, again, I want to tell some of the Lord's mercies to one such as I feel to be—it seems I'm never able to express myself verbally. I deem it a sacred thing to write of such matters and I trust that what I shall say will be a true representation and that I will say nothing that would dishonor God.

I was born and reared in a Primitive Baptist home near Reidsville, N.C. of devout and precious parents and I went with them to church from infancy and as long as they lived. As my father was a minister, I had the privilege of going with him and my mother to numerous Old Baptist homes as well as church meetings, of which I have many precious memories. I believe I always had respect for their belief but surely not the love I hope to feel now.

From as far back as I remember, I had many serious thoughts about death and where I'd spend eternity. One childhood incident has remained vividly in my mind of which I shall endeavor to relate. A niece was visiting us and she and my older sister were playing and excluding me from their games. Hurt to be left out, I made the remark to them that "I wish I was dead" with my only thought being it would surely make them sorry they'd ignored me. Instead, my sister scolded that I should be ashamed to say such, as

It is a saying that kings have long

it was sin. Oh, the feeling of guilt that overswept me as I ran to my Daddy to confess to him what I'd done and, amid much weeping, I told him I didn't mean to sin and was sorry for having made that remark. I knew the concern he had for me as he stayed close to me until bedtime trying to comfort me. I thought he was just feeling sorry for me because he, too, must feel that I was eternally lost.

Sometime after that, Daddy went to an association and I stayed at an older brother's home to play with his children. He and his family later decided to go to the meeting. As we walked on the grounds, Daddy was in the stand speaking and was telling this very incident that had so grieved me, adding that if the Lord had begun a good work, he would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I didn't understand why he would tell something about which I felt so condemned, but remember the feeling of solemnity I had and possibly a little ray of hope.

Daddy died when I was fifteen years old and I was terribly hurt, not being able to imagine my life without him. Even now, expressions I heard him make in the pulpit come to me and, while I didn't understand then what he meant, I believe in a measure, I do now.

After I finished high school, my Mother and I moved to Winston-Salem, N.C. to be with my older sister there and to enable me to go to business school and find work.

Until around 1950, I had mixtures of feelings--at times so disturbed about religious matters and at other times content to join in worldly entertainment with my friends. Also, I attended different churches with acquaintances and felt so desirous to be shown the truth, and even wondered if I could do something to help bring myself in favor with God. I would lie in bed at night and, while meditating on these things, would try to ask the Lord to show me the right

way. Little did I realize what trials and suffering I had to endure before being shown, by being brought to the very end of my own strength.

At about this time, I became ill (or so I thought, the doctor could find no trouble) and was unable to work part of the time, being on the verge of a nervous breakdown. However, if the Lord has ever dealt with me, I believe He did during this time. The load of conviction for my sins was so heavy that it seemed it would smother out my very life and I knew that should I die in this condition, there would be no hope for my soul, and I felt each day would possibly be my last. I would hide where Mother couldn't see me and try to read the Bible and her religious periodicals; all seeming to condemn me more. It seemed I was constantly trying to beg for mercy and, as my efforts seemed too feeble to be heard, I was also trying to ask the Lord to teach me how to pray.

One morning, while walking from the bus stop to my work, it seemed this terrible weight was lifted and the feeling came over me that I was one for whom the Lord shed His precious blood--what a feeling of joy! The same surroundings that, heretofore, were filled with gloom were now beautiful and filled with praise. I felt aware that God's presence filled every inch of space in the entire universe.

Soon after this, I had a strong desire to unite with the Primitive Baptist Church. After having been brought to such a low ebb, there were no more doubts where the true church was (all my doubts were and are about myself). I knew the hope I now hoped to have--was all by the grace of God and that had I been given justice, I would have forever been condemned. I spent about 5 years desiring a home with the church, still I couldn't go. In my own mind, I used the excuse of not knowing where to join. I didn't feel led to go to the church in Winston-Salem as I'd grown up going to

Pleasant Grove but I thought it was too far away.

After I married and moved near Danville, Va. in 1952, I felt to know that Malmaison was where I wanted to join, but still I couldn't go. Oh, the warfare I had from month to month. I would make promise after promise to offer myself each month only to break them. How unworthy I felt even to be seated among those dear people. I kept hoping to feel that I was living a better life before joining, but never could and I still long to but fail each day of my life. On the First Sunday in March 1955, I was made willing to go and the love that was shown me was wonderful. Elder Tench and all the members were so sweet to me and they took me in. It has been a precious home to me these many years and, while I don't feel to be any benefit to them, I don't feel I could live without their fellowship. For a personal reason, that is very precious to me, I firmly believe that I couldn't have joined any sooner nor could I have waited any longer.

While my Mother was on her death bed, I so desperately wanted to tell her of my little hope, but for the fear of deceiving her, I never did. She was so concerned and patient with me during my deep trials of conviction that I think she must have known. Here I would like to relate that, while I never heard her sing a note while she lived on this earth, shortly after her death, I dreamed of seeing her singing, seemingly overjoyed, among a host of happy people.

Unworthy though I am, the Lord has so richly blessed me all the days of my life. In addition to my wonderful parents, He has blessed me with a dear companion who is so good and considerate: two precious daughters that are as devoted and sweet as we could wish for; a devoted pastor who shares our burdens and joys; also a host of relatives (including my husband's people) and friends that mean more to me than great

riches. What a merciful God we have!

Humbly,
(Sister) Mary Frances Williams

The weight of opposition will always fall heaviest on those who sound the gospel trumpet loudest.

Toplady

O B I T U A R I E S

IDA BRYANT FARMER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved sister, Ida Bryant Farmer. She was born in Floyd County Va., June 23, 1887, and died April 26, 1977 after a long illness, at the home of her son-in-law and daughter Mr. and Mrs. Victor Benjamin, North East, Md.

In early life she was married to Eugene M. Bryant, and to this union were born three sons: Crystal and Kendall Bryant, both deceased, and Hatfield H. Bryant of Rising Sun, Md., and two daughters, Mrs. Alean B. Carter of Rising Sun, Md., and Mrs. Jean Benjamin, of North East, Md.

After the death of Mr. Bryant she was married to Mr. David P. Farmer. To this union was born one son, David Farmer of Florida, who died several years ago in an automobile accident. Sister Farmer is also survived by two step-sons, Russell and Everett Farmer of North East, Md., and two step-daughters, Mrs. Leota Farmer of Philadelphia and Mrs. Lauriane Huber of North East, Md. Surviving also are 32 grandchildren, 91 great grandchildren, and 17 great great grandchildren.

She united with Rock Springs Primitive Baptist Church in Pennsylvania in 1928. She loved her church and all it stood for, and lived true and faithful to it. Her greatest pleasure was to entertain her brethren in her home, and to attend her church services. She was humble in manner and had a wonderful personality, and was loved by all who knew her. In her long illness she had every care that loving hearts and kind hands could do for her comfort.

Her funeral was conducted at the Crouch Funeral Home, North East, Md. by Elder

John D. Wood, and interment was in the Ashbury Cemetery, Perryville, Md. there to await the coming of her Lord.

The many beautiful flowers and the expressions of the many friends, testified of the love and esteem in which she was held

May the Lord give sustaining grace to all who mourn her passing.

Sister Farmer especially loved the last verse of the hymn, "Keep silence, all created things," and it was found written among her papers.

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb"

Virginia C. and John D. Wood

OBITUARY OF INEZ SHELTON YEATTS

Our Heavenly Father called our dear Sister Inez Yeatts from our midst on September 19, 1977 at the age of 83. He giveth life and he taketh away, according to His Holy Will.

She died at the home of her daughter in Concord, Virginia. Sister Yeatts was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, the daughter of the late George A. and Harriet H. Shelton. She was the widow of the late Berkley Yeatts. Survivors are, two daughters, Mrs. Thelma Wright of Concord, Virginia and Mrs. Ida Shelhorse of Waynesboro, Virginia; two sons, Melvin Yeatts of Gretna, Virginia and Thomas Yeatts of Hurt, Virginia. Also surviving are one brother, Luther Shelton of Chatham, Virginia, and two sisters, Mrs. Cora Worley of Chatham, Virginia, and Mrs. Ocie Doss of Gretna, Virginia.

She was received into the fellowship of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 6, 1919, and was a faithful member. She was able to attend the last meeting held at Weatherford Church prior to her death. Sister Yeatts will be greatly missed by her church, family, and friends. May we all be reconciled to the Will of our Heavenly Father and may the family be blessed to think more on what they have had than what they have lost.

Her funeral was conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by her beloved Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the

Glorious Resurrection.

Written By: Marvin Brumfield
Elder O.K. Tench - Moderator
Brother L. H. Doss - Clerk

MAGGIE JANE LEWIS

It was requested by the church that I write this obituary of a cousin in the flesh and a sister in the church, Maggie Jane Proctor Lewis.

Sister Lewis was born May 8, 1896 to Elijah and Bettie Proctor. First married to Jesse Williams, they were blessed with two sons who survive; Brother Amos Williams, of Rocky Mount, and Cooper Williams of Battleboro, N.C. She was later married to William Lewis. To this union was born one son, Charlie of Rocky Mount, N.C. and three daughters, Mrs. Martha Moss, Rocky Mount, N.C.; Mrs. Nannie Sherrick, Enfield, N.C. and Mrs. Eunice Simmons, Rocky Mount, N.C.

Sister Lewis united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pleasant Hill June, 1921 and was a devoted and loving member until her death on May 25, 1977 at a rest home in Enfield, N.C.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Henry Jones, at Gay Yost Funeral Home in Rocky Mount. She loved her church and attended when able. We miss her, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by order of conference, by:

Annie Price

MISS MARTHA FERGUSON

Miss Martha Ferguson was born April 18, 1881, at Montrose, West Virginia, and died September 18, 1976, at the age of 95 years and 5 months. She was the second daughter of a family of 14 children of Daniel and Elvie (Murphy) Ferguson.

She was a long time member of the Leading Creek Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Montrose, West Virginia. She spent the last 35 years with her sister, Hester B. Thompson, at Cumberland, Md.

The last days of her life she said over and over, "God's will be done". Her favorite hymn was, "Keep silence all created things, and wait your Maker's nod."

Hester B. Thompson

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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THE FLUTTERED DOVE

My soul amid this stormy world
Is like some fluttered dove,
And fain would be as swift of wing
To flee to him I love.

The cords that bound my heart to earth
Are broken by his hand;
Before His cross I found myself
A stranger in the land.

The visage Mar'd, those sorrows deep,
The vinegar and gall,
Were Jesus' golden chains of love,
His captives to enthral.

My heart is with him on his throne,
And ill can brook delay;
Each moment list'ning for the voice,
"Rise up, and come away."

With hope defer'd oft sick and faint,
Why tarries he? I cry;
And should my Savior chide my haste,
Sure I can make reply,--

May not an exile, Lord, desire
His own sweet land to see?
May not a captive seek release?
A prisoner to be free?

A child, when far away, may long
For home and kindred dear;
And she that waits her absent lord
May sigh till he appear.

I would, my Lord and Savior, know
That which no measure knows;
Would search the mystery of thy love,
The depth of all thy woes.

1873

Gospel Standard

BANK OF FAITH

(continued from February)

I do not remember any other particular providence until I was married, when my wife and I took ready-

furnished lodgings at Mortlake, in Surrey, where God smote my conscience effectually. It so happened that I fell lame, having received a wrench in my loins, which rendered me incapable of labour for many days. During this time our money was all gone, and we were but strangers in the place, having been in it but about half a year. After I began to recover a little, there fell a deep snow on the ground, which prevented my working for many days. Here Providence suffered us to know what it was to want. We had one child, about five or six months old, which was our first-born. It happened one morning early that my wife asked me for the tinder-box, seemingly in a great fright, crying out, "I wonder the poor child has not waked all night." She lighted the candle and took up the child; and behold it was dead, and as black as a coal! It went off in a convulsive fit, as five more have done since, all of whom turned black also.

Here Providence appeared again; for, about three or four months before this death happened, a gentleman, in whose garden I at times had wrought, desired me to look after his horse in the country while he was in town, for which I was to have one shilling per week. The very day on which the child died the gentleman came down from London, and I got my money of him for looking after the horse, which just served to bury the poor infant. My lameness, poverty, distress of mind, the sufferings of my wife, loss of my child, and the sense of God's wrath, were the most complicated distresses I had ever felt. From this time spiritual convictions began to plough so deep in my heart as to make way for the word of eternal life; which at length brought me experimentally to know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He had sent." And, if God should spare my life and give me time, I may acquaint the world of the whole dealings of God with my soul in a treatise by

itself; but in this I intend treating chiefly of the providences of God, lest the book swell too big for the poor to purchase.

I do not remember any particular providence attending me till about three or four years after, when I was brought savingly to believe in Jesus Christ for life and salvation. At this time I dwelt in a ready-furnished lodging at Sunbury, in Middlesex, where my eldest daughter (now living) fell sick, at about five or six months old, and was wasted to a skeleton. We had a doctor to attend her, but she got worse and worse. Having lost our first child, this was a dear idol to us; and I suppose it lay as near my heart as poor Isaac did to the heart of Abraham. However, it appeared as if God was determined to bereave us of her, for He brought her even to death's door. My wife and I have set up with her night after night, watching the cradle, expecting every breath to be her last, for two or three weeks together. At last I asked the doctor if he thought there was any hope of her life. He answered, No; he would not flatter me; she would surely die. This distressed me beyond measure; and as he told me he could do no more for her, I left my lodging room, went to my garden in the evening, and in my little tool-house wrestled hard with God in prayer for the life of the child; but upon these conditions - that, if my request was granted, and she should live to arrive at the full stature in life, and in future times turn wicked, and be damned for sin, and that my earnest prayer should be the cause of it, I beseeched God not to regard my petition for the child, though she was as dear to me as my own life. I went home satisfied that God had heard me; and in three days the child was as well as she is now, and ate as heartily, only her flesh was not perfectly restored. This effectually convinced me that all things were possible with God.

I had now dwelt about fourteen months at Sunbury, and had served a

gentleman in the capacity of a gardener at twelve shillings per week. The gentleman informed me he purposed to keep his carriage, and intended that his driver should work in the garden; therefore he should only hire a man a day now and then, and not keep a gardener constantly. I was, in consequence, discharged from my work, but had the liberty offered me of staying till I could get employment elsewhere. I believe my master often saw the felicity of my mind and the wisdom God had given me, by the answers I was enabled to give to his various questions. Grace carries many rays of majesty with it, though it take up its abode in a beggar. However, I thought this world was his god, therefore I refused his offer, as Abraham did the present that was offered him by the king of Sodom; that is, I would take nothing that was his, from a "thread even to a shoe latchet."

After I had been three weeks out of employment I heard of a place at Ewell, in Surrey, which I went after, and engaged in. It was with a gentleman that manufactured gunpowder. I agreed for eleven shillings per week in the summer, and ten shillings in the winter, and procured a ready-furnished room (if with propriety it might be called a furnished room) in an old thatched house on Ewell Marsh at two shillings per week. Owing to my being out of employment, I was obliged to pawn all my best clothes in order to defray the remaining expenses which attended my wife's lying-in and hiring of a cart to carry my personal effects (which were but few) to Ewell. When the cart set us down on Ewell Marsh on the Monday morning, and I had paid the hire of it, I had the total sum of tenpence-halfpenny left, to provide for myself, my wife, and child, till the ensuing Saturday night! But though I was thus poor, yet I knew God had made me rich in faith; and these words came on my mind with power, "He multiplied the loaves and fishes to

feed five thousand men, besides women and children." We went on our knees, and turned the account of that miracle into a prayer, beseeching the Almighty to multiply what we had, or to send relief another way, as His infinite wisdom thought most proper.

The next evening my landlord's daughter and son-in-law came up to see their mother, with whom I lodged, and brought some baked meat, which they had just taken out of their oven, and brought for me and my wife to sup along with them. These poor people knew nothing of us, nor of our God. The next day in the evening they did the same; and kept sending victuals or garden stuff to us all the week long. We had not made our case known to any but God; nor did we appear ragged, or like people in want; no, we appeared better in dress than even those who relieved us; but God sent an answer to our prayer by them, who at the same time knew not what they were about, nor did I tell them till some months after. While we were at supper I entertained them with spiritual conversation. After supper I went to prayer with them, and prayed most earnestly for them. And God answered it, for He sent the woman home deeply convicted that night; nor did her convictions abate till she was brought to see Christ crucified in the open vision of gospel faith, and to receive peace and pardon from Christ for herself. Some time after this God began to work upon the husband also; and then I related the forecited circumstance, at the hearing of which he told me how it was impressed on his mind that I was in want of victuals; and his wife found fault with him for thinking so, and bringing it to me, saying "The people are better to pass than we are." But he contradicted her, and insisted on her doing as he desired.

It pleased God sorely to afflict this poor man some few years after, during which time I was enabled to restore him

fourfold. He left a testimony for God with his dying breath, and I believe he is in eternal glory. His widow is this day a servant to Mr. Linsey, a tallowchandler in Lambeth Marsh, on the right hand side of the road which leads from Westminster Bridge to Clapham. Her name is Ann Webb.

I found that the small pittance of eleven shilling per week (as I paid two shillings for a ready-furnished lodging) would amount very slowly towards getting my clothes out of pawn, the debt of which, with the interest, amounted to near forty shillings, and I was loth to lose them. It came into my mind to search my Bible, to see if any instruction for faith could be got about this matter. I turned promiscuously to these words: "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are they among so many?" I asked my wife is she had ever ate barley bread. She said, "Yes, in Dorsetshire." I told her I never had eaten it, but the poor Saviour and His Apostles had; and I supposed it was because (speaking after the manner of men) they could get no better food. And, as God saw it necessary to keep us in a state of deep poverty, it ill became us to complain, or to refuse the meanest diet seeing He had blessed us with an assured hope of heaven hereafter. She said she was willing if I were. So she went to a farmer to ask him to sell her a bushel of barley. His reply was, "That he sold his barley by the quarter, or load, to maltsters, for making malt; and should not trouble himself with measuring such a small quantity." So she went to a corn chandler in Ewell, and asked for the same article; whose answer was, "I have only the refuse of the barley, or tail corn, which I sell for swine and fowls." My wife told him that would do; but did not inform him for what use it was intended. This was ground at the mill, and was very cordially received by us; as the love of God which we enjoyed in our hearts

more than counter-balanced all the poverty we laboured under; for I well knew it was decreed by God Himself that His people should have tribulation in this world, but in Christ Jesus they should have peace. And love made the yoke easy, and the burden light; for, if at any time a murmuring thought entered my mind, it was soon quelled by considering that Christ lived on the alms of His poor followers, and that He was worse off than either the foxes or the birds; as it is written, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." This has often made my bowels yearn within me, silenced all my murmurings, and dissolved my heart in Gospel gratitude.

My dame and I now kept house at a very cheap rate; two shillings and sixpence per week carried us through tolerably well. As for the world's dainties, we were satisfied without them; for we knew that the grace of God had enabled us to choose that good part which shall never be taken from us; therefore Patience had, in a manner, her perfect work. We soon saved upwards of twenty shillings, with which, on the Saturday night, I set off to Kingston to get some of my clothes out of pawn, leaving money in the hands of my dame to get half-a-bushel of barley. It so happened that the apparel which I went to redeem came to so much, with the interest that I had not any money left to bring home. This was a great trial to us; because our little girl, who had been but lately weaned, had nothing to carry her through the week but bare barley cakes; and though she would eat barley, yet I could not endure to see her live on that only.

On the Monday following I went heavily to work, and very much distressed to know how my poor little one was to live. I reflected with indignation on myself for parting with my money; thinking I had better have gone without my clothes than have exposed

my poor little one to want the necessities of life. But, as I went over a bridge that led to my work, I cast my eye on the right hand side, and there lay a very large eel on the mud by the river side, apparently dead. I caught hold of it, and soon found it was only asleep. With difficulty I got it safe out of the mud upon the grass, and then carried it home. My little one was very fond of it, and it richly supplied all her wants that day. But at night I was informed the eel was all gone, so the next day afforded me the same distress and trouble as the preceding day had done. When going to my work, cruelly reflecting on myself for parting with all my money, just as I entered the garden gates I saw a partridge lying dead on the walk. I took it up, and found it warm; so I carried it home, and it richly supplied the table of our little one that day. A few days after this my master told me he had found a partridge on the garden walk also, but that it stank. I told him I had found one a little before that time. He said that two males had been fighting, and had killed each other, which was very common. But I was enabled to look higher.

Carnal reason always traces everything from God to second causes, and there leaves them floating upon uncertainties; but faith traces them up to their First Cause, and fixes them there; by which means God's hand is known, and Himself glorified. I believe this battle between the plumed warriors was ordained by the Lord; for, if a sparrow falls not to the ground without God's leave (as the Scriptures declare), I can hardly think a partridge does.

The third day arrived, and I was in the same case as before. As I went to my work I saw a bird's nest in one of the shrubs; which upon examination, I found to be the nest of a large bird, with four young ones in it, just ready to fly. It was with much reluctance I stormed and plundered the simple little citadel, but necessity hath no law; therefore I was

forced to rob the poor dam of her young; and leave her mourning and lamenting, while my young one lived upon hers. However, I found it was no sin in God's sight. "If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young: but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days." (Deut. 22:6, 7).

These birds served for that day very well; but the next day found me again unprovided as before, and brought forth fresh work for faith and prayer. However, the morrow still took thought for the things of itself; for, when I came to take the scythe in my hand to mow the short grass, I looked into the pond, and there I saw three very large carp lying on the water, apparently sick. When my master came to me I told him of it. He went and looked, and said they were dead; and told me I might have them if I would, for they were not in season. However, they came in due season to me. And I found morning after morning, there lay two or three of these fish at a time, dead, just as I wanted them; till I believe there was not one live fish remaining, six inches long, in that pond, which was near three hundred feet in length.

While musing on, and admiring, the tender care of my God in His providence, and wondering what could move Him thus to pity such a sinner, who was so unworthy of His grace, mercy, and truth, as well as of His providential regard, these words came to my mind, "He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish". (Ps. 105:29) Mrs. Webb, the woman before mentioned, has often partaken of these spoils; and the incredulous are very welcome to make inquiry into the matter, for which purpose I have informed them where she

lives. My master told me he thought it was the heat of the sun that killed them; and I believe it was; but I knew that the sun and its heat were both from God, and that the sun shined in due season for me. It much amazed me to see God so kind, even in temporal matters.

I was led to search His blessed Word for similar circumstances. And, when I read of the distress and simple covenant of Jacob, of God's changing the colour of Laban's cattle, that they might change their master, and of God's blessing Jacob's simple means of peeling the rods (that the pregnant dams might look at them, and bring forth accordingly, and so setting the dams a-longing to bring forth a motley progeny like the rods he set in the troughs) and the dream of the speckled ram begetting the spotted inheritance of faith, I could not help weeping and admiring the unmerited goodness of my God in setting the birds of the air to war, sending the sunbeams with such a hostile force as to slay the inhabitants of the floods, suffering the eel to sleep till the hand of the necessitous had entangled him, and directing my eyes to the little lodgment of birds, when all other supplies seemed to be cut off. It so operated on my mind, that I cannot describe the humility, compunction, love, joy, and peace, which I felt. O the goodness of God to the children of men!-- I evidently saw that both in providence and grace, God is the same to us as He was to the saints in days of old, and that they had no pre-eminence over us in the covenant of grace at all; but that Jesus Christ was the same yesterday that He is today, and will be the same forever. Let not these providences beget a notion in the weak of the flock of any partiality in God to me in particular; knowing that "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation those that fear Him and work righteousness are accepted of Him."

I found that my pay would hardly support my family with comfort; and it

came into mind that I could mend shoes, if I tried. I accordingly sent my dame to Kingston to buy me some materials for this business; upon which I began, and became a decent proficient in a very little time. This helped me so much that I got all my things out of pawn, and kept myself out of debt. But it happened one night that my dame complained to me that she had nothing for the child but barley cake. I told her I had a job of cobbling to do, and would sit up that night to finish it, so that in the morning the work might be carried home, when peradventure she might get the money. So we sat up and worked together till between eleven and twelve o'clock; when I heard a person call at my window. I went down, and found several men on horseback (in appearance they were smugglers), who enquired their way to Malden Mills. I went a little way to show them, for which one of them gave me a shilling. On receiving it, my very hair moved upon my head at the reflection of the daily providences of God. I mention this because God says that "the gold and silver are His; that it is He only who maketh poor and maketh rich; and that it is He who bringeth low and lifteth up." These things so endeared God to me, that I often called Him my Bank, my Banker, and my blessed Overseer; and I earnestly begged that He would condescend to be my Tutor, my Master, and my Provider; and never leave me in the hands of mortals either for tuition, protection, or for temporal supplies. I no longer envied the rich of this world; for if they are gracious, they only see one side of God's face, having an independent stock in hand; and, if graceless, they are of all flesh the most miserable. I clearly perceived that the most eminent saints

in the Bible were brought into low circumstances, as Jacob, David, Moses, Joseph, Job, Jeremiah, and all the apostles, in order that the hand of Providence might be watched.

When harvest came on, my dame informed that she should go to gleaning, in order to pick up some wheat to make bread with. So we generally rose about three o'clock in the morning; and I gleaned with her till six, and then went to my work; but she continued till eight o'clock; then went home with her corn, ate her breakfast, got the child up from bed (which all this time had been left alone), and then she went off for the day. At this time I had begun to preach at Ewell Marsh, which made no small stir that way; therefore the farmers drove my dame out of the fields, and the gleaners came about her like a shoal of small birds attending the funeral of a dead hawk, swearing that parsons' wives should not glean there. "What", said they, "wives of the clergy go a gleaning!" I own it is not a good sign, nor a good sight, to see Levites gleaning; but, if the blind guides steal the offerings of God, which should feed the Levites, the Levites then must work or starve.

In Scripture a Gospel minister is compared to an ox; so that he must take Christ's yoke, and learn to draw; and, when his day's work is ended, he must tread out the corn, if required; and, if God uses him to plough up the fallow ground of the heart, he must expect to work hard and fare hard. To be a Gospel labourer is a rare thing; but to be a dumb dog, to lie at the bone and forget to bark, is very common. We read in Scripture of the oxen ploughing while the asses were feeding beside them (Job 1:14). But still God's hand was seen; for if they drove my dame out of one field, she was surely directed into another, where she often found them carrying the corn; and then she got the first and prime gleanings of the whole field. At six o'clock I went in search of her, and gleaned with her till nine, or as long as we could see an ear of corn. When I went after her I knew not where she was, nor how far she had been chased that day; but, whether she was

one or two miles distant, I always went that road where my mind led me, and constantly went as straight to her as if I had actually known where she was, and I never missed her track; but found her every night, the whole five weeks, whether she was east, west, north, or south. And when I came I was entertained with an account of all the chastenings her pursuers had given her, and how they had threatened to rob her of her corn. I told her Boaz was not in the field; if he were, he would not have served her so. It is true we use his words in our church service, "The Lord be with you;" and the pious reapers reply, "And with thy spirit." But this language is now quite out of fashion in our harvest fields.

(Continued next month)

Richlands, North Carolina

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

While sitting here alone thinking of the ones I love for Christ's sake, I hope, I will try to write a few lines as it has been on my mind for some time to say I hope I love you all. I was not able to go to church today because of an infirmity in my body, but I hope this will find each and every one of you enjoying the best of health.

This week is Thanksgiving but I feel that Thanksgiving is each and every day when we are blessed with the love of God in our heart.

I joined the Primitive Baptist Church when I was 26 years old. Now I will be 75 years old the 21st day of May if I live to see the day. I have traveled a rough and rugged road in this life, but I am so glad at times to have a hope that I will have all my troubles in this life, and meet my dear Saviour some sweet day when my troubles will all be over.

I believe with all my heart that I was made to love this doctrine. I know I have been shown that there was nothing I could do within myself without the

mercy of God. I can now see where He has blessed me before I even realized it, or before I was even aware that there was a God of love and mercy that could be so good to me, a poor and vile sinner.

When I go in the church I feel to be so little and so near nothing I don't see how anyone can love me, but I do know there is where I feel at home with the brothers and sisters. I just hope I am one, and I hope that God loved me before I was ever born in this vile world of troubles.

I am sending in my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*, which I love to read so much. I hope I can get the dear paper as long as I live. I cannot see very good and it gets worse all the time. But I believe I do love you all for Christ's sake, and when at the Throne of Grace remember this poor sinner, who is one of the least of God's humble poor if one at all.

May God be with you and bless you all is my hope. If I never meet you here in this world I hope we will meet in Heaven.

All my love to all,
Mrs. Bessie M. Foy

Eden, N.C.

Dear Brother Donald Smith,

I see my subscription is due and I am enclosing a check for \$10.00 to cover the next two years.

I like the paper very much. We have been taking it for a number of years, and it still contains a lot of good reading. So many of the articles are written by people I know and some by the ones I've met only once, but they all seem to be my people, and "talk my language", so to speak. It draws one closer to them, and makes them seem that one knows them better, and loves them more.

Wish you much success in this endeavor.

Your little Sister, I hope,
Nannie Vipperman

Perry, Kansas

Dear Editors,

Please renew my subscription for two years. I have enclosed a check for \$15.00. Use the balance for the good of the *Signs*. I enjoy getting the *Signs* very much because no one around here preaches predestination. Without that the Bible is a blank Book.

Yours respectfully,
Hobart Stallard

313 Whitewood Street
Burlington, Iowa 52601

To the Signs of the Times readers:

I am trying to locate a copy of a pamphlet or book called *Walking About Zion*, by Elder I. N. Vanmeter. The author was a frequent contributor to the *Signs* during his life (1815-1894), and Hassell's History says he visited the Tarboro, N.C., Church in May, 1874. I think this book was printed in about 1860-1870. I find an account of it in the *Signs* of December 15, 1888. Any help will be deeply appreciated.

In precious hope,
Robert L. Webb

FAITH OF OUR FOREFATHERS

Dear Brother Beebe: — With a heart pained with sorrow and filled with grief, I attempt to write for publication a notice of the death of my dear little son, Millard Jackson Poulson, who came to his end in a most shocking manner, aged 9 years, 10 months, and 7 days.

The case which we have witnessed, brings us to consider how impassable are the decreed appointments of Jehovah. It is well said, that a man's days are numbered, and his time appointed, and his bounds are with the Lord, and he cannot pass them. My little boy, though small as he was, was trusted with his horse to plough with, day after day, and to ride him to and from his work, with harness on or off, and in any gate that he chose, and no accident befell him until the 26th day of

May, when after using the horse myself on business, I changed the harness. He came readily, without a call, and said, "Pap, I will go and get the plow," which was a mile distant from the house; and in finding nothing to the plow, and being in a hurry, I went back to the house to get the iron. I was in the front yard. I heard his mother say, "What is Millard riding so fast for?" And she turned her head away; and in a second his brother exclaimed, "Millard is killed." When I got where I could see, he was fast in the bit of one of the traces, and the horse was running and kicking with all the power he had.

And O, my friend, what a heart-breaking sight did then appear. When I had taken him loose from the harness, every garment was torn from him, and his little flesh was mangled to a sight. I carried him to the house, and we discovered that he breathed, and the doctor was immediately called upon. He lived an hour, or an hour and a half. He never moved or spoke, but winced one eye two or three times. This memorable scene will go with his parents to the grave.

May God enable us to be resigned to His will, and say, He has only taken that He lent. He was a darling child, loved and highly respected by all who knew him. He has left a name that will live, though his body is gone.

And while we are mourning his loss, he is clothed in the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness, bearing the image of the Only Begotten of the Father. "Be still, and know that I am God."

Farewell, little Millard, farewell,
Until we meet again;
The Lord has done all things so well,
Our loss has been your gain.

Our darling little Millard,
Though active as he was
How soon his life was withered
And he consigned to dust.
And now, my little Millard,
You've joined that happy throng,

Where life can ne'er be withered,
But sing that happy song.

(Elder) Thomas M. Poulson

Taken from the October 15, 1868, *Signs of the Times*

(We feel this obituary from years past fully reflects the blessed faith God gives His people in time of extreme trial. Our hearts were drawn out to grieve with our dear brother as though he were writing today, and at the same time we were given to rejoice that the Lord is a present help in time of need. Editor)

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION, 1977
CIRCULAR LETTER

My dearest brethren:

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ whom to know aright is life eternal.

I consider this a joy and honor to be tasked with the responsibility of addressing the Salisbury Association in this, her one hundred ninety-fourth annual session. I feel to confess, however, my weakness and inability to write unto you, and except the Lord grant a measure of grace, my efforts shall be but sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Now my sincere desire is, that our blessed Lord will anoint our hearts and lips with the unction of His grace and enable this assembly of believers to worship Jesus aright. What we all need so much is that blessed anointing of which John speaks in the teaching of all things; for I am very sure that without Him we are nothing. Furthermore, all our efforts toward worship, our praying and preaching, our goings and comings, and our social gatherings, if without Him, are but sin, and filth, and folly. Hence, our total and absolute helplessness and dependence upon Christ. "For without me ye can do nothing." (Jn. 15:5)

I am convinced and persuaded that the true religion of God is found, not in the pomp and glory of liturgy, nor in the adorning and wisdom of flesh, but in simplicity and in the "excellency" of the knowledge of Christ. "Yea doubtless, and 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 count them but dung, that I may win Christ."—Apostle Paul.

The religion and worship of the Most High

God is in simplicity and truth. Conversely, modern Christendom is adorned in pomp and splendor. She offers a magnificent and stately display of religion. And with her purported cry for lost souls, and her easy believism, she gives every appearance as one in whom to trust the salvation of the soul.

Myriads have trusted her throughout the annals of history. And it is not unreasonable to suggest that they will continue. But to a discerning eye, she is only a cheap imitation. To the man of faith, she is deceptive, vicious, morally bankrupt, theologically unsound, and a travesty and disgrace. She may be beautifully adorned in the flesh and wisdom of man, but inwardly she is full of putrifying sores. What saith the Scripture? "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Rom. 10:3)

I submit to you, my brethren, that the wise Apostle in the tenth of Romans warned of something known as "false righteousness", and "false zeal", and "false worship". Such spurious religion will inevitably cluminate in one's own judicial blindness and hardness of heart.

You will observe in Paul's letter to the Romans (Chapter 10) that it is the "Ignorant" "going about" to establish their own righteousness. (Vs. 3) It is the "Ignorant" who possess "a" zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. (Vs. 2) It is the "ignorant" who have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. (Vs. 3) It is the "ignorant" who justifies self and cannot discover that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. (Vs. 4) I don't know how you feel about this, but I fear the self-anointed, self-righteous, soul-winning zealot. I fear them, not as a man, but their eternal state.

Do you know how Paul described the wise man of Romans 10? Let us examine for just a moment verse 6-9. "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

The "ignorant" attempts to establish his own righteousness. The man of faith rests in the righteousness of Christ. The "ignorant" foment a zeal of God. The man of faith rests in the zeal of God's anointed. The "ignorant" are perpetually "going about", but the man of faith "rests" in the Beloved and enters into the Lord's work which is said to be finished or established from the foundation of the world. The "ignorant" are evermore ascending into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above) and descending into the deep (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But for the man of faith Christ is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart. (Vs. 6-8)

Ah, my brethren, the man of faith is given the knowledge that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. (Vs. 4) The man of faith is the wise of Romans 10.

And so dear brethren, when you look about you and see men going to and fro engaging in one religious activity after another, manifesting untiring zeal and appearing to possess a "form of godliness", do not become unduly alarmed. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." (Isa. 40:29) God is our strength, our Fortress, our Refuge. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:57)

In conclusion, allow me to offer one closing remark regarding the Mighty Victor. He came and tabernacled among us in the flesh. He is very man of very man and yet possessed the spirit of God without measure. Thus, He is very God of very God and therein lies the source of His victory. As the Eternal Son, He is without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. He abideth after the power of an endless life. He is the Eternal I am. He is Jehovah Jesus. God in flesh. In His flesh, He became the perfect oblation. "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12) "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that

are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14)

As man, He "gave up" the ghost. (Jn. 19:30) And I remind you that Jesus is the only man who "gave up" the ghost. In mortals such as you and I, the ghost must be "taken" from us. But not with Jesus. He gave it up, thus signifying absolute submission to the will of God the Father.

As man, He descended into the deep on our behalf. Oh, if thou but knew the deepness of that "deep". As God (and herein is our victory) He ascended into Heaven, sprinkled the mercy seat with His own blood, and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God. In the mystery of the incarnation, He conquered death and hell for us. And we can sing with the Saints of all ages: "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." (Apostle John)

"Mighty Victor, reign forever,
Wear the crown so dearly won;
Never shall thy people, never
Cease to sing what thou hast done:
Thou has fought thy peoples' foes:
Thou wilt heal thy peoples' woes."

T. Kelly

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:57)

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee and make His face shine upon you all is my sincere desire.

Jack H. Dawsey

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116

CHRIST THE BRANCH

"Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the Branch thou madest strong for thyself. It is burned with fire, it is cut down: thy perish at the rebuke of thy countenance. Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man thou madest strong for thyself. So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts; cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." (Psalm 80:14-19)

Throughout the scriptures a variety of

pictures are drawn from natural plants and vegetation, each typifying some aspect of the experience of the Lord's people. They are likened to wheat, among which tares have been sown; to cedar trees, lilies of the field, trees of righteousness, olive trees fat and flourishing in their old age; fig trees, grass, limbs grafted into olive trees, and branches of Christ the true vine. Again, they are spoken of as a garden, enclosed and watered. They are vines individually and a vineyard collectively. Each of these and other pictures shows in some way the Christian's dependency upon Jesus Christ in his or her relationship to Him.

In particular, His people are spoken of as branches while He, Christ, is spoken of as the Branch at least seven times in the Old Testament; and they are identified as vines while he is the true vine in John 15. It is along these lines that my thoughts have been led for some time now: to consider Jesus Christ the Branch as the fit and able representative of His branches (John 15:5) and to see Christ the true Vine as the eminently successful representative of His vineyard.

In Ezekiel 15:1-8, the people of God are typified by a vine that has been consumed by fire. They are spiritually unfit for work for two reasons: the pithy and brittle nature of a vine makes it useless for any type of work (who would use a vine for an ax handle, a lever, or some other tool?), and in addition God says, "How much less shall it be meet for any work when the fire hath devoured it and it is burned?" Thus, the Adamic man can do no spiritual work at all in his fallen, corrupt and rebellious condition.

While they are in this fallen state, God sends His refining fire into His people's experience to cut them down by His Spirit, scorching them in the oven of affliction and effectually teaching them that salvation is of the Lord, and without Him we can do nothing.

That this ordeal of fiery trials is the experience of God's people seems clear from the scriptures: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Matthew 3:11)." Their being subject to the fire is typified not only by Ezekiel's reference to them as a vine consumed by fire, but also by Isaiah, Peter and James likening them to grass: "All flesh is grass and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever (Isa. 40:6-8)." "For all flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away (I Peter 1:24)." "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat but it withereth the grass and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways (James 1:11)." "Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity? For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:13-14)."

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?" Jehovah asks. "Who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?" The answer to this question will come as an unbelievable surprise to those who are accustomed to thinking that fiery trials are only heaped upon 'disobedient children' because of their disobedience, or upon the wicked because of their wickedness. The answer will shock anyone steeped in Arminian ways of thinking in terms of conditional covenants. It will be ignored in blindness by whoever believes himself capable of 'meeting God's conditions' to escape punishment and earn rewards. God Himself gives His own answer as Isaiah continues: ". . .Who among us

shall dwell with the everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes. . . he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure (Isa. 33:14-16)."

In the above texts these truths stand out among others: the ones baptized by fire are the same ones who are baptized by the Holy Ghost; all flesh and its imagined goodliness and glory withers and fades because the Holy Spirit blows upon it; if a person's goodliness and glory withers and fades in his own eyes it is evidence that the Holy Spirit has

breathed upon him; if a person is yet rich in his own eyes it is evidence that the Holy Spirit has not as yet blown upon him in such a special way; when the Spirit of the Lord does breathe upon him in this way he is baptized with the fire of God's purity and justice, and he feels the scorching, burning heat of God's wrath, seeing himself to be a fit candidate for the everlasting burnings; the one who has been rich in his own eyes and estimation who experiences this revelation from the Spirit of the Lord fades away in his ways as he sees his (supposed) riches perish; this experience is of the Lord of

Hosts, who for a while causes them to labor in the fire and weary themselves for very vanity--that is, He causes them to learn by experience "there's nothing good that I can do"--and He brings them by this route to their wit's end; only the righteous will be enabled to dwell with the devouring fire and the everlasting burnings of this God; and it is they, the righteous ones, who will experience the fortification and defence of the Rock, Christ Jesus, and be enabled to feed on Him as the bread and water of life.

"It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance." Burned, consumed, without strength, helpless if God were

not their helper, hopeless if Christ were not their hope; such is the pitiful case of God's vineyard in their poverty-stricken, fallen condition. If it were not for God's infinite love, grace and mercy they would be blasted, withered and burned eternally. Is this vine without strength, then? "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6)." The Son of God came in the fulness of time, identified with His vineyard.

The Psalmist, given to see these things, prays, "Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts; look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the Branch that thou madest strong for thyself (Psa. 80:14-15)." This Branch is Christ Jesus Himself, which is evident from verse 17: "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself." The Branch which God made strong for Himself is the son of man whom He made strong for Himself, and upon whom His hand was placed in at least a fourfold way:

(1) The Father's hand was upon Jesus Christ by way of His showing His approval. Even as loving earthly parents proudly place an approving arm around their child's shoulder or an approving pat on the head, hand or arm, so God the Father showed His approval of His only begotten Son by twice breaking nature's silence and saying aloud, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," and by pouring out His Spirit upon Him without measure. This approving gesture in the visible form of a dove descending from Heaven was seen by John the Baptist.

(2) God's hand was upon Jesus Christ by way of identification. The laying on of a hand or hands throughout the scriptures is a mark of a person's being identified with the one on whom their hand is laid. This is the significance of

an ordination; by laying their hands upon a man, the presbytery which ordains him is saying in effect, "We are not ashamed to be identified with this man; we recognize him as a fit representative of us." That God Himself ordained Jesus Christ is evident from Acts 17:31. Thus the True and Living God shows forth that He is unashamedly identified with Jesus of Nazareth.

(3) God's hand was upon Him in a providential, protective way, guarding and protecting Him against the wrath of men and devils until the appointed time came. He protected Him lest at any time He should so much as dash His foot against a stone, and He kept Him in all of His ways (Psa. 91:11f).

(4) Then, when the hour arrived for which He came into the world, the Father's hand was upon Him in wrath as the Father judged His only begotten Son for the sins of His people which He bore. On the cross it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, to put Him to grief, to make His soul an offering for sin, and to cut Him off out of the land of the living, striking Him for the transgressions of those whom God is pleased to call "my people."

The vineyard, the Psalmist says, "is burned with fire, it is cut down; they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance." Therefore, to be identified with His people, Christ endured their fire and the rebuke of His Father's countenance for them and in their place. "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. From above hath He sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: He hath spread a net for my feet, He hath turned me back: He hath made me desolate and faint all the day (Lam. 1:12f)."

The fire which the Father sent into His Son's bones (His bride is bone of His bones, flesh of His flesh!) was the fire

His vineyard would have justly endured had they not been freely loved and chosen by the True and Living God. The elect were viewed as being in Christ from all eternity, and certainly they were in Him as He suffered for them on the cross. There, the Vine, the Branch was also the Winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and His people were like grapes under God's feet within Him: "The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me. He hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men: the Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress (Lam. 1:15)."

As the Branch is also the winepress, and He is also literally substituted in the place of His people, and He is both the Holy One who has done the treading and the Holy One who was trod upon, is it any wonder, then, that He is the all in all of His people? What could a poor sinner lack if Christ has undertaken for him? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?

Going back to our text in the eightieth Psalm, we see in the life of God's children these specific results of the Father's hand being thus laid upon the Man that is His fellow:

1. PRESERVATION--"So will not we go back from Thee": By His life and death Christ purchased this continued preservation of His people. This purchase both secures and assures the effectual working of His Spirit in their heart in such a magnificent, peculiar way that they will not go back from Him, because of the bedrock fact that He has effectually implanted in their innermost being the truth of His saying to them, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

As part of this preservation, the very thought of Christ's bearing one's condemnation and shame will so move and

melt the heart of one who has been made to hope and rest in Christ that all vengefulness, censoriousness, and critical, carping attitudes toward others will be neutralized in direct proportion to how clearly Christ's glory is seen by him or her. The forgiveness of our sins is the basis and motivation for praying for our enemies, our turning the other cheek, and our going the second mile: "Forbearing one another, forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye (Col. 3:13)." "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Eph. 3:32)."

His people are so wonderously wrought upon in the day of His power that this is not merely an external motive or obligation placed upon them as a duty, but it is a new and living principle in them, as they are made partakers of His divine nature in a living, vital union with Him as branches of the True Vine.

The "so" in this text looks back to what has gone before and links the vineyard's past deliverance by the man of God's Right Hand inseparably to our (i.e., the vineyard's) present state of not going back from Him. The vineyard's future preservation and deliverance likewise is based upon, secured by, and linked to the True Vine's finished work. All of this is contained in the sentence, "So will not we go back from Thee;" indeed, it is all implied by this one word, SO.

2. QUICKENING--The manifestation of divine life within the sinner: "Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name." Quickening in the scriptures can mean one of two things: either the giving and imparting life where no life is, or manifesting life where it already exists but as yet has not been made evident.

Examples of the former quickening or imparting life where no life is, are (a) the

spiritual resurrection of His people who are spiritually dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1), and (b) the bodily resurrection of their physically dead bodies at His second coming.

An example in nature of the latter type of quickening (manifesting life where it already exists) is when a doctor administers a spank to a newborn baby. No one would think for an instant that the doctor thereby gives life to the babe; but the babe cries out because it has life. It does not cry in order to have life or to be born, but it cries because it has life and is born. The doctor's (providential) spank manifests the life which is already there. If an infant is stillborn, all of the spanking in the world would develop or impart no life whatsoever.

Now, a spiritual example of this quickening is in this text. The Psalmist prays, "Quicken us," that is, manifest the life which is already in us, "and we will call upon thy name," even as the living infant, when spanked, cries out. In the text the Psalmist must mean for God to thus manifest life rather than to impart life, or else it could be said that at least part of the Bible was written by spiritually dead men.

The truth of the matter is, God's children (like and including the Psalmwriter) continually must be stimulated by His quickening power if the life which He has hidden in them as earthen vessels is to be shown forth. This showing forth, or manifesting His life, the desire within our hearts to pray as the writer did, "Quicken us," and the resultant calling upon His name ("and we will call upon Thy name"), are all fruits or results of the Father's hand being laid upon the man of His right hand.

3. IRRESISTIBLE GRACE: "Turn us again, O Lord God of Hosts. . ." This turning both precedes repentance and leads the turned ones to it. In part Ephraim said, "Turn me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God.

Surely after that I was turned, I repented (Jer. 31:18f)." If it were not for God's irresistible grace there would be no turning and no repentance.

Man's depravity shows through this text, also, in that (a) this turning is not accomplished by the people themselves (else why would the inspired writer pray to the Lord for it?), and (b) even the people of God's vineyard gravitate back to their old ways, which fact is emphasized by the word "again"--"Turn us again." This in itself says he has been turned at least once before, but now he must be turned again. Who could say how many times a saint must be turned back to his God in a lifetime? But God's grace is irresistibly effectual (Psa. 138:7-8, Isaiah 55:11, Dan. 4:34-37), His irresistibility is effectually gracious (2 Cor. 9:8-10, Zech. 4:6-7), and His effectuality is graciously irresistible (Psalm 110:3, Rom. 9:15-16, 21)!

4. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION: The manifestation of God's glory and love: "Cause Thy face to shine." It is God who commands the light to shine out of darkness, to give the light of the knowledge of His glory; and this light is in the face of Jesus Christ. The fact that it is God, as opposed to or contrasted with man, who causes His face to shine points to His unconditional election of His people; for,

". . . had He not pitied the state you were in,
Your bosoms His love had ne'er felt;
You all would have lived, would have died,
too, in sin,
And sunk with the load of your guilt.

"What was there in you that could merit
esteem,
Or give the Creator delight?

"'Twas even so, Father,' you ever must sing
'Because it seemed good in Thy sight.'

"'Twas all of Thy grace we were brought to
obey
While others were suffered to go
The road which by nature we choose as our
way
Which leads to the regions of woe.

"Then give all the glory to His holy name,
To Him all the glory belongs;

Be yours the high pleasure to sound forth
His name
And crown Him in each of your songs!"

There was nothing in man's essence or in his deeds which ever caused God's face to shine. The cause is unchangeably, unconditionally within Himself.

5. SALVATION: "And we shall be saved." Not merely a "so" here; we have no mere statement that "so we shall be saved," which would limit our thinking to the preceding context. A "so" here would indeed summarize what has gone before (election, imputation, redemption, irresistible grace, quickening, preservation of the saints, and other truths), but that, as wonderful as it is, would not be complete.

"And," however, implies something more. "And" means in addition to these truths of imputation, redemption, preservation, and all the other glorious things accomplished by God's divine Branch—in addition to all of these things, in addition, we shall be Saved, a term which covers all of our present and future experience up to, including and beyond the grave. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end (Isa. 45:17)." In addition to all else, this looks forward to the resurrection and glorification of every branch in the True Vine, every vine in His vineyard. It means that in the eternal state hereafter, they shall be with Him and behold His glory which He had with the Father before the world was.

"And we shall be saved." For time and eternity, this infinitely broad and deep sea of salvation flows from Jesus Christ the Branch. The "we" are those vines of His vineyard. The certainty of their security is expressed in the words, "shall be."

"Glory to God! they ne'er shall rove
Beyond the limits of His love,
Fenced with JEHOVAH'S SHALLS AND
WILLS,

Firm as the everlasting hills."

I had hoped to at least touch upon the other Old Testament verses which speak of Christ as the Branch, but I now see that this is impossible at this time. Perhaps in the future I will yet be given to consider those texts. I know that this mighty subject of Jesus Christ the Branch has scarcely been touched upon herein; but what has been written here has seemed to me to be in harmony with sound doctrine and the experience of the saints of the Most High God. If you find it otherwise, please cast it aside. My only desire and prayer in the matter is that it will redound to God's own glory and to the comfort of His vineyard which His own right hand hath planted.

In that blessed hope
(Elder) C. C. Morris

EDITORIAL

ARRIVING AT BETHLEHEM-JUDAH

So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest. (Ruth 1:19-22)

So they two went together. Frequently the number two represents a contrast in scripture as is evident in such lives as Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, but more positively it signifies communion as Amos so clearly reveals to us in asking,

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3) In this regard, we are reminded of many twos. Noah brought the animals into the ark by twos, even two of every living thing. Two turtle-dove or two young pigeons served as an offering in the old dispensation, one for a sin offering and one for a burnt offering. The disciples were sent out by twos because two are better than one for if one should fall the other could lift him up.

Furthermore, there were two great commandments given by God to Moses namely “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” (Matt. 22:37, 39) So significant are these two commandments that upon them hang all the law and the prophets. In addition, we are reminded that the witness of two men is true and of the two immutable things i.e. the oath and the promise. Two principal witnesses are also spoken of in the New Testament which are, of course, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who bore witness of Himself, and God the Father, who bore witness of His Son.

The Church of the living God is also likened unto two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough of the olive tree. In fact, we are assured that where two or three are gathered together in His name that He will be in the midst of them. The Church is also pictured in the Songs of Solomon as having two breasts, two main sources of nourishment or food which it provides for its young even the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper. But it is not until we see through the eye of faith, the Church walking in union with Christ and in complete submission to Him that we see the real significance of the number two. From this viewpoint, we see the Church coming up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved, wholly dependent upon Him for life, here, and for life hereafter. Christ is to

the Church not only her refuge but also her fortress, not only her pardon but also her advocate, not only her saviour but also her spouse. And within this marital relationship, she (the Church) becomes part of His (Christ’s) body. Each child of God is a member of the body of Christ. In fact, for this cause Christ left the throne of His father to cleave unto His bride that they might be one flesh. Adam so clearly and so beautifully described this union and this bond in type, when he said of Eve, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.” (Gen. 2:23) The complete unity into one of Christ and His bride is what is really referred to by the number two. And this unity is reflected here on earth when one of God’s children walks in communion with Him or when two or three of God’s children walk together in unity as Naomi and Ruth did on their way home from Moab. A heart warming expression in Psalm 54:14 sums up the sentiment exemplified when brethren dwell together in unity by saying, “We took sweet counsel together, and walked into the house of God in company.” So did Ruth and Naomi on their way to Bethlehem-judah.

So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And how prophetic this journey was in the light of later developments. For this same Bethlehem later became the ancestral home of David. Indeed, because of this, it became known as the city of David. Still later, it was prophesied to become the birthplace of the Messiah. This, also, was fulfilled. In its vicinity the annunciation to the shepherds took place. As well, the wise men from the East followed the star to Bethlehem whereupon they found the child Jesus and worshipped Him. Subsequently, the infants of Bethlehem from two years old and younger were sentenced to death by Herod in his attempt to find and slay Christ the Newborn King. Bethlehem, literally translated, means “house of bread” and rightly so because of its significance as

the birthplace of Jesus, who, of course, spiritually, is the bread of life.

Although Bethlehem has never had a large population of people, it is frequently referred to in scripture as a city to underline its great importance as the birthplace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In its vicinity, since the earliest times, lay many vineyards and orchards of fig trees and olive trees. The fields, though stony, produce grain in abundance, and at harvest time, gleaning may be seen, even until recent years, as it was in the days of Ruth. The houses within Bethlehem are small and well built. Entrance into the town can be achieved through one of many gates. It was toward this town or "city", if you prefer, that Naomi and Ruth set out, because of the famine in Moab, for Naomi had heard that in Bethlehem God had visited His people in giving them bread. And upon their approach to Bethlehem, the entire city was moved about them.

The household of faith is always moved when one or more of that number which no man can number is brought home in grace for the Lord adds to His Church daily such as should be saved. No one can truly come without the hand of the Lord being in the matter and when the Lord is present it is a moving experience. It is an experience tantamount to the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem upon which occasion the entire city was awakened and alert. The disciples were attentive in every detail to the commands of Christ. The multitudes spread their garments in the way and the people made chorus together singing, "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." (Matt. 21:9)

Like precious feelings are kindled no less today as we see Christ gently lead those with young to cry, "Home Sweet Home!" A craving desire yearns within us to echo Medley in his beautiful hymn, "Jesus, before thy face I fall,

My Lord, my life, my hope, my all;
For I have no where else to flee;
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee."

Job's words are particularly descriptive of the feelings aroused in a believer when he said, "At this my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place." (Job 37:1) Now this "moving" of the heart is not referring to the heart being displaced nor to the feet being removed out of the way but is referring to the love of God being established in the heart and to the attitudes being changed. Kent expressed this state of change very adequately when he wrote, "Th 'appointed time rolls on apace,
Not to propose but call by grace,
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn their feet to Zion's hill."

Now all the city of Bethlehem was moved at the homecoming of Ruth and Naomi just as all the city of Jerusalem was moved at the entrance of Christ for the entire body is exultant at the new birth. Each hand and foot, each leg and arm rejoice with an awareness of His presence. Those who have already come are filled with thanksgiving and praise. And those still being brought are often moved to long the more for the day of His approach.

At this juncture, one cannot but recall the wonderful homecoming of the younger of two sons who, being given his portion by his father, took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. In his case, too, a mighty famine arose in the land to prod his return home. Subsequently, when he came to himself, having filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat, he arose and went to his father begging mercy from the throne of grace. His father, instead of chiding his wrong doing, saw him, had compassion upon him, ran to him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Furthermore, he commanded his servant to bring forth the best robe, and put it on him and a ring for his hand, and shoes for his feet and a fatted calf to kill, that

they might eat and be merry. A similar scene no doubt took place at the homecoming of Naomi and Ruth.

But the city of Bethlehem was also moved to cry, "Is this Naomi?" just as the city of Jerusalem hundreds of years later queried at the entrance of Jesus, "Who is this?" A sense of wonder had captured both, just as a sense of wonder captures the true Church today when one approaches its courts with praise. In what ways had Naomi changed to prompt such an inquiry? Indeed, in what remarkable ways must all the children of God undergo change to ready their reception by the Church of the living God? Let us examine a few!

When John sent two of his disciples to Christ to ask of Him, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. 11:5) they were told firmly by Jesus to go and show John again that the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. These are some of the evidences that the Lord is in the matter. Our eyes begin to see the sacredness of His way, our feet are shod with the gospel of peace, our ears begin to discern His footsteps, our deadness is regenerated with newness of life, our spots commence to heal, our poverty beholds the riches of His grace and we love the brethren. In short, we become a new creature. And all this because God has begun a good work in us for we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus. It is His work because He writes His law in our hearts and imprints it in our minds. Then comes the wonderful day when the law of the liberty of Christ makes us free from the law of sin and death whereby we can say that we have not received the spirit of **bondage** wherein again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father. It is wonderful to not when Solomon built the temple that it was said, "And the house, when it was in building, was built of

stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." (I Kings 6:7) In like manner Naomi and Ruth were being made willing, were being prepared for the homecoming long before they reached the gates of Bethlehem.

Sometimes, the change in the heart of a sinner is sudden and swift as in Paul's conversion on the way to Damascus. More often, however, it is gradual though nonetheless unrelenting as Thomas exemplifies when he simply could not believe until he must needs press his finger into the nail prints of Jesus' hands and reach his hands into his side. But whether gradual or sudden, the revelation of Christ in the heart of a believer is indelibly clear and leaves a distinguishing mark which is very evident to others of like precious faith. Although the Lord alone, knows them that are His, yet there are precious evidences revealed in the lives of those who have been with Jesus and have learnt of Him that ingrain in them the same sweet hope to say as Joseph's brethren did when they came before him in Egypt to obtain corn, "We are all one man's sons." (Gen. 42:11)

Naomi and Ruth had gone down to the sea in ships, had done business in great waters, had reeled to and fro, had staggered like drunken men and had begun to search for a better country even one that was heavenly. In so doing Naomi was returning home, but she had undergone change, enough even to prompt the inquiry from her own countrymen of years before, "Is this Naomi?" Ruth, on the other hand was a Moabitish woman, a stranger to Bethlehem. Though very different in background, these two women entertained a great deal in common, in particular, the way the Lord had led them to the house of their master's brethren.

Call me not Naomi (that is pleasant), but call me Mara (that is bitter), said

Naomi. Bitterness is an integral part of the diet which each child of God must consume. Indeed in Numbers 9:10-12, each man that was unclean by reason of a dead body must keep the passover unto the Lord by eating, at even, on the fourteenth day of the month, bitter herbs and unleavened bread. And none of either must be left until morning. Job clearly describes the feeling of each child of grace when passing through the valley of Baca (tears) when he said, "Even to day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning." (Job 23:2) The night times of our experience (when we are able only to see His hindmost parts) often leave us confused and disconsolate.

However, the children of God are not without witness in this aspect of their experience for Christ as the captain of our salvation, made perfect through suffering, also had to partake of the bitter herb. Indeed, David in Psalm 69:21 foreshadowed the experience of Christ on the Cross when he cried in his affliction, "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

But, just as assuredly as night turns into day, the valley of Baca is made a well, the waters of Marah are made sweet and the bud that had a bitter taste becomes a flower exceptionally delectable because Christ is in the midst. No wonder it is said of Him in 2 Samuel 23:4. "And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." His presence disperses our gloom and the labour of child bearing is remembered no more. How unbelievable! Naomi and Ruth had come through low places, but their eye had not seen nor ear heard what blessings were in store for them on their return to Bethlehem.

Naomi had been sent out full (with husband and sons) but was brought home empty. The Lord had testified

against her and the Almighty had afflicted her. How swiftly Christ testified against Paul on the way to Damascus when he said unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:4) And how convincingly the same Jesus prophesied that Peter would deny Him thrice before the cock crowed in the morning. There is no defence against the testimony of Jesus, for all self-righteousness is consumed in His wrath as chaff in a refiner's fire. In addition, the Almighty afflicted Naomi and Ruth by taking their husbands from them and by causing them to have to search for bread in a land weakened with famine. Similarly, the Eternal God afflicted Job by removing from him, first, his substance, then his sons and daughters and finally his own health. But God preserved the faith of these elect even in the midst of His wrath for Job lived to declare that the Lord gave and the Lord had taken away, and blessed be the Name of the Lord. Naomi and Ruth, too, were given sufficient faith to return to Bethlehem for Naomi had heard that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread.

Naomi's name had been changed to Mara. How characteristic of the Lord's work! When God appeared to Abram, when he was ninety and nine years of age, and made His covenant with him, He changed his name to Abraham to signify that he would be a father of many nations. Similarly, Jacob's name was changed to Israel for it was said he had power with God and with men and had prevailed. Likewise Saul became Paul, and Peter's surname became Cephas which means "A stone". (Jo. 1:42) The new man must be renamed commensurate with his or her experience and the old man must be subdued. Paul in his second epistle to the Corinthians makes note of this when he says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17)

Moab no longer held any enticement for Ruth and Naomi, just as the world, today, holds no charm for the people of God. When God called the children of Israel from Egypt, He commanded Moses to go in unto Pharaoh and say to him, "Let my people go, that they may serve me." (Ex. 9:1) Subsequently, God brought His people as a vine out of Egypt which He planted in the land of Promise having cast out the heathen before it. The type is still evident in this age as we behold those whom God has reserved unto Himself come before Him with prayer and praise. No enemy of the Lord's people, whether unbelief or principality or power or Satan himself and all his host will ever be able to prevent one of God's children from coming once He calls, for even the sea will be divided before them and they will leave the Egypt of this world on dry ground.

In His land of Promise, here, which is a foretaste of things Heavenly, God establishes His people as the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. And in their midst is The Tree Of Righteousness even Christ. God's declaration to Moses concerning this land of Promise is just as evident, just as real, and just as glorious as it was when written. Let us hear again His eternal assurance. "For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee." (Deut. 8:7-10)

And Naomi and Ruth came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest. The Book of Ruth speaks of both barley harvest and wheat harvest

depicting a child of God being brought through his or her experience from law to grace. Barley was ground into flour which was used to make a coarse bread (law) in contrast to the fine meal and bread made from the wheat (grace). The law of Moses is not very palatable yet a necessary food. For the law must enter that the offence might abound. The law is therefore holy, and the commandments holy, and just and good. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but what the law can nor could not do through the weakness of the flesh, Christ, who knew no sin, came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle by His impeccable sacrifice. Therefore, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Now the law came by Moses but grace and truth by Jesus Christ. The two are linked together in an unbreakable chain and the beauty of it all is that the law of the liberty of Christ makes us free from the law of sin and death. In the last analysis, this enables the Lord's people to exclaim, we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father. Naomi and Ruth came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest, but how thankful we ought to be when we are told later that Ruth kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law. From law to grace is the work of the spirit and constitutes an incredible journey.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"UNDERSTANDING SCIENŒE"

(DANIEL 1:4)

That which promoted certain of the

captives of Israel into favor with the king of Babylon was their skillfulness, their cunning knowledge and their ability to understand science. The ages of the past had their scientific men as well as our age. In our present world, Israelites rank the highest in modern knowledge and scientific achievement. Though having no nation of their own, those of Israel sprinkled among the nations have radically influenced the life and history of those peoples among whom they are dispersed. Science is the sum of man's knowledge relating to the laws which operate in the physical world. We hear it said that we are now living in a world of men of science. This is an era of engineers. Engineers make practical use of science. There is, as Paul says, science falsely so-called; science which is not real knowledge, but merely metaphysical theorizing and speculation. The opposition to faith comes from this so-called science. (I Tim. vi. 20.) Real science is knowledge based on facts. This knowledge when practically applied brings wonderful results.

More and more are we coming to depend on science for the satisfaction of our daily material needs. It is sometimes charged that the facts of science do not agree with the truth of Scripture, but it has occurred to our mind that truth cannot be inconsistent and out of harmony with itself. The truth as to salvation cannot be arrived at by a scientific process. It is a matter of faith. Conclusions of faith regarding spiritual truth in the spiritual realm of being are not to be either proved or disproved by science. Not that faith and science are in conflict with each other, but because they each deal with two separate and distinct spheres of being. Science has to do with knowledge to be derived from the realm of matter and is God's revelation to man of physical truth, faith has to do with the realm of the invisible and is God's revelation to redeemed man of truth in the world to

come.

Faith never could have given rise to the electric light or automobile simply because it is not intended to function in that way. Science never could have discovered man's need of salvation from sin nor the way of redemption therefrom, because that is outside of the domain of science, and the sum and substance of human knowledge cannot function in the realm of the invisible. It is not necessary for those who are subjects of faith to belittle the men of science, nor need the scientific men think the faithful are fools. Each are experts in two different and distinct spheres. There is no real conflict or fight between science and faith. The truth of one cannot deny or disprove the truth of the other, for they are not the same kinds of truth. Faith reaches ahead and beyond the ability of science to follow. It asserts what science cannot effectually assert or deny. Let it be remembered that we are not considering here such theories as often pass for science but which are thus miscalled, we are considering the established proven facts of human knowledge. Evolution, for instance, is a theory to account for the existence of life on this planet. It has never been proved and in the very nature of the case, never can be proved; and it may be discarded tomorrow if those who use it can find another theory that works better.

When as a boy I went to school, we were taught that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. It was regarded as a self-evident fact that needed no proof. Nowadays, that is rejected. Einstein's theory of relativity has upset all that. He shows that instead of the three dimensions of length, breadth and height to which we have been used, there is a fourth dimension called "time" which needs to be considered. If you are in an auto and want to reach a certain place five miles distant in a straight line and that five miles is a

bad muddy road, and there is another good hard road of fifteen miles going to the same place, then the straight line is not the shortest distance to that point. Then the longest way round is the shortest way there. The element of time upsets our former theory of the three dimensions. So with evolution. It may be upset tomorrow if a better guess can be found. Thus, it does not do to worry about facts unproved. If they are guessed at, the guess of one person is as good as the guess of the next one, and one guess will be thrown away in favor of another guess if the last guess is found to work better than the former one.

Wherever in the Bible the Spirit of inspiration has recorded a scientific or historical assertion it has never been proved an error. This is because inspiration does not guess at things, but knows and asserts them to be as they are. The Scriptures declare facts centuries before man finds them out to be so. This is one of the proofs of the infallibility of the scriptural record. Man's knowledge has never yet caught up with the Bible. The written record of inspiration is yet ahead of scientific research. When Copernicus and Galileo asserted the earth revolved on its axis daily and around the sun yearly, thus causing day and night and the succession of the seasons, they were regarded as dangerous men and heretics. In the book of Job, however, long before either Copernicus or Galileo found it out, the pen of inspiration declared that the earth is turned to the sun as the clay to the seal. (Job xxxviii. 14) Whenever it was desired to make an imprint in pottery, the vessel of clay was turned on the wheel against a seal on another wheel. Whatever was on the seal became imbedded in the clay as the wheels turned against each other. Thus, as the earth turns toward the sun and also around the sun, the heat, light and energy of the sun make their effectual imprint on the life and well-being of all on the earth.

The record further says the sun takes hold of the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth, literally, are the two poles of the earth. If one takes hold of a ball or round object, the fingers of the hand must be bent in order to do so. Just so, science has proved that the rays of light from the sun, which rays may be likened to the fingers of a hand, bend as they reach the two poles. This bending or refraction of light at the poles causes the poles to be entirely illuminated at certain periods of the earth's travel in its orbit. If it were not for this refraction of light certain areas at the poles would be always dark. The point we wish to stress is that the Bible stated these things long before science caught up with it. Enemies of inspiration charge the Bible with declaring the earth to be flat. Not so. The above from Job shows the earth to be round, and to be a turning world, not a stationary one. Isaiah also declares the earth to be circular. (Isaiah xl. 22) In the book of Job we are told that the morning stars sang together. This used to be thought merely a poetic or figurative saying and not meant to be taken literally. We now know this to be really true and science shows that the stars do literally sing. All the air about us is in vibration, all is full of song could we but hear it.

For years we have had no desire to question the spiritual import of the Bible, but the fact of its literal truth grows daily more impressive. We become more and more a literalist as we grow older and as its factual truth becomes more and more substantiated. All sound is vibration. There are waves of sound and waves of light. Light and sound vibrate at different rates of intensity and in different rhythms. The eye of man is so made as to transmute the waves of light into the sensation of sight, the ear of man is so made as to transmute the waves of sound into the sensation of hearing. The vibrations of light cannot be appreciated by the ear, nor the vibrations of sound by the eye.

Each organ is made for its own work and responds only to its own set of stimuli. The ear of man is attuned to take in and record on the brain vibrations ranging from $16\frac{1}{2}$ a second to 38,000 a second. Any sound vibrating below $16\frac{1}{2}$ a second or above 38,000 a second cannot be heard by us. This does not mean that there are no vibrations below $16\frac{1}{2}$ or above 38,000, but only that the human ear cannot take it in. So, every star studding the heavens has literally its own vibration, thus striking its own characteristic key-note and singing its own song into the ear of its divine Creator. Our human ears are not able to tune in on this infinite harmony of the universe, since our dull mortality does too closely hem us in. When the poet said, There's not an orb which we behold but in its motion like an angel sings, he was declaring more fact than imagery, as we are now finding out. In Psalms lxxv. 8, "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." Again, not fancy, but fact. The colors of the dawn and of the sunset are due to radiations or waves of light, each color having its own pitch and rhythm. The word "outgoings" means "radiations," or "goings forth."

A stove radiates or gives off heat, a lamp radiates or gives off light. So, the beauties of the morning and evening are due to the giving forth of vibrations of such different intensities as causes the eye of the beholder to see the dawn or the sunset in their varying hues. These "outgoings" do really sing. Rejoice means to sing. We cannot hear this music of the morning and evening because in this mortal body we are not in tune with it. But when this vile body shall become changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, when the redeemed shall come into possession of their spiritual bodies, then it is our belief that the capacities or faculties with which the saints shall then be endowed shall enjoy the music the

angels now enjoy and shall appreciate that rapture which now fills the Father and the Son. Our soul leaps forward at the thought, somewhat as the unborn John within Elizabeth leaped at the salutation of Mary, who held within herself the unborn Jesus. What a blessed anticipation!

We are no scientist, and know very little about science or its laws. But it has deeply impressed us how remarkably the facts of the physical world as they come to light do support the record of inspiration. To the I Am nothing is new. That which is has already been. That the movements of heavenly bodies influence and control events of human history is plainly taught in Scripture. The researches of astronomical science confirm this. Astronomers by mathematical calculation from the position of astral bodies can predict the influence of these conjunctions upon the earth. Thus, it is not fancy but fact, that the stars in their courses did fight against Sisera and bring about his defeat. (Judges v. 20) The ordinances of heaven do set their dominion in the earth. Pleiades has its sweet influences upon us, Orion's bands are fixed, also the suns of Arcturus. (Job xxxviii) These are but a few facts showing truth, whether of faith or of science, is not inconsistent with itself. There are different realms of truth, but one truth does not make void another truth. The most that science can do in relation to Scripture is, within certain limits, to afford by its discoveries added confirmation to the literal truth of the Bible; into the exploration of its spiritual meaning science cannot go. That lies outside and beyond its domain.

August, 1930

H.H.L.

Our thank to all of you for your co-operation in keeping down the length of obituaries. We are now able to keep pace with the amount coming in.

Editor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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IS 4/78
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

TO OUR READERS

This issue contains much that could be called exhortation. True Baptists have always maintained that exhortation is a part of the whole gospel. We agree with that position.

We shall strive to keep a balance of doctrine, experience, exhortation, etc. From time to time we are informed that a brother or two is "up in arms" about something that appeared in these columns. This we regret. However, we shall not attempt to be all things to all men to please and pacify all, or even some. Truth, dear readers, is what we want. If the material we insert is not truth, then by all means speak up. If your complaint is that your pet views have been slighted, then we can do nothing about that.

It shall always be the aim of all the Editorial Staff to bring you a paper rich with the Gospel of Christ. *This includes exhortation and Absolute Predestination on equal footing, for they are both Bible principles.*

Thank you,
The Editors

We have several excellent articles which we hope to print soon. The addition of the Bank of Faith in our columns each month has somewhat reduced the space and limits the amount we can insert. We ask for your patience. Nothing suitable for publication is being withheld except for this reason.

Thank you,
Editor

BANK OF FAITH
(continued from March)

Notwithstanding their chasing the clergyman's wife from field to field, she gleaned as much or more than Ruth of

old did. As for our harvest, that was piled up on each side of our bed, and served instead of curtains; so we slept, defended with the staff of life, having all our tithes in our bed-chamber (which, by-the-bye, I believe was one of the smallest tithe-barns in Christendom). Our corn was threshed out in the chamber, and winnowed on the Marsh; a sheet serving for a barn floor. The whole quantity of our wheat, when measured, amounted to four bushels and a quarter, exclusive of some peas and a little barley. My dame threshed out the corn, and baked the bread; and I paid her so much per loaf, as an encouragement to her future industry, and to buy her such necessaries as she wanted. God visiting me with such severe poverty without, and conscience keeping me strictly honest within, drove me to be as severe with my wife as Paul was with his flock, when he made a law that if any would not work, neither should they eat.

I should not have entertained my readers with such a long account about gleaning, if God had not left so much of it on record in the book of Ruth, where we have an account of that spiritual proselyte going to glean in order to support herself and her mother-in-law; yea, the grain that she gleaned, and the quantity also; and of the good hand of her God in guiding her to the field of Boaz, a man whom Providence had appointed to be her future partner in life, and who was her husband, in law reckoning, provided the covetous and unbelieving kinsman (whom heaven refused to honour with such a wife) declined his lawful right, for fear that his obedience to God's command should bring him to poverty. But God, who commands us not to be unequally yoked together, guided her to the field of Boaz, a man who did not curse her for her religion, but commended her for her faith, chastity, and industry; and added the blessing of God to the begun work of

grace, wishing her a full reward of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings she was come to trust.

In the following winter the Lord sent a very deep snow, which lay a considerable time on the ground. Our wheat was now of great use to us, as it supplied us with bread for two or three months. But we were shortly brought into another strait through this snow. We used to buy fagots of our landlady to burn (being all the fuel we could get at that time); who one night informed us that she had but ten fagots left, which she must keep for herself, as there was no likelihood of the snow going away, therefore she could sell us no more. To this I replied that if she was in trouble for fear of suttering with the cold when she had so much wood by her, surely we had much more cause to fear, who had a young child. However, I begged of God that night to take away the snow, or send us something to burn, that our little one might not perish with the cold, and the next morning the snow was all gone. God had sent out His word and melted it; He had caused His wind to blow, and the water to flow. (Psa. 147:18)

After some time our wheat was gone, and we were obliged to eat barley again, and having paid away our money to redeem our clothes, we began to get very short of other necessary apparel, which however we soon retrieved, for as I worked by day, cobbled at nights, and lived upon barley, we kept ourselves out of debt, and tolerably decent in clothes. But this living on barley was attended with very bad consequences, for as I had ever been used to it before, now living almost entirely upon it, without mixing it with wheat, it threw a violent humour into my eyes, and for some months I was in danger of losing my sight; but, by using one simple thing or other, they got better. My second daughter brought the same humour into the world with her; and both myself and the child had it, more or less, for some years, though not

so violently as at first. I have often viewed this affliction on the child with great grief; but in answer to prayer, God healed her eyes and mine too, so that our sight was perfectly recovered.

When harvest came on again we went to gleaning as before, and got no less than five bushels of corn; but my dame was pursued as formerly; for my continuing to preach had alarmed and much offended almost the whole parish, therefore they were the more fierce in pursuing her. On the other hand, some were afraid of going near her, lest they should catch a religious infection, it being reported abroad that there was something of a power that seized upon them, and that if we once got them to hear what we had to say, there was no getting away from our religion, as this secret something that seized them held them so fast that they must immediately change their own religion. I have known some men whom I have met go quite out of the path, and take a circle in the field, rather than pass me on the road; just as if that secret something could not seize them whilst walking on the grass as well as on the footpath.

I now began to lose favour with my master, having preached among the poor people till some of them refused to work on the Lord's day. Wherefore he inquired into the cause, and was informed that the gardener had been preaching to them against profaning the Lord's day, which was the reason that some would not work on that day. Others murmured because they were compelled to labour while some were exempted. This provoked him much, and he said he should expect me to work in the garden on the Lord's day. I told him I did not choose to do that. He then swore at me, saying that if I did not I should not work for him. I replied that I would not, if I lost my employment; so in a few days after he told me, with several imprecations, to work no more for him. He owed me a trifle for a few days' work,

but as he did not offer to pay me, I never asked him for it. He knew at the same time that my wife was big with child, and ready to lie in, and that we were very poor. I was informed that he expected me to come back with a suppliant knee, but I was determined that I would not sell my conscience for a loaf of barley bread, as it had cost my Saviour so much to purge it; therefore I set off for Thames Ditton, and carried coals in the river for fourteen months at ten shillings per week, and preached during that time on the Lord's day, and one evening lecture in the week. All this time I suffered much both in body and mind, and found that the iniquity of those who wrought with me began to harden my heart; therefore I was determined to leave that situation, and go to my old business again. I got three or four days' work at Moulsey, when a farmer came to my master, and told him to discharge me, having begun to preach out of doors. It was here that I committed this great offence of preaching Jesus Christ in the high road. On this account I was turned out of employment, and remained so for three weeks, during which time a gentleman at Mitcham sent for me to come over there the week following, to preach in their meeting, as he had long entertained a great desire of hearing me.

A few days before this a gentleman had given me an old black coat and waistcoat, which, being very large, made coat, waistcoat, and breeches for me. So on the day appointed, I put on my parsonic attire, which was the first time I ever appeared clad in that colour, my usual appearance being more like the ploughman or the fisherman; but now I appeared in the external habit of a priest. And surely the good hand of my God was with me, and I went and delivered my message in His name. As it had been reported that a coalheaver was coming to preach, there were a great many people gathered together to hear

me. After I had finished my discourse, a lady came to me and gave me a new book, and blessed me; a gentleman, too, put a letter into my hand, laying an injunction upon me not to open it till I got home, in which I found enclosed a guinea and four shillings, with these words written, "Take this as from the hand of the Lord, for the labourer is worthy of his hire." (Luke 10:7)

These kind providences of God did wonderfully endear the Lord to me, and brought me to live by the faith of Him for a supply of all my wants; and indeed I was obliged to do it, for I could get no employment. And though I had preaching enough for a bishop, yet I had nothing coming in to live upon for so doing, my flocks were as poor as myself, at least the generality of them, and my family still continued increasing.

In this dilemma a professor of the gospel, who was by trade a shoemaker, asked me one day to come to him and learn to make children's shoes, which at last I agreed to, and learned to make them (though in a very rough manner) in a short space of time.

I now took my work home to my house and wrought there, and a few poor journeymen, who attended my ministry, and were single men (and therefore not so poor as their pastor), gave me some tools, till at length I became a shoemaker, and worked at it for my bread, while the love of Christ constrained me to preach for the good of souls, without making the gospel a burden to any. I was now in as bad a state as poor Paul, who preached the gospel freely, and made tents for his livelihood; his own hands ministering to his necessities, while his tongue was ministering to the necessities of thousands. If he had preached up heathen morality he need not have fared so hard, for the world loves that, and the preachers of it. The Saviour says, "The world loves her own; and she never serves her own children as she does the children of God."

As I began this business so late in my

lifetime, I was a very slow hand at it, and therefore was obliged to turn my help-meet into a shop-mate; that is, I taught my wife to close the shoes which I made, and both of us could earn about eight shillings per week. I had now five times a week to preach constantly, on which account I was forced to lay the Bible in a chair by me and now and then read a little, in order to furnish myself with matter for the pulpit. It sometimes happened that I was under sore temptations and desertions; the Bible, too, appeared a sealed book, insomuch that I could not furnish myself with a text; nor durst I leave my work in order to study or read the Bible; if I did, my little ones would soon want bread; my business would also run very cross at those times. I therefore found the ministry of the gospel to be work enough for any man, without leaving the work of God to serve tables.

After I had been about eight or ten months at this trade, my master failed in business, and nobody else would employ me. I was now a fortnight, or more, out of work, which sorely tried me indeed; for it so happened that we were forced to put our little ones to bed one night without a supper, and their dinner was a very scanty one. When they saw me look into the cupboard, and shut the door again, without giving them anything, they lisped out some very pathetic, though broken, accents, expressive of want; which touched my parental feelings very sorely, and took away my rest for that night. In the morning I got up and went out; but where to go I knew not; and I could not endure the thought of staying at home to see my little ones want bread. But these words were sweet and suitable to me, "He hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom." And I well knew it was "easier for a camel to go through the needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

In this miserable situation I knew not where to go. If I left off preaching, and ran from the work (as Jonah did), I should deny the Lord that bought me. Though I was willing to work yet none would employ me on account of my religion; and if I stayed at home my little ones were crying for bread. Indeed I should often have run away from the work of God, had not His terrors stood on my conscience in battle array against me. At this time no book could suit me but the Lamentations of Jeremiah. To these I constantly fled for comfort; for, like him, I often was for running away, but could not; therefore God fulfilled His word, "They shall be My people, and shall not depart from Me."

I went that morning as far as Kingston, but where I was to find relief I knew not; however, just as I came into the town, it came suddenly in my mind to go to Mr. Chapman, then living on Hounslow Heath; a person who had know me for some years, even before either of us knew the Lord; and who was called by grace about the same time that I was. He had often invited me to come and visit him; wherefore I now obeyed the impulse which I felt, and accordingly went over Kingston Bridge directly to Hounslow Heath, where I found him and his wife at home. I was, however, determined not to make my deep distress known to them, but intended to watch the good hand of my God in this journey.

The good man and his wife received me very affectionately; and, after kindly entertaining me, loaded me home with many simple dainties for the children, though at that time they knew not how I had left them. And it came to pass, when I departed, that the good man walked two miles with me; and on the road offered me a guinea, which I refused, saying that, if he would give me half-a-guinea, I would accept it, provided it was with his wife's knowledge. He said it

was. So I took the half-guinea, wondering how I should pay the fare on the bridge to get home, fearing they might not be able to give me change; but I cast my eyes on the ground, and there lay a penny, which served to pay the toll of the bridge. So I got safe home, and was received with a hearty welcome. And thus I made a better voyage of it than Naomi, who went out full and returned empty.

As I had lost all my employment in shoemaking, I was obliged to try another branch of business -- I therefore commenced cobbler. But, as none would employ me except those who attended my ministry, sometimes I had work and sometimes I had none. So that I found this branch of business attended with many inconveniences; for it often happened at the beginning of the week that I had little to do, and at the latter end rather more than I could get done; which, with sitting up till twelve o'clock on the Saturday night, and having eleven miles to walk, and three times to preach on the Lord's day, rendered my labours too hard for me, as my living was very inconsiderable; however, God made this circumstance of great use to my soul; therefore it was one of the all things that work together for good.

I had naturally a very great flow of spirits, so that this poor way of living gradually brought on me an inward weakness, attended with loss of appetite; which rendered me incapable of taking that nourishment my labours necessarily required. I could drink nothing but water or small beer for some years together, which at times brought me so low that I was obliged to gird my stomach with a handkerchief as tight as I could bear it, in order to gather strength to enable me to deliver three discourses a day. At length I got so low that one pint of good small beer rendered me incapable of walking steady; and Satan violently tempted me on this head. Some of my friends, who

saw the case I was in, fearing that I should shortly come to an end, laboured hard to dissuade me from this mode of living, but in vain. Sometimes they would mix my small beer with a little ale, which I could immediately detect, and was apt to view them my enemies for so doing; but they did it through fear that I should throw myself into a consumption and that one little branch of the church of Christ might thereby sustain a loss. For five years I went on in this manner, till there was scarce one step between me and death. But I gradually got rid of this habit, as the Lord appeared more precious to me in a way of providence, and God sanctified it to the good of my soul; for this poverty and bad living brought many infirmities on me, which have at times laid as a cankerworm at the root of my natural levity. I now began clearly to see that God intended to establish me as a preacher of the gospel, by His opening many doors for me, and because many souls were awakened by my instrumentality. Blessed be God, such shall be my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

I found it, however, impossible to preach five or six times a week, and carry on the business of cobbling at the same time; especially as it generally came in so fast at the latter end of the week - a time when I wanted to study the Scriptures, in order to furnish myself with matter for the Lord's day. Wherefore I determined to give up this employment, and continue in the work of God only, whatever I might suffer by it. In consequence of this resolution, I went to a poor cobbler, who lived in the same place with me, and to him I gave my kit of tools, threw myself entirely on the propitious arms of kind Providence; and gave myself wholly to the ministry of the Word and prayer.

At this time I had left my ready-furnished lodgings, and rented a little cottage at three pounds eighteen

shillings per annum; and we had about half as much furniture to put in it as a porter would carry at one load.

Having thus left off my cobbling business, Providence exercised my faith and patience very sharply at times, and suffered me to get a little behind-hand in the world, which caused me to cry and pray day and night; for I knew that the cause in which I was embarked would be exposed to contempt if I contracted a debt and could not pay it. And, though this is not felt by the rich, yet it lies heavy on the mind of the poor honest Christian. But, in answer to prayer, God sent to my house a gentleman of great property, very much noted in the religious world for liberality; who, after he had stayed with me a few hours, ordered his carriage, and at his departure gave me five guineas; at which I was amazed, he being a stranger to me, and one whom I had never before seen. This served to buy me some few household necessaries, as also to pay off the debt which I had contracted. Oh, who would not choose the precious life of dependency on God, when His tender regard in our poverty is so clearly seen in those rich supplies which are poured forth in answer to the simple, though powerful, prayer of faith!

At this time I stood in great need of linen and of a new suit of clothes, my old black ones being almost worn out. I often begged this favour of God agreeably to His own Word, "If God so clothe the grass, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" But God exercised my patience long, teaching me the necessity of importunity in prayer; and at last answered me by terrible things in righteousness; for He sent a violent storm of persecution, which proving intolerable, obliged me to seek redress from the law of the land, as I was legally licensed. My appeal, however, proved in vain; for, upon the trial, my license

proved an improper one from the word teacher, or preacher, being left out of it; which was not my fault, as I had applied and procured it legally. I was now compelled to go to London, and get another license. And here the answer to my former prayers appeared. Being obliged to tarry in town all night, and as there was a person who had long wanted to see me (not from any personal knowledge of me, but from various reports he had heard of the Lord's dealings with me), I endeavoured to find him, and succeeded in doing so. He received me very courteously, and kindly entertained me, at this time of sharp trial. "A man's own heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

As answers to prayer now seemed to be wholly denied me, my faith in God's providence began to fail. And in very deed I was determined to leave my ministerial work here, and go and settle at Guildford, where I thought I could get employment as a gardener, and preach to my little flock at Woking, on the Lord's day. Alas! "There are many devices in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand." However in order to accomplish this with some degree of conscience, I endeavoured to get a supply of ministers for the various places I preached at. But all my efforts were in vain. And indeed there was little encouragement for any to undertake to supply them, as they were so distant from London, and as it was in much opposition that the cause was carried on; besides there were neither tithes, offerings, nor surplice fees attending their labours. Those who undertook the work must have gone on this warfare entirely at their own expense.

As I could not possibly get any assistance in my ministerial labours, I knew not how to go on, having no clothes fit to be seen in. I suffered, too, even for want of the common necessaries of life, for I had as much travelling and preaching as I was able to do, had I lived ever so

well; but being obliged to live very low, I was hardly able to go through the work in any shape. I found myself as badly off as poor Paul, suffering hunger, cold, and nakedness.

(Continued next month)

Meadows of Dan, Virginia
Elder Donald Smith:

Very dear brother, I received this wonderful letter from Sister Mattie Underwood and asked her permission to have it published in the *Signs*. She said yes, so you can see that the Lord's given faith shall not fail in women to cause them also to proclaim the truth, and I believe this is written in this believer's heart and mind as I have received many rich letters from her, causing me to press on and uplifting my drooping heart.

I love her dearly for Christ's sake.

Your unworthy sister and a helpless
sinner,
Pauline Spencer

Dear Sister Spencer,

I will take this opportunity to answer your letter, only trusting God to direct my mind and thoughts.

As you say, unless the Lord gives us good thoughts we have none, but only evil thoughts. Christ prayed to His Father for His loved ones, that He would keep them from evil. (John 17)

It seems to me we are living in two worlds — the kingdom of God and the kingdom of men, believers and unbelievers.

Some believe God loves everybody, and Christ died for everybody. We do not find it recorded in the scriptures. In John 15:17-19 it says, "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

The unbelievers do not believe in election, but we find it recorded many times in the scriptures. The Apostle Paul, with other apostles, pinned it down. In Romans 8:33 it is recorded, "And who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;" (Rom. 9:11) Matthew 24:24 says, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." I Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;" II Timothy 3:13, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." In the 4th Chapter it says, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." Read also Mark 15:20, 21; and Luke 18:7.

I believe God's loved ones were saved and chosen in Christ before the foundation of the World in the purpose of God, and only lost when led away by evil spirits until being born again of the Spirit of God.

In I Peter 1:2, we read, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:" I Peter 2:9, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"

Sister Spencer, you say that if you are in that choice it is not of any good works that you have done but in God who was

and is rich in mercy. We Primitive Baptist believe this. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8:10-12)

To those that believe otherwise, their sins and iniquities are not pardoned, for they do not believe in the wills and shalls of God, which is none other but the doctrine of God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ taught in the school of Grace, not in the schools of men.

Yes, we should be more than thankful, that we have been made to believe this.

We read in Revelation the 22nd Chapter, "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Three months after offering to the church I dreamed of being near my uncle's home, of people gathered at the water, (it seemed to me for baptism) and in three months my twin sister met there and was baptized. I wondered then if it was my uncle who was to be baptized, but he passed a way several years ago.

Baptism in water is not putting away the filth of the flesh but an answer of a good conscience toward God.

May God continue His blessing on us and our loved ones is my prayer for Christ sake.

Mattie Underwood

Houston, Texas

Dear Editors,

Enclosed you will find a check in the amount of \$30.00 for the renewal of 3

subscriptions. Please use the balance as you see fit.

May God bless all of you dear Editors, Writers, and Readers of the precious *Signs of the Times*, which I hope and believe will continue to contend for the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Helen Johnson

Lewisville, Ark.

Dear Sirs,

I see by the *Signs* this month that I owe you for another year, so find enclosed a check for \$5.00.

I look forward to the *Signs* each month and don't want to miss a copy. I send mine to a dear Primitive Baptist in my hometown and she lets others read it.

The *Signs* is also dear to me since my father, the late Elder V. R. Harris, took it and he died in 1936 at the age of 69. I have been taking it ever since then.

May you always continue to write the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Your friend,
Mary H. Herndon

Fremont, N.C.

Dear Editors,

Please renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for another year. The enclosed check is to cover it.

The *Signs* is the most wonderful paper. May the good Lord be with all you Editors, always, and in all things.

Yours truly,
Julia Sauls

N. Little Rock, Ark.

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for \$20.00 for two subscriptions for two years each.

My father, W. S. Gordon, took the *Signs* for many, many years and enjoyed it so much.

One of my dear sisters has been

passing her copy on to me for quite a while, but I feel that isn't fair to the good people who publish it.

May God bless and keep you all.

Your sister in hope,
Mrs. Edna Simpson

Plant City, Fla.

Dear Elder Donald Smith,

I would like to renew three subscriptions to the *Signs of the Times* for two years.

I have been getting the *Signs* for only about eleven months and I have really enjoyed it. I didn't know about the *Signs* until I visited Elder and Sister Prescott in Swansboro, North Carolina.

Yours in Hope,
Fred Futch

Richmond, Virginia

Dear Editors,

I have overlooked renewal of the paper. I am sending a check for renewal for two years. Use the extra to help someone else get the paper.

My husband (Elder C.M. Bunn) passed away in 1972, but I am still enjoying the *Signs*.

May God bless you all to continue to keep sending the paper to so many who can not get out.

Unworthy,
Nellie Bunn

Reidsville, N.C.

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for \$20.00 to renew the *Signs* for another year for the three enclosed names. Please use the balance to help in whatever way you wish to help with getting the wonderful *Signs of the Times* out.

May the good Lord continue to bless you editors as He has in the past.

A Sinner in Hope,
Hilton Haney

EXHORTATION

It is preposterous to think that in some way exhortation and its effects militates against the will of God and the fulfillment of His purpose, instead of rather working in harmony with it.

If we notice the manner of preaching that Jonah was commanded to deliver unto the Ninevites we will see that it was not left up to the prophet to draw any private conclusions as to the effect the message would produce upon the hearers. The command to the Apostles was to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and leave the results thereof to the will of God. God will bless His word to His own ends. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. Some seed falls by the wayside, some among thorns, some upon stony ground, and some in good ground. Paul plants, and Apollos waters, but God gives the increase. When Saul of Tarsus was apprehended of the Lord upon the Damascus Road the Lord said unto him, "Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." (Acts 22:10) "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness (not death) to light (not life), and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts 26:16-18)

"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." (Jonah 1:2) "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." (Jonah 3:2) "And Jonah began to enter into the city a days jour-

ney, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." (Jonah 3:4) "And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: Let them not feed, nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?" (Jonah 3:7-9)

We may ask (in man's way of thinking) why the results of Jonah's preaching was not revealed unto Jonah beforehand, as the Scripture does not expressly state in so many words, but it is certainly implied, for if we will notice verse 2, chapter 4, Jonah says after the repentance of the city, "And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before thee unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil." Is it not strange that a prophet of the Lord, who has been made acquainted with the graciousness and mercy of God, could raise up such a "prayer" in anger! And because he knew this, he would be provoked to disobedience. I hope no one will be so precocious to pervert the plain language of the scripture to say that Jonah did not disobey! God's preachers are many times in rebellion and find themselves at war and resistance with that which is laid upon them, because of the weakness and opposition of the flesh and it's inclination to trust in lying vanities, and forsake their own mercy. But when God has afflicted them sufficiently, and they are cast out of His sight, then their soul faints within them, then they remember the Lord and are made to consider that all deliverances

must be from Him and of Him. We may ask what Jonah had to be thankful for in the situation he found himself in at the bottom of the sea. (Jonah 2:9) Are we not many times made thankful unto God in the midst of the afflictions He has laid upon us, because we are made to consider that this is what we have to be thankful for. We are thankful that the storm of chastisement and the sea that has overwhelmed us has, in some divine and miraculous way, been shut out, and although our position may still seem precarious, yet we are still able to perceive that it is by the divine mercy that we survive. How can one who has received of the mercy and grace of God, and has so much to be thankful for, because they be so undeserving themselves, manifest an apparant jealousy at others whom God, the Maker of all, designs to show His goodness. Let it forever be a fixed truth that "Known unto God are all His works, from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) Yet, God alone, regarding particulars, knows these things; we, His creatures, know only what He has been pleased to reveal unto us in our experience, and through the light that shineth in a dark place. Our insight into the purposes and councils of the Almighty is very limited and dim. We know by faith, and we walk by faith. To attempt to resist the plain revelations of God's will, or complain at the manifestation of it in jealousy, envy, and prejudice when God makes manifest His mercy on whom He pleases, and at the time, manner, and means He chooses is to manifest the same spirit that the Jews were notorious for. They begrudged any favors that it pleased God to bestow upon the Gentiles, or what He had prophesied concerning them. They forbid the Apostles to preach to the Gentiles that they might be saved from the darkness that they were living in, and from the power that their fallen and corrupt flesh was holding them in under the sense of condemnation and sin. "Being alienated

from the life of God, because of the ignorance that was in them". Let us, my brethren, be very careful upon these points. I am afraid that we have many times acted the part of a Jonah. See Acts 26:18-20, 26, 29. We cannot blame the purposes and predetermination of God to cover up for our errors, sins, unbelief, and shortcomings, even though He overrules them to His own glory. For so does He overrule even the actions of the devils, and they also believe and tremble.

When we consider the goodness of God to some, and as it appears, the execution of His strict justice upon others, these considerations should be sufficient to deter and abate our pride and presumption and incline our hearts unto humiliation and caution. For those that God has blessed with a manifestation of His spirit, given them a Church kingdom, and vouchsafed the knowledge of their Saviour unto them that they may rest and rejoice in Him, after all, by nature, are no better than others. For all have (and do) sin against God and His holy law as they stand in their fallen natures, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, which we are encouraged to strive to put off and keep under control through the Spirit. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. (Rom. 11:22-23)

What do we have except that we freely received from God? We can call nothing that we rejoice in and place the highest spiritual values upon as productions of our own, for it is by the favor of our Heavenly Father, and the good pleasure of His will that we are what we are. The Apostle has affirmed that he laboured more than all of his contemporaries, yet he considered himself unworthy (within his own merit and righteousness) to be

called an Apostle. For he had always in remembrance the persecution and havoc that he had wrought upon the saints of God. Therefore he says that be the grace of God he was what he was. "It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." (Lam. 3:22-23) "Thou standest by faith; be not highminded, but fear." (Rom. 11:20) Neither should we be elated with our gifts to such an extent that we develop an attitude of haughtiness, disdain and contempt toward others, and look down upon them, for all that we have when we rightly consider it, is by the grace and goodness of God alone. We should therefore stand in reverential fear of Him. Not a slavish fear that genders unto bondage and condemnation, but a fear motivated by love in not offending Him and despising His grace and mercy and goodness which has so freely been bestowed upon us. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of Him, For he chasteneth every one He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," that we may be made partakers of His holiness.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil--Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." (Eph. 6:10, 11, 18, 19) In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it. Brethren, pray for us.

(Elder) O. Allen Bailey
Westover, Alabama

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." (Prov. 25:11)

To my mind the word that is under consideration is the word of God by which the gospel is preached, and is preached by the gift of God.

"A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men". (Prov. 18:16) We know that man doesn't preach the gospel unless he is called and given the gift to preach. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Rom. 11:29) The Gospel is what we are interested in, and it is the power of God. Paul tells us in I Corr. 9:16, "For though I preach the gospel I have nothing to glory of: For necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Paul also said, "If our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost." We have to live by the gospel, which is the power that controls all things. We walk by faith; faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. "In the beginning was the word", (John 1:1) "And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) I know I am not worthy to think upon His Name even for the blessings He has bestowed upon me which are more than I can count. He has blessed me to live to worship Him above everything else. He knows what we need before we ask Him, and we believe He will supply us with all we stand in need of. I try to thank Him each day. But we have to press on to the prize of the mark of the high calling of God.

I think of the old prophets, how they had to go at God's command. This is why His servants go today. They are commanded to go preach the gospel. The gospel has never been preached by the voluntary act of man. The man who says he can preach or let it alone as he pleases is to be pitied, and I am of the opinion the church would be much better off if he would let it alone.

I have often said (and I yet have no grounds for taking it back) that I never saw a man that wanted to preach that could. Neither did I ever see one that did refuse to preach, but what the Lord could make him preach.

Now we understand "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." So says John 6:45. Jesus also says, "And them that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out". (John 6:37) This leaves no room for conditionalism on the part of man. "And all of thy children shall be taught of the Lord". (Isa. 54:13) And we are made to believe that God has never changed and never will. God has always taught man how and what to preach from His word. We read in 2 Tim. 4:2, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Preaching the Word, and being able to expound the gospel, is the most wonderful gift that man can have. "But the word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (I Peter 1:25) The word of God liveth and abideth forever. I am made glad to believe that grace and peace comes through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, to a sinner. This is our hope that we are saved by grace which is none other than the love of God shed abroad in our hearts that makes us cry unto Him begging for mercy and not justice. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God". (I John 3:1) There is no fear in love. We love God because He first loved us with perfect love. This sinner wonders if he loves God in the right way. I hope that I do. If it be God's will, I will hear Him say, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Brethren, this is my hope that my name is written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from

the foundation of the world. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15)

Now back to the text - the "word fitly spoken" is the word of God spoken by His Son, and His chosen ones do hear it. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;" (Heb. 1:1-2) The word us includes all of His elect; all of His sheep that hear His voice. Jesus is the Shepherd of His sheep. He goes before them and they follow Him. The sheep hear not the voice of a stranger and a stranger they will not follow. Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd and I know my sheep, and am known of mine." (John 10:14) "I lay down my life for the sheep." (John 10:15) ".....because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." (John 10:17)

Brethren, there were some that did not believe in the great Shepherd of the sheep, and there are some people today who don't believe in Him, as may be seen in their works. Jesus told them the reason they did not believe in Him in John 10:26, "But ye believe not because ye are not my sheep." Don't you know the sheep hear His voice and they follow Him. When He speaks it is done and He commands and it stands fast, and there is no one that can withstand God, because He is all power, controlling all things of Himself.

(Elder) Herbert R. Prince
Memphis, Tennessee

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder John D. Wood has requested that his address be changed from Box 186, Manassas, Virginia, to 8902 Cherry Tree Lane, Manassas, Virginia 22110.

He has not moved but for convenience sake is having his mail delivered by the carrier.

GRACE AND PREDESTINATION NO LICENSE!

Beloved Ones:

"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. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. 12:1-2)

as followers of truth we would never swerve. We must never lower the standard nor compromise the pure doctrines of grace, for these are the experience of all the people of God. Neither must we mix grace and works, as conditionalism does. Nor must this doctrine of grace be allowed to fall into a fatalistic passive do-nothingism. Grace is no license to sin! "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life". (Rom. 6:1-4)

This grace of God, of which we delight to hear and to tell, is a grace that teaches everyone who receives it. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." (Tit. 2:11-15)

Because of the "mercies of God", the apostle concludes that living a sacrificial, holy, acceptable life is "your reasonable service". Now a long

controversy has raged in Primitive Baptist circles as to whether man is active or passive after regeneration. Active means lively or alive. Passive means enduring without resistance or without activity, that is lifeless. Now we know the sinner is totally passive before his regeneration, for how can the dead do anything? (Eph. 2:1) But I believe we can see where the saint of God is both active and passive after regeneration. He is passive for he faces his gross inability; he is active for he is alive to his terrible responsibility!

God infallibly assures the accomplishment of His will - this we know - but can we coldly sit on that one point without any concern about our scriptural duty? "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (I Thes. 5:5-6)

Let us notice a few things the written Word says the child of God is to do. 1. Add to your faith seven blessed traits enumerated in II Peter 1:5-10. And what of one who does not actively pursue his duty in this matter? "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." (II Peter 1:9-10)

2. Study to show yourself approved "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." (II Tim. 2:15; compare I John 2:28) According to the parable of the talents in Matt. 25, the slothful servant will be ashamed at His appearing. There is a responsibility placed by a sovereign God upon each child of His in this matter. We are to study and to "desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (I Peter 2:2-3)

3. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. (Phil. 2:12-13) Here he continues, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." reminding us that

back of our working out is God's inworking! But in most of Paul's admonitions he leaves it in the active voice - not always stopping to remind his reader of this subjective prior work of grace!

4. Deny self, take up your cross and follow me. (Matt. 16:24-25) Can we accept these and similar words of Jesus implying action - or must we explain it away or spiritualize it to mean He did this for us? "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." (Heb. 13:12-13)

5. Lay aside every weight and run the race. (Heb. 12:1) Are we endeavoring to do this, calling upon Him to help us? Or do we in our shallow understanding of the doctrine, just assume that we are in the race while still lying upon beds of ease?

6. Contend for the faith once delivered. (Jude 3) Are we in our individual places trying to do this? Or have we not often felt that each person believes just exactly what he is destined to believe - "he is serving his purpose" - and therefore we fail to stand up and actively contend for the faith?

These and many other admonitions lead us to know that God's people are active-they are alive - they have a hearing ear and an obedient heart - thus are the only fit ones to be exhorted to obedience. And they must be so exhorted: "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles

which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." (I Thes. 4:1-7)

More than half the teachings of our Lord and of the entire New Testament consists of exhortation, admonition, instruction to the living family of God! This poor feeble writer has tried to show in other articles the folly of exhorting the dead to come alive, and I have tried to stress the great truth that all New Testament admonition is directed to the regenerate, never to the unregenerate! We have likewise tried to expose in another article the error of conditionalism - i.e., making everything in Scripture admonition to hinge on the will of the new creature. But at this time our burden is for some who are evidently caught in a system that knows nothing of obedience or disobedience, advocating that God sovereignly accomplishes all His will at all times - that everything is just as it should be always - but wrongly concluding that we are not responsible!

The decrees of God cannot be my rule of life - however sure and infallible I know them to be. My rule of life must be the things He has told me in His precious Word. There is a people, says the Apostle, who have "become dull of hearing", (Heb. 5:11) all the while still professing grace. The mark of unbelievers is that "they would not have this man to reign over them" (Luke 19:14) -- that is, to tell them how they must act!

If my hope in Christ is a "good hope", then Christ is my Lord, Lord of my life and of my actions. "Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am." (John 13:13) "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46) Our Lord does not say, "It's all fixed - ye are doing just exactly as ye should and as ye must. I have predestinated this and therefore ye dis-

ciples are not responsible to do anything other than what ye are now doing." --- This would perfectly suit some self-styled Old Baptists who are sleeping under an abuse of God's absolute predestination and unchangeable decrees! But our Lord takes no such passive attitude to sovereign predestination. While He never violates grace - He never teaches works for salvation--He never promises His people a reward here in time for an obedience which is wholly contingent upon their own will - yet neither did our Holy and Blessed Lord ever encourage passiveness or inactivity on the basis of the predestination of God! We could enumerate many examples, but you have Bibles. Read for yourself, starting with the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 5-7)

For those who have an understanding heart and a willing mind, we would bring before you the life and death of our suffering Saviour. When He came into this world it was as an Obedient Servant as well as a Dying Substitute. (Read Matt. 20:28) Our Lord was not One to stand passively on the sidelines - witness His cleansing of the temple in Mark 11:15-17! He wrestled with Satan in the Wilderness and in the Garden. He offered up strong crying and tears, the writer of Hebrews tells us, and He endured such gross contradiction of sinners. (Heb. 5:7; 12:3) No passivity in Him! Thank God, He stood true. There was no sin found in Him, none could condemn Him, neither was any guile found in His mouth. One of His enemies was heard to declare, "Never man spake like this man," and even Pilate found in Him no fault at all. He was pure, undefiled, separate from sinners. How we delight in the gracious truth of our Lord's sinless life and substitutionary death. But had He "conformed" to the world, we could not have a Saviour. Every time He preached, He set before them the proper course for their lives. At the same time, remember, there was never a stronger preacher of predestina-

tion than our Lord! Read Matt. 11:25-27, Luke 4:25-28, and John 12:37-41, as a sample of the finest preaching on unlimited predestination.

Our Blessed Saviour left us the example of how we are to walk in obedience to the Heavenly Father, while in full recognition of God's unfailing providence and eternal purpose. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:5) "For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." (I Peter 2:21) Now if a strict adherence to absolute predestination would cause us to leave off following the example of our Saviour, then we had best reconsider our view of predestination. Christ Jesus our Lord died for the very reason that sin is so abominable to a Holy God. Dare any of us walk in sin and lay the blame upon a Pure and Spotless Lord! "Christ has not died in order to purchase for His people an indulgence for them to live in sin; rather did He shed His precious blood to redeem them from all iniquity and 'purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works' (Titus 2:14), and just so far as they neglect those good works will they fail to enter experimentally into the benefits of His redemption." (Arthur W. Pink)

"Thou also hast wrought all our works in us", (Isa. 26:12) is another side of the truth - so gloriously true - but we are to adhere to His precepts actively as our duty, as obedient children. From the view of Almighty God - i.e., looking down from Heaven as the Eternal "I Am" - 'tis unalterably true that all things are fixed and the Eternal Sovereign God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will". (Eph. 1:11) But from the viewpoint of faith - i.e., standing upon this sin-cursed earth and looking heavenward - we see the law of cause and effect. As we walk in the light, He is pleased to give us light. And the

Old Prophet of long ago could say, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord." (Hos. 6:3) Follow on is "to run after" in the original; implying human activity, the activity of a living person!

So we see that the decree of God is sovereignly and arbitrarily accomplished from God's omniscient point of view. But from faith's narrow viewpoint, it is through necessity being laid upon us to walk in His way, to overcome the world, to live as obedient children. Any religious professor who is a stranger to this experience may well lay aside his profession altogether. For while professing the doctrines of truth and the very faith of God's elect, if there be not this desire to walk in obedience, he is yet in the course of this present world, knowing nothing of grace in reality. He may have the letter but not the Spirit and unction of truth.

The beloved Apostle Paul taught that the believer is one who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Now we know - those who are taught of God know - that this Spirit is a Person of the Eternal Godhead. Surely this Spirit knows better than any dead-letter professor the certain accomplishment of all God's predestinated decrees. But how does this Spirit lead one who is alive spiritually? He brings one to see his infirmities and to groan over his inability. (Rom. 8:26) "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.....who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Rom. 8:2-6)

This indwelling Spirit continually stirs up the child of God to a sense of his duty and a painful awareness of his failures and sins. This brings from his lips that cry, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body

of this death?" (Rom. 7:24)

"If I pray or hear or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do.
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?"

Newton

There has come in recent times into our midst - speaking as Old Baptists - a terrible fatalistic absolutism that would say: "Well, I am walking exactly where my steps are ordered by God. I cannot do other than what I do. Then what is there to be disturbed about? I have never disobeyed God but merely fulfilled His purposes." Such is foreign to the spirit of Paul who constantly feared and trembled, desiring that he might know more of Christ. (Please turn and read Phil. 3:7-14) He pressed toward the mark-it was the consuming passion of his soul. No passivity in Paul!

We pause once more to stress that we firmly believe the truths of the absolute sovereignty of God. A spiritual resignation to the will of God in all things is right - and yet a solemn striving to overcome that which is our hindrance and our sin is likewise a spiritual necessity. God's counsel is oftentimes hidden to us, so we must walk by faith. We must look to the precepts of His holy Word. Remember, the certainty of "what is to be" can never alleviate our responsibility in the face of those precepts.

A sovereign, predestinating God gave us the Bible. It is God-inspired from Gen. 1:1 to Rev. 22:21. If the Bible is not given to encourage - yea, to motivate us - to instruct us in the way of life - then why, please tell me, was this book given at all? "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (II Tim. 3:16) So there we see the Bible is God's precious Word - it is given to the quickened man of God, (vs. 17) to reveal His will for our lives.

This, my brethren, is far from Arminianism or conditionalism, but is the very truth by which God is pleased to

instruct us - to correct us - to conform us to the image of His Son! "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:2)

There is no time here to sit idly by and assume that His perfect will is being done in our lives - but there is a turning from worldly conformity, a proving, a seeking, in this matter. It is most cruel and blasphemous to blame God with our evil ways while given over to fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and the desires of the (natural) mind. But they who are taught of God are ever ready to confess themselves as sinners, knowing something of the enormity of sin as it is a rebellion to all that our God is, and that they could never be free of sin just by overlooking it or saying, "Well, I did what I was given a mind to do!" Brethren, let us flee from such a tendency. It is possible to dispute fine points of doctrine too long, until the heart is cold and calloused in theory, and until we have "left our first love". May it not be so with us. Let us love the decrees of our Immutable God but let us likewise be about our duty in seeking to honor Him during all the days of our earthly pilgrimage.

If you want to talk about things that are fixed - I tell you the Lord has so ordered, constituted and fixed us that we are to grow and be conformed to His perfect will through the Scriptures, through exhortation of God's dear servants, and through meditation - all under the direction of that One Spirit by whom we all are partakers of like precious faith. "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord". (I Cor. 1:31)

Let us rejoice in our duty - but let us ascribe to Him the honor of all our successes. You see, this is not conditionalism which would glory in the works of the creature. But this is true

faith, which would desire to walk worthy of the One who has called us. This is a great mystery except to those of the household of faith to whom it is given! Amen

Note: I had purposed to write out the following Scripture references, but since the article is already too long I would urge those who want to receive a challenge to turn and read them in your Bible. I John 1:6-7, I John 2:4-6, Eph. 5:1-17. This is needed Brethren!

Wylie W. Fulton
P.O. Box 879
Forest City, N.C. 28043

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BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Healthy Plains the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1978.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
 Box 4524
 Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

ARTICLES WANTED

The following titles by Elder David Bartley are being sought for possible re-publication:

- "The Christ-Man in Type"
- "Death in Adam - Life in Christ"
- "Man Redeemed from Sin and Death"
- "Faith Against Infidelity"
- "Early Religious Life"
- "The Priesthood of the Holy Son of God"
- "Death and Resurrection"

Anyone in possession of the above will please contact:

Elder Maon Jones
 107 Elm Lane
 Streamwood, Ill. 60103

EDITORIAL

VARIOUS CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES AMONG OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, AS OBSERVED BY THE WRITER

For several years I have had a desire to write an article describing the different practices among the churches in different places. I note the different practices among those who preach the same doctrine, yet whose fellowship is not affected.

First, I will mention some practices in Canada:

PRAYER: The first part of the service is prayer. The minister enters the pulpit, and while the congregation stands, the minister prays.

COMMUNION: When communion is served each person holds his bread until all have been served; and when the minister says, "And they all did eat," all eat the bread at the same time. Leavened bread is used in the service; as it is in most places in the North, but not all. The difference in the use of leavened and unleavened bead has never affected their fellowship.

SINGING: In the Dominion they have a small book containing the Psalms in metre, and some Paraphrases in verse. When I first visited there over thirty years age this book was used exclusively in their services. Hymns were used between services, which most knew by heart. The Psalms and Paraphrases are sung in familiar tunes. Their singing is wonderful, and the congregation joins in the singing.

NORTHERN STATES: In the northern states the congregation does not stand during prayer; and hymn books are used in singing. Some have the same custom of holding the bread in communion, and others do not.

DEACONS: In the North the deacons are appointed by the church for the most part, and not formally ordained by a

presbytery as in the South.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Collections are taken by the deacons immediately after the conclusion of the sermon, by passing a plate or basket. There is no formality observed in this.

MEETING HOUSES: The place of worship is referred to as the Meeting House. In other areas the meeting place is referred to as the Church, for the most part.

RECEIVING MEMBERS: In years past it has been customary for those expecting to offer to the church for membership, to first speak to the pastor about it, laying their case before him for his advice. Though there is no set rule in the matter. This practice is not followed at present as much as it was in the past. When a person offers to the church for membership, he is said to be going before the church, instead of joining the church.

USUAL PRACTICES IN THE SOUTH AND WEST:

DEACONS: The usual practice is for the church to choose one or more whom they believe meet the scriptural qualifications of the office. Then a call is sent to a minister or ministers who join the pastor in organizing a presbytery for this work. After due examination, if believed qualified, the presbytery proceeds to ordain by the laying on of hands and prayer; and then a charge is given regarding the duties of the office. In one area that I know of, at some of the ordinations of deacons, the deacons present take part in the laying on of hands. This is not the usual practice over the land.

CHURCH EXPENSES: Contributions are made by the members and friends directly to the minister in some areas. In other places the contributions for the minister and for church expenses, are handed to the deacons; and distribution of the funds is left to them.

In some communities, especially at associations and appointments of visit-

ing ministers, the congregation is called on to contribute; and while a hymn is being sung, the people go forward and lay their contribution on the table. In other words, in the South and West, there is no fixed rule.

PRAYER: In some parts of the South some ministers stand while praying, while in other areas they kneel. There is no fixed rule in the matter. In the deep South and West, I believe they all kneel in prayer.

COMMUNION: Unleavened bread with the wine is served in the communion service. In some places the deacons personally serve each of the members, who are requested to sit in every other pew so as to be easily served. In other places the elements of the communion are handed to a member at the end of the pew, and they then pass it to others in the pew.

FEET WASHING: In the Middle Atlantic States of Virginia and North Carolina, some of the churches engage in literal feet washing, and other churches do not. Where a church does engage in the practice it is left to the choice of each member whether they engage or not. I do not know of any church where all engage in this. It has never been a problem with them and the most charitable attitude is manifested by all. In the Northern Churches most of the members have never observed this practice, or even witnessed it.

In the deep South and West, from my observations, the members have all engaged in literal washing of feet; which is usually done at the conclusion of the communion. In the North, South, and West there has never been a question of fellowship among them over this practice. The ministers of the South and West have visited freely among the Northern churches; and the ministers from the North likewise.

There is a section of the country where there is a tendency to make a test of fellowship about literal feet washing; and they are finding such an attitude

discouraged by brethren when the matter is pressed. Elder Sylvester Hassel, in the Primitive Baptist Church History, has this to say about the practice, on page 845, "This appears to be an open question among Baptists, some approving and others disapproving the literal observance as a church ordinance or rite." In relation to the Kehukee Association, the oldest Primitive Baptist Association in the United States, Elder Hassel has this to say, "Some of the churches of the Kehukee Association never observe it at all, others observe it annually and connect it with the communion or the Lord's Supper."

On page 847, Elder Hassell continues as follows, "The discussion of the subject of feetwashing on both sides has been characterized by a true Christian spirit, worthy of commendation." It would be a sad day for the church were the observance or non-observance of this rite ever be set up as a bar to fellowship. So far from this at the present time, it has been customary with the churches of the Kehukee Association to excuse any or all who did not feel disposed to unite with them on such occasions."

I have set forth the above, to show that in different parts of the country there have been varying practices; yet brethren in the North, South, East, and West have been blessed to live in peace and fellowship with each other; and to manifest a charitable spirit toward others whose customs and practices differ with theirs. Where you do not find this manifested, you will find a people with many factions and groups where very little love and fellowship abounds.

In conclusion, let us ever be mindful of the Apostle's word as to who is to be received among us. "If they bring not this doctrine, receive them not into your house," ect. Which doctrine is the doctrine of rich and reigning grace in the salvation of every vessel of God's mercy.

April, 1970

D.V.S.

(It seems that this Editorial by Elder Spangler is as timely and useful now as it was when first written. We hope our readers agree and will find it profitable to their souls. J.F.P.)

FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lord willing, Elder C. C. Morris, of Duncanville, Texas, is to be with the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church the fifth weekend in April, 1978. The church is located three miles east of U.S. 13 on Smith Mill Road, halfway between Laurel and Delmar, Delaware.

Sister Pattie Krewatch, Clerk
Elder Jack Dawsey, Pastor

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Princess Anne, Md.

Feb. 16, 1864

Brother Beebe: If it will not interfere with other matter, you will oblige me by giving your views on *Haggai 1:6*, "*Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.*"

I. W. Bayly

REPLY—This message was sent to Zerubbabel, the governor of Jerusalem, and to Joshua, the priest, and, through them, to the people of Judea, in the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia, admonishing them to proceed with the work of building the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem. The work had been commenced under the patronage of Cyrus, by whose hand God had delivered Judah from her seventy years of captivity in Babylon, but hindered by the adversaries of Judah, who had taken offence because their proffered services to help build had been rejected by Zerubbabel and Joshua; and, in revenge, they charged them with disloyalty to the king, and succeeded in

procuring an edict, or injunction, from the king, causing the work to stop. But God sent the prophet Haggai with a command to go on with the work. This prophet, in urging his divinely authorized admonition, "Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house shall be built. Then came the word of the Lord, by Haggai, the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, "Consider your ways." And of the things which they were to consider, in making up their minds whether it were better for them to obey God or men, mark the dealings of God with them in their disobedience. How had they fared while the work was suspended through fear of the human government claiming the right to dictate in this matter. This suspension lasted from the time of the decree of Artaxerxes until the second year of the reign of Darius, and during that period God had withheld from them the blessings provided in His covenant for their obedience, and had sent upon them the judgments in that covenant provided for disobedience. The scarcity of bread among them was not because they had sown too sparingly, for they had sown much, but bring in little. God in judgment had withheld the rains and dew, and suffered not the earth to yield to them its bounteous harvests. This is one thing they were called on to consider. Another matter for serious consideration was that what they did eat was forbidden to satisfy their appetites. "Ye eat, but ye have not enough. Ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink." Neither in eating or drinking could they be satisfied. "Ye clothe you, but there is none warm." They could prosper in nothing. Even the hireling who earned wages could not permanently invest them. Their money was put into bags with holes, so that it was lost. Now, God commands them to consider these His dealings with them, and bear in mind that "the way of the transgressors is hard." God would not allow them, as His peculiar people, to prosper in disobe-

dience. How true the testimony of them as an inconsiderate people is given in the first chapter of Isaiah, - more inconsiderate than the very ox, and even the stupid ass reproves them. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider." God had promised them corn and wine and oil if they were obedient to him, and assured them that the willing and obedient should eat the good of the land; but the same covenant provided that if they were disobedient, he would send the sword, the famine and the pestilence. Under their then present circumstances, it became them soberly to consider whether there were not clear and palpable evidence that God disapproved of their disobedience. How astonishing, that having so recently returned from their seventy years of captivity in Babylon, they should so soon require to be reminded of their duty to obey God by His judgments. They were a carnal, but a typical people, and their waywardness as a stiff-necked and rebellious people but too plainly points to the inconsistency, disobedience and backslidings of the spiritual Israel of God under the new covenant - in this the gospel dispensation, and the frequent chastisements to which we are subjected for our wanderings. These lessons are written and left on record for our instruction and admonition. And although the new covenant under which we live is a better one, containing better promises, and in it God has promised to be merciful to our unrighteousness, and that he will remember our iniquities no more, yet with equal certainty he has provided that he will, in parental love and covenant faithfulness, visit our iniquities with the rod, and our sins with many stripes.

We learn from this record of God's ancient people, or we should, if we but considered our ways as God commanded them to consider theirs that our comforts, joys and spiritual prosperity, though not for our good works, yet are inseparably connected with our faithful obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. Can the child of God be happy in

disobedience? Can the christian prosper when indifferent to the honor of his Lord and Master?

Let us look about us and consider. Have we sown much? Alas! perhaps too much have we sown to the flesh, from which we are reaping corruption - food that will not satisfy the cravings of a child of God. Have we drank from broken cisterns, and found that the streams of earth cannot satisfy like the streams of that river which makes glad the city of God? Have we wrapped us in a cloak, or garments of Babylonish texture? Can christians feel warm and comfortable in a Babylonish garment? Have we upon the legal principle been working for wages? How have we husbanded our gains? What have we laid up in store against the time of need? Let us consider that it does not become us to live in ceiled houses, while the church of God is neglected and the ways of Zion mourn. That we are not to court the smiles of princes, potentates or monarchs, at the expense of our sacred allegiance to the King Eternal, the only wise God our Saviour, nor to barter away or yield one particle of what He has revealed in His holy word, to save from the rack, the torture, the scaffold or the stake, these poor frail dying bodies. "He that findeth his life shall loose it; and he that looseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 10:40) "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." (Ps. 50:22, 23)

Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., April 1, 1864

OBITUARIES

LOIS DUDLEY WILLIS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst a dear and lovely sister, Lois Dudley Willis.

Sister Willis was born in Franklin County on May 14, 1910, and passed away Nov. 26, 1977, at the age of 67. Sister Willis came to

Sandy Level Church by letter in December, 1970.

Survivors are one daughter, Mrs. Donnie Prillaman; and two sons, James and Wayne Willis. Also surviving are three sisters, Sister Edith Brooks, Sister Mae Perdue, and Sister Odessa Brown; and three brothers, Brothers Henry Dudley, Benford Dudley, and Hedrick Dudley; and five grandchildren.

She passed away in Martinsville Hospital. We believe that Jesus called her to come to Him, "that where I am there ye may be also".

Sandy Level Church will always hold her precious in their thoughts. Sister Lois was a lovely and faithful member and attended services as long as health permitted. The children so lovingly cared for her, always providing a way for her to go to church, which she enjoyed so much.

Funeral services were conducted at McKee Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Denver Simpson, and Mr. James R. Cole, with burial in the Roselawn Cemetery in Martinsville, Va., beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, awaiting the coming of her blessed Saviour. We shall miss her but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of the Church.

Elder Denver Simpson, Moderator
Ruthie Walker, Clerk

ELDER A. L. MCKINNEY

November 4, 1906 October 18, 1977

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

Elder McKinney, a man with a very strong hope of eternal rest, has departed this life of sin and sorrow and, were it possible, would advise those who mourn "to sorrow not, even as others which have no hope".

Elder McKinney asked for and received a home with Beulah Church in Hyde County, North Carolina on the third Sunday in January, 1953, and shortly thereafter a divine gift was recognized by his brethren and he was ordained to the full work of the ministry on the third Sunday in December, 1953.

At the time of his death he was pastor of three churches and moderator of the Eastern Union, one of the two unions of the Kehukee Association.

Elder McKinney was not a man who traveled far, his health prevented this, but he enjoyed the brethren from far and near to visit him, because no one enjoyed telling of the goodness of their God more than he.

Elder McKinney leaves to mourn a devoted wife, Mrs. Nellie McKinney, and four fine children; one daughter, Mrs. Larue Moye of Farmville; three sons, Wayne of Newport News, Virginia, Ronnie of Ahoskie, N.C., and Jimmie of Greenville, N.C., and several grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by Elder J. T. Prescott with Elders E. C. Harrison and I. S. Conor eulogizing briefly. He was laid to rest in Soule Cemetery beneath a large mound of flowers that attested to the esteem in which he was held.

His family miss him, his churches miss him, and all of us who knew him will miss him but none of us could wish him back.

Written by Reeves Smith

ANDREW C. GIBSON

The church at Weatherford with a deep sense of appreciation and love for the life of Brother Andrew Gibson indeed feels it has suffered a loss in his death on September 25, 1977. In the loss of his presence we acknowledge the sovereignty of God and hope to be reconciled to His will.

Brother Gibson was born in Pittsylvania county, March 12, 1911, and engaged in the lumber business from young in life until his retirement. He was given hope and joined Weatherford Church August 24, 1952 and was baptized September 14, 1952. His Brethren feeling to see in him a gift, he was ordained as deacon May 21, 1960.

Brother Gibson was blessed with many marks of grace and loved and desired peace in the church. He was sincere in his convictions and satisfied that only God ruled all things and that salvation was perfected in Christ and He alone. He often spoke of how he felt about doctrines which did not give God all of the honor, praise, and glory.

He was blessed with hospitality to divide what the Lord had given him naturally and opened the doors of his home with warmest love and fellowship to the flock. He loved the company of his Brethren and the conversations of heavenly things.

May all who miss him be blessed to feel their loss has been his gain through Jesus Christ. He is survived by his wife Sister Alice Gibson, three sons, James, Bobby, and Kenneth all of Gretna; two daughters, Sister Christine Shelton of Chatham and Mrs. Gail Dalton of Gretna. His other survivors are: six brothers, Noel of Hurt, Herbert, Acie, Charles, and Harry of Gretna, and Wilbur of Lynch Station and one sister, Mrs. Billy Dalton of Hurt. He also leaves twelve grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted in Weatherford Meeting House by Elders O.K. Tench, Raymond Goad, and Denver Simpson. He was buried in the church cemetery overlooking the Meeting House. His life was a life of hope, his sickness and afflictions of patience and his death a parting in faith of God's promises.

Written by: Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

Clerk: Brother L. H. Doss

Moderator: Elder O. K. Tench

SISTER NEVA BROOKS

It is with sadness and humility that I pass on this information after learning that some dear friends have not yet been notified.

Sister Neva Fenny Brooks, age 91, died at the Torrance, Little Company of Mary Hospital, Torrance, California, on Feb. 4, 1977.

She was born at Boiceville, New York, November 26, 1885, daughter of Thomas and Sarah Fenney. She and her husband, Fredrick Brooks, also deceased, were baptized into the Primitive Baptist Faith at Temples Pond, Ashokan, New York, (date unknown) by Elder Arnold Bellows, then pastor of the Shokan Old School Baptist Church. She later transferred membership to the Liberty Primitive Baptist Church of California after taking up residence with her son and daughter-in-law, John and Marie Brooks, of 902 Maple Avenue, Torrance, California 90503.

She is survived by her son and only child, five grandchildren and six great grandchildren, all of California.

Thank you for the courtesy of this publication.

Sincerely,
John T. Brooks

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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

BANK OF FAITH (Continued from April)

The good man whom I have before mentioned, and at whose house I lodged that night, proposed that I should go into Sussex, to preach at the place of his nativity. I told him that the apparel I then had on was all the clothes I possessed, therefore I was really not fit to be seen anywhere; and that I was likewise in debt. He asked me if I would stay and preach in one of his rooms in the evening to a few friends whom he would invite. I complied with his request, and accordingly preached; here three gentlemen gave me each a guinea. The good man also went to some of his friends, and made up the sum of nine guineas; with which I got proper clothing and other necessaries; and there was a little money left to pay some debts which I had contracted. Thus I went home with a full answer to my prayers, and in my second suit of parsonic attire. This circumstance much encouraged my faith in God's providence, and caused me perpetually to beg of God to be my only Provider, Teacher, and Master, and that He would always direct my steps, and supply my wants, and not leave me dependent on an arm of flesh. In my prayers I often made this my plea, that as He had called me without the instrumentality of any preacher, and sent me out without the approbation or disapprobation of anyone, and had in a way of providence opened many doors before me, and blessed my labours to the good of many souls, He would also let His providence appear to me as I might stand in need of it; that I might not be

burdened with cares about what I should eat or what I should drink, or wherewithal I should be clothed; but that I might devote body, soul, time, and talents to the glory of His name, and to the good of His chosen. These petitions God has been pleased to answer in some measure ever since: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." (Psa. 37:25)

On my return from London, I could not help making my boast of God, even in the pulpit. And as my persecutors had burnt me in effigy a little while before, I told my audience that God had sent me a new suit of clothes, as it were, out of the ashes, my persecutors having burnt a suit (with which they clothed the effigy), not much unlike my old one. Seeing me thus clad was a great grief to the opposers of God; they were sorry to see any raised up to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

I had now a pleasing gale of prosperity for some time; but shortly after another cloud of frowning providences gathered thick over my head, and kept me long in suspense, until I had run fourteen or fifteen pounds in debt, more by ten pounds than I had ever owed before. But as my faith in providence had been sharply tried, and was strengthened by such trials, a greater burden was laid upon me. And thus I found faith's task to be always proportionable to her strength. In the midst of this trouble, the little flock at Woking desired me to take the charge of, and to be ordained over, them, to which I consented, and gave my promise. On my return home afterwards, however, Satan violently tempted me, and unbelief and carnal reason fell in with the temptation. It was for having refused some calls in the country, where the people would have supported me as their pastor, if I would have accepted their call; but now, as I had agreed to take the charge of a flock that could not support me, I should be

tied down from accepting any other call; that my family was still increasing; that I was deeply in debt; that my clothes had got as bad as ever; that my year was now out; and that my gracious Master had not given me a new livery, nor was there any appearance of it. But blessed be God, I had the inward recompense of a good conscience, because I did not take the oversight of God's flock for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

Having waded some time in this dreadful flood, I began at length to reason, from past experience, that God had hitherto been gracious; and as He had set me to work, I must look to Him for my wages. But this Satan attempted to overthrow, by suggesting that I was never so much in debt before, which I knew to be true; so that my faith began to fail, and I mistrusted the Providence of God. But these words came so sweetly to my mind, and with so much power, that they bore down all that the tempter could suggest, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "A word spoken in due season is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

The next day in the evening I preached at Hammersmith, and on coming down from the pulpit, a gentleman desired me to call at his house, where he had ordered a tailor to measure me for a suit of clothes, of which he intended to make me a present. As soon as the words were out of his mouth, the same scripture returned with power to my mind, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." I hung down my head, and wept for joy at the goodness of my God to one who was so slow of heart to believe. In a few days my clothes were made, and I went and received them. This was one sharp blow to my unbelief, and led me to see that God took care to order apparel for me, as well as for Aaron and his sons.

Now the principal and most difficult

work of faith was to reconcile my mind as to the discharge of my large debt. And how this was to be done I knew not; but this I knew, that I had not imprudently presumed on God's providence, having contracted it merely to supply my wants; and, as the Lord made me trust Him for the fulfilment of His promises, I was forced to get others to trust me till my faith could get her wages in. Thus I scored up for my blessed Master, who, in His own time, always discharged my debts with honour. That God who wrought a miracle to clear, by Elisha the prophet, the debt of a poor widow, will surely clear the just debts of His poor ministers.

Soon after this my friend in London asked me, and I consented, to preach at his house, and on the day appointed I went. He told me he had consulted the managers of Margaret Street Chapel about my preaching there, to which they had agreed, and it was advertised that I should preach there that night. At this I was sorely offended, being very much averse to preaching in London for several reasons. First, because I had been told it abounded so much with all sorts of errors, that I was afraid of falling into them, and there were so many that lay in wait to deceive. Secondly because I had no learning, and therefore feared I should not be able to deliver myself with any degree of propriety; and as I knew nothing of Greek or Hebrew, nor even of the English grammar, I should be exposed to the scourging tongue of every critic in London. However, I preached that night, and soon after found myself induced, by sundry persuasions, to preach the Word of God stately in that very chapel. During many weeks I laboured under much distress of mind respecting my want of abilities to preach in this great metropolis. But God in due time removed that distress, by condescending to bless His Word, even from my mouth and He was pleased by the first discourse to deliver a young

man from a capital error; which appeared not only a great encouragement to me at that time, but also a prelude to that future success which I might expect under God's promised blessing. The above-mentioned young man is now a preacher of the gospel, and has been instrumental in calling others. So that I am become a grandfather from my first London discourse.

Being a native of the weald of Kent, which is none of the most polite part of the world, I retained a good deal of my provincial dialect; and many of my expressions, to the ears of a grammarian, sounded very harsh and uncouth. This circumstance caused many unsanctified critics to laugh and cavil at me. But when God permitted me to drop promiscuously into company with any of those who were so very learned, and they began to pour contempt on some of my expressions, I generally found them very deficient in the work of the Spirit on their souls; and, though some of them seemed very wise in gospel doctrines, yet I could easily find that their knowledge was borrowed from commentators, by their appearing great strangers to the experience of them in their hearts, and also to the happy enjoyment of them; which I knew they would be able to give an account of, if they had received them wet with dew and warm with love from heaven, in answer to the prayer of faith. It is true that some have often confounded me in the sense and meaning of words, as also in the original texts; yet I found I could as much confound them in the sensible operations of the Holy Ghost, agreeably to the Word of God; and, by my own experience of the Spirit's work, could overthrow some expressions of theirs from the Hebrew language, especially those who laboured to overthrow the divinity of the Son of God; the manifestation of whom, to my own soul, agreeably to His Word, has enabled me to foil the most accomplished Arian I have ever yet contented with upon that point. The only way to

prove Christ's Divinity is to go to Him when overwhelmed with guilt and horror, and to pray to Him as the eternal God, and, if He appears to honour our faith and to answer our prayers, and delivers us from the wrath of God, the guilt of sin, the power of Satan, the fear of death, the curse of the law, and eternal damnation, and blesses us with pardon, peace, love, and liberty, He shall be the eternal God of our soul's salvation, though Satan be the god of this unhallowed world. For, though the Arians talk of Christ as a stone of help, yet if they allow Him to be no more than a creature, they might as well call Him a sandy foundation as a rock; for all flesh is dust, and to dust it must return. If He were not God, He certainly would have seen corruption, as well as other creatures have done; and that He was raised from the dead is not owing to His being man, but to His being God, - "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." His flesh was raised without seeing corruption, because He was the Son of God with power, and had immortality and eternal life in Himself, as the self-existent and independent Jehovah. And, as God the Father prepared a body for Him, and He willingly came and took it on Him to do His Father's will, so He wore that garment of flesh till He had finished the work His Father gave Him to do, and then dipped it in blood, and sanctified Himself for our sakes, that He might sanctify us. He then laid it down for our life, and raised it again for our justification; took it at last to heaven as the first fruits of them that sleep; and appears in it as in an eternal temple wherein dwells the glorious Shekinah, or, "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." All our access to God is only through that rent veil of His flesh; and he who allows Christ to be no more than a creature, denies all the intrinsic glory of the eternal Godhead that ever dwelt between the cherubim, and condemns

every hoping soul that ever took shelter under the shadowing wings of the Almighty.

Upon the whole, I found my ignorance of Greek and Hebrew to be no impediment in the way of the Spirit of Power, as I firmly believe that God had written His law on my heart; and I am persuaded that what the Holy Ghost writes on the mind of man is always agreeable to the original text; and that, if there are any errors in our English translation, the blessed Spirit will never impress the minds of God's elect from a false copy, nor appear as the broad seal of heaven to ratify a lie. No; "He shall guide you into all truth, and He shall glorify Me."

But I shall now return to my former subject, and inform my reader how my faith managed the great debt before mentioned, God having long exercised my faith and patience, until I began to despair of ever getting it paid. It so happened that a capital error crept into the church of God at Horsham, in Sussex; and some friends sent for me, as it was a place where I had often preached; indeed it was the first place that I had ever preached at in a public manner. I therefore complied with their request; and on my way thither was blessed with one of the most comfortable and lively frames of mind that I had ever enjoyed. This frame was attended with a most delightful chain of heavenly meditations; which, when I arrived at my journey's end, I committed to paper and sent to a friend in town. This circumstance, under God, paved a way for my being invited to preach at Chelsea, where I delivered a discourse from this text, "Children, have ye any meat?" I was afterwards informed that a confirmed Arian came out of curiosity to hear me; and, though I knew nothing of it, I was led, in the course of my sermon to be very severe against the destructive tenets of that sect; in consequence of which he went home convinced; and

upon his arrival there, was seized with a fit of illness, during which Christ was graciously pleased to manifest His atonement to his conscience. When he felt the power he cried out, "The darkness is now past, and the true light shineth." He continued in this divine ecstasy till his body dropped into the jaws of death, which was about a fortnight after the above discourse was delivered. Thus God fulfils His Word, "Those that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and those that murmured shall learn doctrine."

But to return to my subject. A gentleman famous for a liberal turn of mind, asked me to lodge at his house, with which I gladly complied; and in the evening he inquired about my health, ministerial success, and also concerning my circumstances. As God alone knew my wants, so none but God could have inclined his heart to relieve me. This precious answer to prayer, coming so seasonably in a time of need, put my discontent to the blush, dashed infidelity itself out of countenance, and stopped the mouth of an accusing devil. "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." (Psa. 37:3)

I found God's promises to be the Christian's bank note; and a living faith will always draw on the divine Banker. Yea, and the spirit of prayer, and a deep sense of want, will give an heir of promise a filial boldness at the inexhaustible bank of heaven.

Indeed the providence of God is a great mystery; nor could I unriddle it, even while I was daily exercised with it. During my residence at Ewell I have often begun the week with eighteen or twenty pence, sometimes with two shillings, and sometimes with half-a-crown, and we have lived through the whole week upon that only, without contracting any debt. And I found it impossible at the week's end, upon the best reflection I could make, to tell how

we had been supported through the week. At other times I have found that my craving appetite had lost its keenness, insomuch that I have been able to work hard for two days together without food at all. And sometimes God has indulged me with such heavenly views of a glorified state, and entertained my mind with such sweet contemplations on futurity, that my dinner has passed away unnoticed; nor have I once had a thought about it till four or five o'clock, or near the time of leaving my labour. But these blessed acts of God's providential regard are nothing new; for He took away the appetite of Moses and Elijah for forty days together; and He is the same God still. Nor is His bountiful hand at all shortened, though the faith of the necessitous has so often stretched it out. "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord". (Zeph. 3:12)

At my return I discharged my debt as far as the ten guineas would go, and left the other standing on the book; this Providence used as a future exercise for my faith. About that time I was ordained over my little flock at Woking; I soon found Providence began to frown again, in order to keep me humble. However, all things worked together for my good; for being kept daily dependent on God's providence by faith, I had the precious enjoyment of sweet communion with God; and every day did His providence and gracious care appear more or less over me. I generally found those blessings the sweetest which had caused me the most importunity in prayer. This makes the "dinner of herbs, where love is, better than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

Some time after this I was brought into another strait, by receiving a letter that required me to give up one of my little flocks, which happened to be at that time my chief support. This plot

was laid by a person who made a god of his wealth, and therefore found fault with my sermons, conceiving they were levelled at him. And, indeed, the allegation was certainly well founded; for, if a man has got the world in his heart, the preacher is sure of hitting him, if he should only draw a bow at a venture. For, if the love of money be the root of all evil, it is impossible to wield the sword of the Spirit without cutting either root or branch.

This treatment drove me to London. When I left my own home on the Lord's day morning, my whole stock of money amounted to no more than two pence; of which I took one half, and left my dame the other. One half-penny of this I paid at Hampton Court bridge; and soon after a poor man asked an alms of me, to whom I gave the other half-penny. Then I besought the Lord not to send any other person to ask alms of me until His bountiful hand had supplied my own wants. However, this trial also worked together for my good; for it was the means of bringing me to preach constantly in London; and many who had heard me in town, met with me at my friend's house, and invited me to preach at Margaret Street Chapel. Several friends also sent for me to their houses. One gave me a guinea, and others half-a-guinea, till I had enough to discharge the debt I owed.

Mentioning these minute circumstances has offended many; and some (of an independent fortune) have condemned my prayers as carnal, in praying for such temporal things; but I know that they have taken many worse steps both to accumulate and to keep their independence; and I think it is better to beg than to steal, as say those who speak in proverbs.

I now wanted to return home, fearing that my family would want bread; but just before the time of my departure, a friend from Richmond arrived, who informed me that he had been to Ditton,

and supplied the wants of my family; for he said he had been informed of the affair, and guessed how my pocket stood. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works." (Eccl. 9:7)

On my return home I discharged my debts; and for a time went sweetly on under the sunshine both of Providence and grace; and God sent me back again to the flock which I had been commanded to leave by the mouth of a rich and covetous professor. Thus God frustrates the counsels of the wicked, so that his hands cannot perform his enterprise.

But, as the life of faith consists in bearing the Cross of Christ, we must not expect to be long without trials. Providence soon frowned on me again, and I got behind-hand as usual. This happened too, at a time when my wife was lying-in, destitute of those necessities of life which are needful at such times. The nurse came and told her there was no tea in the house. My wife replied, "Set the kettle on, though there is not." The nurse (whose name was Ann Webb, a daughter of mine in faith, and the first soul that God called by me) said, "You have no tea, nor can you get any." My wife replied, "Set on the kettle." The nurse did so, and before it boiled, a woman (with whom at that time we had no acquaintance) came to the door, and told the nurse that she had brought some tea as a present for my wife. Thus God, who showed Moses a stick to sweeten the waters of Marah, sent a little tea to bitter the water in my dame's kettle.

Soon after my dame had got over her lying-in, tidings were brought to us that a gospel minister was coming down to Kingston to preach an evening lecture, and to break bread to the congregation. I

had a great desire to go to the Lord's table, and also to have my child baptized at the same time; but as I never would go to the table without offering my mite, and at this time having no money in my pocket, I could not go. However, I begged of God to send me a little money, some way or other, for this purpose; which I verily believed He would. So I waited till within half-an-hour of the time to start, and began to think I should be disappointed; but just as unbelief set me to murmuring and complaining, I heard a man ride up to my door as I was in my study at the back part of the house; and when he rode away again I called to my wife to get ready to go. "Get ready!" said she, "why, you know we have no money!" "Poo! poo!" said I, "God has sent the money!" And true enough it was that God had sent it; for all the business the man had with us was to give us some money! Surely it was God that sent him, and none else; for if the hairs of our head are all numbered, we have reason to believe that our wants are; and if God keeps our hairs from falling to the ground, He certainly supplies our wants, too. Thus the good God and Saviour, who made a fish produce money for an earthly tribute, sent the man with three shillings as an offering to God, and of His own we offered to Him. (I Chron. 29:14)

Soon after this I was obliged to borrow a guinea of a certain friend, which I promised to pay him on the Thursday night following, if he would call for it. And I begged of God to send it to me from some quarter or other, firmly believing He would. The day before my friend had appointed to call on me for the money I was to go out to preach among my friends; and I earnestly besought God to send it to me that day, if it was His will and pleasure; of which I had no more doubt than of my own existence. However, I returned home without it, and wondered how it could be, seeing the Saviour says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask, believing, ye

shall have it; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." I told the Lord that I prayed in faith for it, firmly believing I should have it, but had not obtained it. This text of Scripture came with power to my mind: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" I had from that time a sweet view of that passage; and delivered several discourses from it, which God seemed to bless with power. But to return to my subject. As soon as I came home I began to fret, because I had not got the money that I expected; but still the text answered me: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, etc." I replied, "If it is the substance, it is sure as the thing itself." Upon this the good man came into my study, and I was going to make an apology to him; but before I opened my mouth he said, "I came to desire you not to think of paying me the guinea, for I have made you a present of it, and God bless you with it." As soon as he was gone the same passage of Scripture came upon my mind again with much comfort: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for," etc. And indeed, I clearly saw it to be so, both in spirituals and temporals. Thus my faith was not confounded, nor my hope disappointed; all my trouble sprang from my own sin, which was limiting the Holy One of Israel. I was expecting money to pay the debt; but God took away from my creditor the expectation of payment. Thus, like Joseph's brethren, I intended to show myself faithful and honest, by paying the money; but our spiritual Joseph was minded to show me that He had given me treasure in the heart of my creditor.

(Continued next month)

IT IS FINISHED

Dearly beloved brethern, have you ever been given a mind to meditate upon the final words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as he hung upon the tree of

Calvary? Made to understand in measure what these precious words embrace? "It is finished." To the regenerated child of God; one who has been born again of God and made to see how vile, filthy and sinful he is by nature; one who has reached the end of the law and found there is nothing he can do to redeem himself from the curse of the law, and that he would be cast into the lower pits of hell were it not for the amazing grace, love and mercy of God; there can be no sweeter, more comforting, more soul satisfying nor awful words ever spoken.

"It is finished." A simple statement; but one that covers much more than can ever be fully comprehended by mortal man. When Christ bowed his head and gave up the Ghost, he had accomplished all that the Father had given him to do. What was this work? Was it not the redemption of His children, the ones He chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, that he might present them to the Father holy, unblamable, and unreprouvable?

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing but raise it up at the last day." (John 6:37-39). Because God works His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; who speaks and it is done; whose purposes stand fast; how can anyone claim there are millions of people being cast into hell because there is not enough money to reach them with the gospel? I am glad that my salvation does not depend on the economy of this world! Jesus did not say that the Father gave him everyone who was willing to believe and accept him if they so desired. No! In no wise did he say that. He said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have

chosen you." (John 15:16). "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen." (John 13:18). Peter said, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." (I Peter 1:9). Paul says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:4). Now if you were chosen err the world was, were you there to influence His choice? and if not, is there anything you can do now to change His mind? He said, "I am the Lord, I change not." (Mal. 3:6). But, replies the Arminian, God would be unjust to chose some and cast away all others. What blasphemy! God would be just if He chose to cast everyone into hell, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another to dishonor?" Let us suppose that you went to the dog pound and found several dogs ready to be put to death. One of them, for no apparent reason, being no better nor worse than the others, appeals to your heart; and therefore you buy him and take him home. Because you loved this one and saved his life, would you consider yourself unjust in that you chose him and left the others?

Everyone that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, has everlasting life; for this is the will of the Father. (John 6:40) Now we know that Jesus is no more in the world in the flesh, and we cannot see him with our natural eye: but even when he was in the flesh, what did it profit those who saw him? Jesus said, "That ye also have seen me, and believe not." (John 6:36). If we do see Jesus, it must be thru the eye of faith; if we believe in him, it must be by faith. Now the Arminian admonishes everyone to have faith, believe on Christ and accept him so that we might have everlasting

life. But what does Paul tell us about faith? "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." (Eph. 2:8-9). Now if it is a gift, how are we to get it any other way? And to whom is this faith imparted? To the ones not chosen? To the unbeliever? To the ones who seek to be justified by the works of the law? No! By the grace of God it is given to the children of promise, the ones chosen in Christ before the world began; the ones for whom Christ died; the ones for whom Christ finished the work; the ones who fear God; the ones who are made to understand and rejoice in the meaning of "It is finished."

All things had been accomplished when Jesus cried, "It is finished"; the law had been fulfilled to a jot and a tittle, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, being nailed to the cross; the debt of justice had been fully paid for the remission of our sins, Christ being made a curse for us, that we might be redeemed from under the curse of the law; we were washed white as snow by the blood he shed that he might present us to the Father holy, unblamable, and unreprouvable. It is in hope that I use us instead of you, even though that hope seems so small at times.

God said of Jesus, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." I do not believe God would have been well pleased if Jesus had not accomplished all that the Father sent him to do. If one sheep is ever lost, for whom Christ died, then our hope in him is vain and we are still in our sins. God gave His only begotten Son, that through his blood, we might become the sons of God. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." (I John 3:1).

Here I must stop, because, as John said, the world could not hold the books that should be written concerning the

finished work of Christ. May God bless the truth and pardon all errors. May He also continue His blessings upon you and may it be His holy will that you remember this poor worm of the dust when at the throne of grace. If not deceived by my poor sinful heart, I love each of you for Christ's sake.

Clifford Wilbanks

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EXPERIENCE

Dear readers, having been asked several times about writing, I'll attempt at this time to write some of what I believe to be the dealings of the Lord with me.

May we quote, as a base to meditate upon, "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 Timothy 1:9)

What precious language to the child that seeks something, he knows not what it is, but surely feels deep in his heart, that if he does not find some evidence or assurance of God's mercy to one like himself he is lost forever.

Let me start by stating, that while in the army during World War II, being in a foreign country nearly a year and now in combat with the enemy, I was made to realize that only some power unseen of natural man was able to bring me home to my dear family again.

This was, I believe, God's way to bring me to see my final destruction naturally speaking, without His interceding. Thus, thinking my first true prayer to God to be, "O Lord save me or I perish." Many times thereafter, this silent prayer came in my heart, and each time I came through safely from the battle we were in but was never able to thank Him enough. Seemingly I was given the assurance some way, that my life would

be spared to return home. In all this, why, when so many of my buddies were falling daily, and they better than I, was this mercy bestowed on me. Now, I can say, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace.

The war ended and He brought me home, yet for many years thereafter the thought of religion was least in my mind as I enjoyed the ways of the world. I attended church, but only from habit or felt duty to my parents.

About this time, or shortly before, my brother in the flesh was brought to join the church, something seemed to stir me inwardly, and at his baptism it was hard for me to control my emotions. For the next seven months the Bible seemed to be my best companion and though most of it was a sealed book to me, I read most of my spare time, even many times hoping to read rather than have friends visit. This was much comfort, as I was searching for some assurance that there was any hope for one as wicked and sinful as I. Surely I felt to be one that was different from anybody else and a misfit in the world. Lost and rightly so, doomed to destruction as was the world in which I had had all my pleasure and put my trust. As I read farther and farther trying to find a character such as I, the book was completed without me recognizing one.

During these months I was anxious to go hear preaching and even though my loneliness still existed, many sermons fitted my case as I was made to rejoice that there was hope for sinners through the merits of Christ.

When I offered to the church at Malmaison, which I believed was about the dearest place on earth, my plan to relate my hope to them left my mind, only to say "I love you people and want a home with you, if you will have me." This is all I could say now, though many years later, I am still a sinner and my planned expressions fail to come forth.

Through all the above condemnations, trials, and burdens, my dear

companion sensed my sorrow as many times, though an adult, I cried for deliverance. She would suggest I talk with others in the church, but I just could not, still she was much comfort to me at all times.

After uniting with the church and being so relieved, happy and made to rejoice so often, I thought never would I be so burdened again and to that extent, I have not, but soon there seemed somewhat a vacuum still, that I cannot explain.

About two years later our church erected a new building and while several of us worked with the carpenters to complete it, I had strange thoughts I will never forget as we came to the pulpit, something would impress me as we stood and worked there, to think and fear I should stand here some day. Hard as I tried to dismiss the thought, it never would completely go away, even as I would say to myself, I could and would not.

In the meanwhile, a group was asked to go from our church to sing for a dear Sister unable to attend regular service. Before arriving I was as sure as we are of anything in the future that I would be called upon to offer prayer, which I was by someone. For some reason I was given utterance to my amazement and satisfaction and seemingly to all there, though my first attempt in a public way. This also stayed with me as have many dreams on different occasions.

Eleven years after joining the church and not having told even my wife of my thoughts and many dreams of standing before the Lord's people, this one stood out vividly. Dreaming of being with Brother Spangler at church and having him announce I would speak after him. These things I tried so hard to forget and at times thought I had, only to have them return, but I dared not tell anyone of them.

I believe I fought hardest to keep from speaking my feelings publicly praising God for His wonderful work when my

daughter of 14 years asked for a home in our church and was received.

A few weeks later, Burnell, who I spoke of earlier, asked if I ever thought of speaking in public. This was as great a shock as ever occurred in my life, not having mentioned my experiences to anyone. We embraced a few minutes, to cry and I believe rejoice as I told him this was on my mind almost daily, but to just wait before telling anyone.

He, being impressed to ask and tell our pastor, did so, as I was asked the next meeting by Elder Tench to take part in the service, if so impressed. My first speaking was of very few words nervously expressed as I thought my burden and expectation was to just speak my experiences of His mercy to me just this one time. After this once, I supposed I would be rid of this desire but am still attempting to speak.

While I yet wish and long for greater assurance and evidences of this salvation and holy calling of God, I feel His grace has and will be sufficient.

We go wandering, many times with cast down feelings, pondering if our speaking is feeding the "flock" but we also experience times of uplifting as I had this joy recently. This was to be called to serve as pastor of Canaan Church and falling on the exact day seven years from the time I was ordained to the ministry.

These things dear ones make us go His way rejoicing when touched within by that power from above, yet feeling so unworthy of the love shown us by you, His people.

Yet our testimony will be, "not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," so all events have, do, and will work together to accomplish that which He pleases.

Hesitantly written,
(Elder) Julian Williams

Liberal, Kansas

Dear Elder Donald Smith,

Enclosed please find a check for \$9.00 for a two year subscription renewal of the *Signs of the Times*.

I would also like to thank all the wonderful people who sent me letters and cards when I had my heart attack. I tried to answer everyone, but in case I missed any one, I am writing this to also thank them.

In Hope,
(Elder) W. A. Winfrey

Jacksonville, N.C.

Dear Editors:

I enclosed a check for \$5.00 for the renewal of the *Signs of the Times* for another year. I enjoy reading the experiences of others. Although we are many miles apart when their experiences blend with mine, it seems we are together.

I am nearing my 80th birthday, and I hope I am thankful to the good Lord for all our blessings. Bless His darling Name for Jesus' sake. From one saved by grace, if saved at all.

Mrs. Effie Davis

Dallas, Texas

Dear Editors,

My subscription to the *Signs of the Times* expires with February's issue. Encloses is a check to cover same for another year.

Thru the years I have so much enjoyed the many wonderful articles that all the good writers have sent forth for our reading. I wish I could absorb the wonderful truths that have been put forth, but I feel to be so little and insignificant when it comes to the magnificent works and ways of such a great God.

I am so thankful to be blessed with just a sense of believing, tho that is so

small at times.

I wish all a wonderful year in 1978 and may we continue to be blessed with love, peace, and harmony through the remaining years even in this world of great confusion.

In bonds of love,
Pearl Lee

Fishersville, Virginia

Dear Sirs,

Enclosed please find two checks, one for subscription renewal, and one as a contribution. Also, please make change in the label to read Myra Parks instead of Mrs. George (Estella F.) Jones, but keep the same address.

My mother passed away on November 24, 1977, at the age of 92. Even since I can remember the *Signs* was always received in our home and since she has lived with me for the last several years she shared its readings with me. You may recall on various occasions she has expressed appreciation to you for the comfort and meaning it afforded her. She would become very concerned when for any reason it was delayed in arriving. I think it would have pleased her to have me continue the subscription and though my comprehension is so lacking as compared to hers, I know I shall learn and gain from its teachings.

I ask for your prayers and love in my great loss.

Sincerely,
Myra Parks

(See Mrs. Jones obituary, this issue.)

Roxboro, N.C.

Dear Editors,

I see that my subscription has expired and I am enclosing a check for \$10.00 and you may use the extra dollar to help send a copy to someone who is not able to pay.

May the Lord bless you to keep

publishing the *Signs* as it is "good tidings of great joy" to all those who love the doctrine.

In humble fellowship,
Clarisse Brooks

Greenville, Alabama

Dear Elder Smith,

Just a few words and a check for \$5.00 for the distribution of the *Signs of the Times*. I enjoy the *Signs* very much and look forward every month to reading it.

The Old Baptist in this part of the country are going on, and very few of the younger ones are coming into the church. But I hope I do know that God's will must be, and is, done in everything. So I hope that my faith will carry me on, and I do know that God's Grace is sufficient.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) Sam Dean

P.S. I sincerely hope that Elder and Sister Spangler are well and wish we could see them and hear him preach again.

For this occasion, I shall offer the following text for your consideration and judgment. May the Lord give the blessing and stir up the pure mind.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."--John 8:31

I think there is a grand fundamental truth embraced and discovered in this text, a fundamental truth for which the Lord's people have been contenders since delivered unto the saints, and that truth is principally this: The calling of God is effectual and those whom He calls will persevere to the end. Or as it was expressed by our forefathers "the final perseverance of the saints."

The Lord enabling, I shall offer this text as a confirmation of faith and also as an indictment against the apostate.

First, consider the confirmation. It is generally believed and accepted among our people that the Grace of God is the unmerited favor and kindness of God toward sinner man and carries with it the implication not only of His good will toward man, but preeminently of His good work in man. We believe this grace is given to some men - because it seemeth good in His sight - and withheld from others essentially for the same reason. Now there are many, many facets of Divine Grace which time and space will not permit us to consider, but whatever the Grace of God is or whatever your understanding of it may be, if it be grace, it is imperative that it be efficacious, that is, the power to produce the desired effects, the desired effects being appointed and sanctioned by God, and the desired effects being absolute, unconditional, final and the complete salvation for His people according to electing love and mercy, otherwise grace is no more grace. Whatever the grace of God is, surely it will enable one to continue and to abide in the Word, else the sinner would be permitted to thwart and frustrate the mind and purpose of God. God forbid.

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." - Phil. 1:6.

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." - Phi. 2:13.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." - 1 Peter 1:3-5.

"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the

rest were blinded." - Romans 11:7.

Note: It is God who begins this good work, it is God who worketh both to will and to do, and it is God's power by which we are kept. Salvation is of the Lord.

When our Lord said, "if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed," He established a waymark, and a living testimony for the Church of God to distinguish and separate the true disciple from the false and spurious. The believer is described as a wayfarer, a pilgrim and stranger who seeks the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. They travel the Celestial Highway called the way everlasting and the way of holiness (Psa. 139:24; Isa. 35:8). They hear the voice of the Son of God saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." - Isa. 30:21. Their bounds and habitations are fixed and they are hedged about by Divine Grace and Providence. They sometimes reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man, frequently they feel to be in darkness and blindness of heart, troubled on every side, perplexed, but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed; and like Bunyan when he said:

"A Christian man is ne'er long at ease;
When one fright's gone, another doth him
seize."

Nevertheless, the power of God is upon their heart and will not let them go.

"Kept by the power of God." - Apos. Peter.

I verily believe that if we were left to ourselves - to depend upon the arm of flesh for sustentation and self-perseverance - we would sink down into utter despair and consternation. We would do as Mr. Pliable in Pilgrim's Progress, turn back to the City of Destruction and become the laughing stock of the town.

Notwithstanding our fears and apprehensions, we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This "pressing on" is like a race that must be run with patience, for some it may be a fast walk, and others a creeping pace or it may be as our brother

Eli who sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark. (1 Sam. 4:13). But there is and ever shall be this element of pressing and awareness.

"The Law and the prophets were until John: since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." - Luke 16:16

As for me, I'm afraid to turn back, and as one dear brother said, "I'm afraid to turn forward." I fear myself. I fear apostasy. Moreover, I fear God. Being warned of things not seen as yet, I move in fear and trembling. When sensible of my state and condition, I stand suspended between hope and fear. But as it was given to Queen Esther, my mind is sometimes resolved, "I must go in unto the King, which is not according to the Law: and if I perish, I perish."

Ah, my dear ones, the doctrine of perseverance is a lively and quickened state. The quickened ones are said to follow on to know the Lord (Hosea 6:3). For some of us, our behaviour and pattern of life may "appear" dormant or lie in a lifeless condition but be assured if we be in the quickened family of God there will be a "witness" within and a "pressing" without. There is a continuance in the Lord. The same one that quickens us; that is makes us alive unto God by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost is the same one that instructs us and writes upon the heart His law: "For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." - Heb. 8:11 B.

The same one that quickens us, washes us, instructs us, and also enables us to continue in the word. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." - Psalms 110:3 A.

Consider for a moment the state of Grace as witnessed by and through the patriarchs. You will note in the language that these men were stirred

and were moved to continue in the Word.

Hebrew 11. By faith Abel offered and obtained (vs. 4), (Abel was not at ease in Zion nor satisfied with a bare doctrinal creed). Enoch was translated (vs. 5). (The word "translated" is from the Greek work *metatithemi*, which means to "change sides", or remove from one place to another, "to turn"). Now I submit to the reader that a child of Grace is moved, stirred and as it were, translated from the Kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of His dear Son (Col. 1:13).

Enoch received the witness that he pleased God....(vs. 5). (For an inspired commentary on "The Witness" examine Paul's language in Romans).

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." - Romans 8:14-16.

I just believe that the child of Grace receives "the witness" in the same manner and likeness as old Enoch, else why would the Apostle Paul speak of his conscience also bearing witness in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 9:1)? Again, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the Witness in himself." - 1 John 5:10 A.

Enoch received the witness that he pleased God (Heb. 11:5). The question is, can we witness with Enoch's witness? What saith the conscience?

Faith diligently seeks and enquires....(vs. 6). Faith warned Noah and moved him....(vs. 7). Note: The language of verse 6 and 7 will bare out the fact that the quickened family of God is lively. Not dead in trespasses and sins, worse yet dead in a profession; hence, twice dead and plucked up by the roots. The Lord's people are seekers and enquirers. I believe the wise men came from the East seeking Jesus to worship

Him. When the Angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night and made the angelic annunciation, what was the response of the shepherds? (See Luke 2:15). "Let us go and see what the Lord hath made known unto us." Ah dear brethren, the shepherds sought Jesus. Faith diligently seeks and enquires. (Heb. 11:6).

When I was 22 years old the Lord awakened me and I've been seeking ever since.

"I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew He moved my soul to seek him, seeking me; It was not I that found, O Savior true, No, I was found of thee." - G. Chadwick.

God called Abraham....(vs. 8). He obeyed and went out....

Abraham sojourned....(vs. 9); he looked for a city....(vs. 10). Perseverance is the inevitable results of a true and living faith, and a true and living faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8).

The Scripture said these all died in faith....(vs. 13). Now I feel to press home to the heart this Divine Truth. Scripture says, "they died in Faith." They lived and moved and had their continued being in faith and at last died in faith. What a mercy it is to die in faith and oh what grief and woe it must be to die in unbelief and in sins.

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come." - John 8:21.

Contrast the language of Hebrew 11:13 with that of John 8:21. You will note that in Hebrews, "they died in faith." In John, "they die in sins." To die in faith (Heb. 11:13) is a mercy, and this death - if one is blessed to experience it - is the wages of Christ's righteousness and atonement and is freely credited unto our account, otherwise we would continue to be morally bankrupt, destitute, ten thousand talents in debt with nothing to pay. But to die in sins (Jn. 8:21) is the dreadful woe of blind

unbelief and in a word, the wages of sin. I tremble at the horrifying thought of such a death. What shrieks and fear will follow the one but what joy and bliss will accompany the other.

I find no comfort in the word of God for the stubborn, impenitent heart. No consolation nor encouragement for the nominal, letter headed believer. The promise is to him that believeth.

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already." - John 3:18 A. To enforce this argument, I call your attention to the word believeth which comes from the Greek root "Pistis," meaning "Constancy in profession," "Unwavering," "total Commitment." The intent of the apostle in the original language is principally this: only those who are constant in their profession of faith, to him who continues in the word, and to him in whom the grace of perseverance is evident can claim the promise of salvation and find comfort and confirmation of faith.

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The perseverance and constancy of the believer is but the divine fruits of grace. And the outgrowth of grace is discipleship. This element of truth is the warp and woof of scripture. For example, consider our Lord's command to His disciples:

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

- Matthew 28:19-20

Note the Divine order: Firstly, Teach all nations. Secondly, Baptizing them in the Name of the trinity. Lastly, observe all things. The word to observe means to keep, to hold, to watch or as our Lord said, "Continue in my Word." Again, "a

tree is known by the fruit it bears" and again, "ye shall know them by their fruits."

One closing thought regarding this scripture and that is the indictment this text will serve on the apostate. I marvel at the nature of truth and especially the dual purpose for which it serves. On the one hand truth will confirm and establish the true believer (Acts 14:22) and on the other hand will arrest and indict the unbeliever. The truth will always bear witness to the truth regardless of the subjects involved. Perhaps that is why Paul said:

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." - II Cor. 13:8.

When our Lord said, "if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed," two principles of truth were established. True discipleship versus the false. Those who fall by the wayside, those who do not follow Him in love and truth are not His disciples and their disobedience is the evidence thereof. The truth is a two-edged sword. For the true disciple, this text is a witness for and on his behalf. A savour of life unto life. For the false disciple, this text serves as a prosecuting witness. A savour of death unto death. The same sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay.

For those of us who have seen apostasy erupt among professing Christendom and have witnessed the "coming" and "going" of man and have witnessed the shipwreck of professed faith in friends, don't become unduly alarmed. Our Lord taught that some would continue in His word and others would not.

"Behold, a sower went forth to sow. And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side and the fowls came and devoured them up:

Some fell upon stony places where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth;

And when the sun was up, they were

scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

But other fell into good ground and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold.

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

- Matt. 13:3-9.

May the peace of God rest upon you all.

In hope of the Gospel,

(Elder) Jack Dawsey

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We sincerely thank each of you personally for your continued support of the *Signs of the Times*. D. E. S.

EDITORIAL

"Even so come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22:20)

"I am now ready to be offered." (II Tim. 4:6)

This man is irresponsible about this conduct; that man is irresponsible about another. I am as irresponsible when I stand behind the sacred desk and belittle a man that appeals to the general public to get ready to meet God, as the man that does that. I am responsible for the manner in which I handle being ready and making ready for the appearing of the Lord whether it is in life or at the termination of life. Likewise, I think that I am irresponsible if I take the position that we are not ever ready for death, or, for that matter, for the Lord's will to be carried out in our life.

The Lord's people are a willing people in the day of His power. (Psa. 110:3) If that is true, (who will first come forward and deny it?) a man is not truthful that denies it. In fifty years of visiting the sick and the dying, I have only found one person of them all that was bitter and unresigned to the Lord's will. Nothing has upset me as this did. After having gone over the sad case again and again, I still am not able to think clearly about it. I had so much confidence in this person; I loved them so dearly, and I love their memory today, but they were bitter because that they were dying with an incurable malady, and because their companion was mentally afflicted instead of somebody that did not amount to anything. Of one thing I am certain, to wit, our unresigned acceptance of death does not deter death from coming; it still holds unrelenting power over us in death. (Eccl. 8:8)

Another strait truth that must always be remembered - natural minds are not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be. (Rom. 8:7; I Cor. 2:14) While in this fleshly or carnal or natural mind, a

man will never please God. For any to salve the minds of men with concoctions of the same kind of mind, is to add insult to injury. This truth can not be glossed over so as to make it truthful or palatable to God's redeemed family. This truth is not strait nor difficult to those that have the mind of Christ, but our reasoning powers will never pulverize nor make palatable hard doctrine so that the fleshly mind can ever accept it.

Due to the warning of my physician, and because of a seeming to bid them Godspeed by my presence, I am not present often when this reasonable and palatable doctrine of free will ability to make one's self ready to meet God is promulgated, but when I am present it is always a serious matter to hear the weakness of men set forth so flagrantly under the guise of becoming acquainted with God. More exasperating than even this is to hear the Holy One in Israel reduced down to a bargaining agent on the level with fallen man.

Everything pertaining to our salvation is a gift of God. He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also give us all things? (Rom. 8:32) The giving of His Son up to death for all has not been disannulled. All have, or will feel, the effects of that deliverance in an experience of divine grace. I am not the least bit queasy about this deliverance failing in any instance. Are you? If you are not so about this portion of the text, how do you feel about the latter part of it? Do you believe it? Are you as ardent in proclaiming the second part of this verse as you are the first? If not, why not? He has spared us, but not His son; He will also freely give us all things. Although I have been accused of spreading these all things too far, including of too many things in the all things. That is an idle gesture to escape the sweetness and the beauty in the text. All of the things necessary for the delivering up of His Son for us all will, I am fully persuaded, be utilized for the

giving of all these things, and they include all things necessary to salvation; some of them directly, some of them indirectly, but nevertheless all given for us all.

My soul is fully cognizant of the comforting truth in such testimony as Paul is bearing toward the subject, but, like Gideon, (Judges 6:36-40) I desire to know a little more about such a gracious doctrine. Peter left some good news for us also. He clearly gives us the whole well made hank of well spun yarn. In his preaching he declares that there is not any salvation in any other than Christ; that no name given under heaven saves but Jesus; (Acts 4:12) and in his first epistle he greets us with the heart warming doctrine that we are kept by the power of God through faith, which is God-given, unto salvation, and that it is kept ready in the last time, (I Pet. 1:5) and in his second epistle he tells us that the divine power of God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. (2 Peter 1:3)

The perseverance and the preservation of the saints are both lovely doctrines and comforting to all saints. Only once is perseverance used and that is when the apostle enjoins it upon us in closing the Ephesian letter, (6:18) and that comes about by the inwrought work of God. (Isa. 26:12, Phil. 2:13) The preservation of the saints unto glory will never grow old nor tedious to the afflicted and poor people of God. Being kept by the power of God, and being preserved in Jesus Christ, there is not any likelihood of one being left out or forgotten.

By no stretching of the imagination can we attribute Paul's readiness to his cunning. Equally, we do not for a fleeting second think of John's ecstatic agreement with the Saviour's declaration that He would come quickly, as being a product of his fleshly mind. On the other hand, it is not an imagination of John, nor is it an illusion wrought upon him by the religious environment. The beloved disciple is being

moved by the miracle working power of the Holy One as He tarries and communes with His lillies and His saints.

It is worthwhile to meditate a long time about their communion together. In retrospection we find the cast-a-way on this rocky barren island alone, having been banished there for the word of God. Exactly what this entailed is not clear from the written word. A careful examination of the writing does not say that he was banished by a cruel emperor bent on getting rid of John's living testimony to the truth. These things come from the church fathers, and they are worth something for us to understand the times which the infant church passed, but they are not to be referred to as a part of inspired truth. John was there for the word of God and that suits me exactly.

The things shown him, and the revelations given him of the true history of Christianity and the travels of the heirs of Jesus Christ are enough to bring John to a perfect acquiescence to the coming quickly of the Lord. In fact, where the Spirit of the Lord dwells there is liberty, and this liberty is never more clearly manifested than the indwelling of the Spirit in us. To be thus blessed we are not seeking our will but His. If it is for Him to come quickly, then we are ready for His coming quickly; if it is martyrdom for the sake of the cause of Jesus Christ the death sentence will find us waiting and submissive; if it is to suffer banishment from home and from loved ones and home land, we, like Abraham, and all of those that have suffered at the hands of persecutors, will count it a joy to suffer for His sake. This readiness, yea even eagerness to follow Him is not a product, no, not even a by-product of the flesh, but it is something wrought in us, in our spirits, by the silent effective work of God's love and grace and mercy. If it is to follow Him in good and evil report wherever He leads and guides, there will be a readiness for these good and acceptable works. If it is

to preach at Rome, or any of our present day churches; to distribute freely whatever has been given to them, or for every good works; to be ready by the grace of God to present our bodies a living sacrifice; to be ready for delivering up to magistrates our living, our all in all, even laying down our lives. (Rom. 1:15; I Tim. 6:18; Tit. 3:1; 2 Tim. 4:6)

The children of God are not keeping an account against God. The pattern counted every natural gift, every heirloom, everything off, that he might win Christ. He could not have both, nor can we. No man can serve two masters. As moved by (not upon, but by) the Holy Ghost, there is an examination of all the alluring things of the flesh, of the world, and by Satan, and there is a subsequent counting off of that will (of ours), that earthly gift, be it family ties, ease and pleasures of this life. This is because of the saving and effectual work in us as we are taught to deny these sly sneaking forms of ungodliness, and enabling us, as Mary was enabled, to choose the better part.

This is the culmination of the divine and effectual workings of the kingdom which is established by the Lord. He sets it up in each of His children, it assumes command of everything in its realm for the continuation and prosperity of itself. It does not hold consultations with the old kingdom that was on the ground when it was first established. Rather it begins the work of a sovereign domination of the old kingdom, even to the breaking it in pieces, and the final subjugation and consummation of it.

Ah what a warfare goes on between the two kingdoms. One is ever in the ascendancy, the other is ever on the wane; one is becoming of more importance each hour and moment of our lives, the other is becoming of lesser and lesser importance each passing hour; the allurements of one becomes the influence of our desires and ambitions and even our lives, the other is

being eclipsed day by day by the refulgent glory of the building and kingdom that is so compactly joined together by the effectual working of every part, making increase of the body (of Christ) unto the edifying of itself in love. (Eph. 4:16)

Thus the motivating influence in the kingdom which God sets up in the hearts of His children is the love of God. The whole body is compactly joined together in love. This love brings you closer and closer to Him and to one another in experience. No man ever hated his own flesh; thus as the will of God is wrought in us, we love one another as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us. Here is the laying down of our lives for one another, and for Him and for His cause and kingdom. His will becomes our will; the welfare of the saints becomes our welfare. This is the test of true discipleship. This test is given us by the love of God in us. As it is given to us, we are ready for following Him even unto death; we are ready and are kept ready by Him; we are obedient because of the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us.

This lovely readiness is thus wrought in every heir of promise by the effectual love of God. May the preservation of our standing in Him be so complete, and that we be so rooted and grounded and settled in the fertility of the good ground that we be not soon troubled or shaken or disturbed by the "lo here" and "lo there" telling us to get ready to die.

W. D. G.

Inward holiness and eternal glory are the crown with which God adorns and dignifies His elect. But they are not the cause of election. A king is not made a king by the royal robes he wears, and by the crown that encircles his brow; but he therefore wears his robes, and puts on his crown because he is a king.

Toplady

The way to heaven lies, not over a toll bridge, but over a free-bridge; even the unmerited grace of God in Christ Jesus.

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."—Matt. xxv. 46.

To those who fear the Lord it is a painful thing that in the churches of God there should arise perverse men speaking perverse things, bringing in damnable heresies. Although we are forewarned in the Scriptures that such characters shall creep in, and plague the saints with their deceivings, yet it abides as a vexation, and bitter matter to the souls of those who are of the truth to have to know of the mischievous work of such ungodly men. The sport delights in his sporting; sporting himself with his own deceiving. (2 Peter ii. 13) The scorner delights in his scorning, and scoffers find satisfaction in their scoffings; for their ears are turned away from the truth and turned unto fables. (2 Tim. iv. 3.) Lies and fictions soothe their itching ears. "Reprobate concerning the faith."—2 Tim. iii. 8. How dreadful! The shadows of the evening time are stretched out, and the judgment of the great day approaches. The Lord will come; he shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. He shall come to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. (Jude 15.) The Lord shall come, and those who hated him and despised him, who knew not God and Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the

presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. But he will be the delight, the welcomed One, the everlasting admiration of all the loved ones, who love him, who have believed in Christ in that day. (2 Thess. i. 9, 10.) The hypocrite with dissembled love, and feigned faith, and who with lip service professedly worships God, and who with flatteries and much wantonness allure and win disciples to fellowship them. But even though some of the dear children of God may for a time be deceived by carnal professors of Christ's name, our Lord is not mocked; all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Our gracious God discerneth all the pretensions of the ungodly, and he knows them that trust him. The true worshippers worship him in spirit and in truth. The Father seeketh such to worship him. Truly it is all of the sovereign grace of God that a sinner receives the love of the truth unto salvation. This is the fruit of the teachings of the Holy Spirit in the soul. He gives us a heart to know the truth. He sends forth in the soul of the quickened sinner light and truth, and brings us into agreement, into acquiescence with the doctrine of God our Savior; we bow to it, love it and delight in it. A minister of Satan once said to me, it did not matter what we believed, we were all aiming for the same place, etc. I told him it was a matter of much importance with me what I believed, and that I would sooner believe the truth than believe a lie. They that are Christ's are sanctified by the truth. (John xvii. 17-19.) It is in God's riches in mercy unto us that we are manifestly of the truth, that we love the truth, walk in the truth, that the truth dwells in us, and shall be with us forever. (2 John i. 2.) Blessed indeed are all such. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."—Isaiah xxvi. 2. Men destitute of the truth (1 Tim. vi. 5) have no harmonious views of divine

revelation, yet they are wiser in their own conceits than seven men that can render a reason, and their utterances are nothing but a maze of confusion, a wresting of the Scriptures, handling it deceitfully, and corrupting the word of God, in all of which it is manifested that they are unlearned (2 Peter iii. 16), untaught of God, destitute concerning the truth. None of the comfort, that appearance of pleasure which spurious professors of Christ's name find in their errors is of the Holy Ghost, for He, saith our Savior, shall guide you into all truth. (John xvi. 13.) Satan's devices are many, and entangle many, and one of his masterpieces of deception is to get them to believe that he himself, the devil, has no personal being, and that at death mankind are annihilated. This nonentity is a devilish dream in the souls of men who are captives of the delusions of Satan. Sometimes quickened sinners, under the guilt and bondage of their sins, feeling the just and holy wrath of God in His law against them, have meditated terror in their hearts (Isaiah xxxiii. 18) yes, dreadful apprehensions of the wrath to come (I Thess. i. 10), have overwhelmed them, and in their souls' miseries have envied the beasts of the field, and have wished they were such for they are not sinners, there is no everlasting punishment for them; they die, and that is the end of their being. But this no hell doctrine, no hereafter, no future torment, punishment for those who die in their sins is contrary to the experience of every sinner who is convinced of his sins, and of the wrath to come, by the Holy Ghost. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."—Psalms ix. 17. The Son of God thus speaks, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—Matt. x. 28; Luke xii. 4, 5. If in their guilt and desperation wretched sinners have wished there were no God and no hereafter, and thus

all would end in annihilation it avails us nothing. But the poor, wretched, law-condemned, self-condemned, afflicted sinner fears to die lest he should be found justly so, as the rich man who died, and was buried, and in hell lifted up his eyes, being in torment. (Luke x. 22, 23). "And the smoke of their torment ascended up forever and ever."—Rev. xiv. 11. The called of God, the convicted sinner under his soul's heavy load of sin, under the curse of the law, knows that he must be pardoned or damned, and it becomes a matter all important how he shall escape the damnation of hell. (Matt. xxiii. 33.) How can the Lord pardon, justify and save a sinner like me? "God be merciful to me a sinner."—Luke xviii. 13. Men who teach the nonentity of the personal being of the devil tell us that the devil is man's corrupt nature. But the devil came to Jesus in the wilderness tempting him. (Matt. iv. 1.) This was not His corrupt nature, for Christ Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. (Heb. vii. 26.) "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."—John xiv. 30. We read that Satan entered into Judas Iscariot. (John xiii. 27.) Christ declared the personality of the devil, and he is under law a transgressor, saying, "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."—John viii. 44. "The devil sinneth from the beginning."—I John iii. 8. And as to the denial of the everlasting punishment of the wicked, who die in their sins (Matt. xxv. 46), not only does such denial contradict the explicit teachings of the Holy Scriptures, but it shows how utterly such erroneous men have failed to understand the sufferings of our precious Christ for the sins of his people

to bring them to God. What! Was Christ bruised, wounded, put to grief and his soul made an offering for sin, and all the sins of his enemies, of the nonelect for whom Christ did not give himself a sacrifice, winked at by the Lord, and go unpunished? Oh! no creature could suffer as Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God. Oh what a cup he drank! What agony for the church, the elect's sake was his in Gethsemane, and on the cross of Calvary!

"'Twas here the Lord of life appeared,
And sighed, and groaned, and prayed, and
feared;

Bore all incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, and none to spare."
But we, if we are of God, wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come. (I Thess. i. 10.) But the Sadducees, the annihilationists, deny that there is any wrath to come, after death, and scoff at the doctrine that any beings are tormented for their sins forever and ever, even though the Scriptures say so. (Rev. xiv. 10, 11.) Annihilation! This is a fleshly pleasing morsel. So much so that many millions of the human race have in Buddhism made the ultimate height of desire to be what they designate Nirvana, signifying the cessation of all conscious beings, personal extinction, ceasing to be; annihilation is its equivalent. Thus they wish to be, and they make and love this lie. (Rev. xxii. 15) Annihilation! But there is no fear of God before the eyes of those who reject the solemn words of Jesus Christ who thus speaks in Matthew xxv. 41, 45, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Rev. xx. 10-15.) Though the ungodly lull their guilty fears, dope themselves, and sear their defiled consciences with the seductive delusions of annihilation at the moment

of death, so that they need have no thoughts about a future condition, nevertheless how dreadful it is to go into perdition with a lie in their right hand. How shall such wicked people who hold and teach such wicked conscience-searing doctrines escape the damnation of hell? Annihilation! In the instant of its infliction upon any being would cease to be punishment. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." — Rev. xxi. 8. But men of corrupt minds, destitute concerning the truth, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God, are ever teaching pernicious errors, they live and thrive and sport themselves with their own deceivings; though they are ever learning they are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Those who fear the word, and have that anointing which they have received of the Lord, and abideth in them, and which teacheth them of all things, and is the truth, and is no lie, can find no place in their hearts to wish such characters Godspeed. For "whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."—2 John 2. Poor sinner muse on this:

"Love moved him to die, on this I rely,
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he loved me so well,
As to lay down his life to redeem me from
hell."

Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, N.C.

OBITUARIES

BROTHER L. L. GENTRY

Brother Lonnie Luman Gentry was the son of Mr. Joe and Mrs. Betty Bran Gentry.

He was born in September 27, 1895, and departed this life September 25, 1976.

He was married to Pearl Turner in 1919, and to this union was born two children William Thomas Gentry, and Mrs. Tereasa Davis. He also has four grandchildren and five great grandchildren, all of which survive.

Brother Lonnie was faithful to attend Moons Creek Primitive Baptist Church for many years before offering to the church. He would ride to church with Elder Raymond Payne and wife, as they passed by his home coming to Moons Creek to preach for us. He loved Elder Payne and our present pastor, Elder Kenneth Key, very much. Both Elders, as well as other members visited him frequently during his long illness. He helped support the church, too. He always desired someone bring him a copy of the Minutes of the Upper Country Line Association. Surely he must have enjoyed reading it. The love he expressed for the church and the brethren caused us to believe he had been given, and had a hope, in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

His Mother, Sister Betty Gentry, was a devoted member of this church, also.

Emma Sartin, Clerk

BROTHER JOSEPH HAMILTON

It has pleased our Heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom and tender mercy, to remove from our midst, one of our oldest and beloved brothers, Joseph Hamilton, and place him in that peaceful rest; to await that great and glorious day when our Saviour will return to call His precious saints to meet Him in the air and to be with Him forevermore.

Brother Joseph Hamilton was born in February, 1883, and passed away August 1, 1977; making his stay on earth 94 years and 5 months. He was married to the former Dennie Gurganus. To this union was born 4 children, three girls and one son; Mrs. Nell Gaylor, Mrs. Nan Gerrity, Mrs. Darthea Taylor, and Matthew Hamilton.

Sister Hamilton passed away January 6, 1976. They had four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Brother and Sister Hamilton joined the church the third Saturday in August, 1953, and were received in full fellowship and were baptized by their pastor, Elder Eddie

Humphrey.

Brother Joseph was a faithful member as long as health permitted him. We, the members at North East Church, feel that our loss is his heavenly gain. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away at His own time. May we be submissive to His will, Who doeth all things well.

Brother Hamilton's funeral was preached by Elder J. T. Prescott and Mr. Paul Odum at the Jones Funeral Home Chapel. He was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Onslow Memorial Park.

This done by request of the church in conference the third Saturday in August, 1977.

Written by: Lewis J. Sammons
Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
Lewis J. Sammons, Clerk

JOHN HENRY BAREFOOT

It was God's pleasure to remove Brother John Henry Barefoot from our midst September 14, 1977. He was born May 11, 1889. He was appointed a trustee of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1955, a short time after it was organized.

Brother Barefoot united with Liberty Church on the first Sunday in June, 1956, and was baptized the same day by Elder Lester E. Lee. On the first Sunday in August, 1957, he was ordained a deacon of the church.

By the grace of God, he remained a loyal and faithful servant in this calling and filled his place at church meetings as long as health permitted. We saw evidence of faith, hope, and charity in this precious brother, and surely the church, friends and his family miss his presence.

In his first marriage to Monnie Barefoot, twelve children were born; seven preceded him in death as well as his wife. Children surviving are Gerfue Jernigan, Bessie Lee, Paul Barefoot, Ruth Wood, and Shelton Barefoot.

In his second marriage to Lela Barefoot, no children were born, and she preceded him in death.

Surviving is his third wife, Sister Edna Barefoot, and one brother, Bert Barefoot. He also has 24 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. His parents were Sisrow

Barefoot and Pherby Tart Barefoot.

Brother Barefoot's funeral was conducted at Liberty Church by Elder W. D. Godwin, Elder M. E. Garner, and Mr. Walter Pierce. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Hodges Chapel Church Cemetery. By faith in an all powerful God, we believe on the second coming of the Saviour he will be raised to live forever and ever in perfect bliss, which is in heaven. May God be pleased to have mercy on the church, his friends and his family.

It was agreed to send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one put on the church record, and one for the family.

Committee: Sister Dorothy Barefoot
Sister Lovie Young
Brother James G. Young

MRS. ESTELLA JONES

Mrs. Estella Frances Jones, 92 died in the Waynesboro Community Hospital, on November 24, 1977.

Mrs. Jones was born in Sussex County, Delaware on October 25, 1885, a daughter of the late Isaac William and Nancy Jane Benson German. She was the widow of George Thomas Jones.

Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Ray S. (Myra J.) Parks, Sr., of Route 1, Box 12A, Fishersville, Va., with whom Mrs. Jones had made her home; two sisters, Mrs. Clarissa Brinson of Laurel, Delaware, and Mrs. Ida Black of Baltimore, Md.; three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and a number of nieces and nephews.

A funeral was held November 26, 1977, at the graveside in Smith Mills Old School Baptist Church Cemetery, Laurel, Delaware, conducted by Elder James F. Poole.

She was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine and a devout reader of the Bible. Her humility, faith, and trust reached far beyond human understanding and her love and concern for others was manifest in every thought and deed. May her sweet soul rest and abide in peace with those for whom she had mourned as we now weep at her passing and as we, too, hope for eternal life and to unite with loved ones.

May God have mercy on us.

Myra Parks

BROTHER LOUIE ROBERT WILLIS

Brother Louie Robert Willis, 76, died of a heart attack at his home on November 26, 1977. He was born December 23, 1900, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He was the son of the late James Robert and Ruehommer Shelton Willis. He was a retired farmer and miller and a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Virginia.

Brother Willis is survived by his wife, Susie Mayhew Willis of the home; two sons, Clay of Lynchburg, Va., and Don of Emporia Va.; one daughter, Mrs. Marion Dalton of Smithfield, Va.; two brothers, Tillman Willis of Gretna, Va., and Martin Willis of Danville, Va.; four Sisters, Mrs. Ethel Worsham, and Mrs. Bessie Worsham, both of Altavista, Va., Mrs. Elwood Mayhew and Mrs. Frank Mayhew, both of Hurt, Va.; five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Brother and Sister Willis were married December 23, 1922. He joined the church at Springfield the second Sunday in September, 1952, and Sister Willis joined several years later. Brother Willis was ordained a deacon on May 9, 1953, and served well in this calling. He loved the church and enjoyed talking of the goodness and mercies of God and never tired of having church members, his pastor, and friends visiting in his home to talk of heavenly things. This was his greatest pleasure. He was so humble and I believe he loved everyone. This was manifested in his daily walk. We of Springfield Church will miss him so very much as will all his family and friends everywhere, but "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Brother Willis's funeral was held at Springfield Church, and was conducted by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder Raymond Goad. Burial was in the family cemetery at his home. The many beautiful flowers and the host of friends spoke so much for him.

May the Lord enable his dear wife to have strength and courage and be reconciled to her great loss, and bless the children, too, who are so good to her.

Written by Request,
Annie Tosh

O. K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/78
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

Humility before Almighty God

Is "Religion's" form at best;

God's Grace is "offered"- so they say;

But man must do the rest.

Of God our Savior's, Grace and Power,

Not much is usually said;

And when it is, it's in such a way,

That worldly minds are fed.

What God is this--who has no power?

On creatures He depends;

Now such a God (as a fool I speak),

Would fail us in the end.

The central theme of "natural" faith,

Is to trust in self and "I";

"I sought the Lord--I went halfway,"

So often is their cry.

"I gave my heart unto the Lord"

I made my peace with Him."

--(Our peace is by His blood that's shed,

On this we can depend.

Not the persons of men He seeks,

For Jesus knows all men;

He knows what death and emptiness,

By nature dwells within.

The cold and stony hearts of men,

By God, are now, not prized;

Power of His own--must form anew--

Such hearts--He's recognized.

The Holy Scriptures thus declare--

In no uncertain terms;

That man, by nature, seeks not God,

Nor ways of peace he learns.

His heart by nature all unclean;

As by the poet said;

His feet is swift, man's blood to shed,

As Christ Himself has bled.

So to the root of worthless trees

Our Saviour laid the axe;

They're now cut off who trust in self,

God's saints no more to tax.

All power in heaven and earth below
 To Christ our Lord is given;
 Though it may seem to us at times,
 We're from His presence driven.

By His power, and it alone,
 We're born from heaven above;
 To confirm His work, He gives us faith
 To view His matchless love.

Humility which is from above,
 To Heaven's heirs is sent;
 The Prodigal thus found it so—
 Famine made him repent.

The humble souls, who in Jesus trust,
 Their poverty confess;
 And what is theirs, is really His—
 'Tis His to give and bless.

No merit of our own have we to boast
 Before our Father, God;
 We only view what He has done,
 And praise Him for His love.

The life we live and now enjoy
 By God is freely given;
 But of ourselves we're weak and poor;
 By every tempest driven.

We are so poor that we must cry
 To Christ for daily bread;
 We feel our need of Him, and sigh;
 In nature we are dead.

To those who pray "Thy will be done",
 For these, He answers prayer;
 For 'Tis His will that they should pray,
 And long with them He'll bear.

Approach my soul, the throne of grace,
 To receive the help I need;
 For in thy balance I am weighed;
 And mercy I must plead.

With favors Divine, and such as these,
 We trust that we are blest;
 Faith claims no merits of her own,
 But in the Savior rest.

Elder O. A. Bailey

BANK OF FAITH (continued from May)

About that time a person called upon me, and offered to let me the house he then lived in, which he was going to leave. I own I had a desire after it,

because there was a large garden belonging to it, which I could look after myself, and raise many vegetables, that would help to support my family. The garden was walled in too, which was an advantage, I being very fond of retirement. There was a stable, a brew-house, and every other convenience; and the rent was only six pounds ten shillings per annum. But the man told me it cost seven or eight pounds to take the fixtures of the house; wherefore I gave up the thoughts of it, as I had no view of raising such a sum. So I drove it from my thoughts, though I much wanted it. But God "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitations; that we shall seek the Lord". (Acts 17:26, 27)

A few days after this a friend called to see me, whom I consulted about the house, and showed it to him. He persuaded me to take it, which I accordingly did; but was obliged to wait a few weeks, till the person I was to succeed could provide himself with another situation suitable for his business. I therefore asked God in prayer to enable me to purchase the fixtures of this house, if it was agreeable to His sovereign will and pleasure; for I knew that God had "set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel". (Deut. 32:8) And the providence of God appeared so conspicuous that I shortly obtained money enough to pay for the fixtures; but the person desired me to wait a few weeks longer, as he had been disappointed of the house he expected to go into; so I waited two months, during which time the money was all spent. Then I begged of God to frustrate my going into the house at all, if it was displeasing to Him, although I much wanted it; because my little cot was placed in a very vulgar neighbourhood, and the windows were so very low that I could not study at any of them without being exposed to the view of my enemies, who often threw stones

through the glass, or saluted me with a volley of oaths or imprecations, which was very disagreeable to me. In my public ministrations I expected nothing else but the cruel venom of asps; but to commune with my God in private was the only sweet refuge I had to flee to, and the only door of hope that was open for comfort and relief. However, Providence soon began to shine again; and indeed I had nothing else to live on from year's end to year's end but what God sent me in answer to prayer.

At this time a person gave me five guineas, - which kind providence I rather wondered at. But the following night I had a dream. I hope my brethren will not hate me yet the more because of my dreams, (Gen. 37:5) seeing we have a scriptural warrant for the relation of them: "He that hath a dream let him tell a dream; and he that hath My word, let him speak My word." (Jer. 23:28) I dreamed that the person before-mentioned sent to inform me that he was going to leave his house, that the things were to be appraised on Friday morning, and that he should expect me to pay him the money down for the fixtures. I said my dream, "Lord, thou knowest I cannot go, for I have not money enough." Then came this answer, "Go to Mr. Munday, cutler, at Kingston-upon-Thames, and he will lend you as much as you want." I soon after awoke, and behold it was a dream; therefore I took little notice of it. But in a few hours the person sent me word that he was going to leave his house, and should expect me to come and see the things appraised the next morning, and pay him for the same. Then I began to think it was more than a dream. The same night Mr. Munday, of Kingston, called on me; and, to the best of my remembrance, he had never been at my house before. I asked him if he would lend me a little money. He replied, "I will lend you all that I have in my pocket; and, if you will call on me tomorrow at Kingston, I will lend you five pounds if

you want it." He accordingly lent me what he then had with him, and the next morning, after the things were appraised to me, I paid for them, having just nine shilling left. This is the end of my dream. Whether this blessing came from Fortune on the wheel, or from the Searcher and Disposer of hearts, I shall leave those to determine who have got learning and an independent fortune at command.

My year being now expired, I wanted a new parsonic livery; wherefore in humble prayer I told my most blessed Lord and Master that my year was out, and my apparel bad; that I had nowhere to go for these things but to Him; and as He had promised to give His servants food and raiment, I hoped He would fulfil His promise to me, though one of the worst of them. Seeing no immediate signs of my livery coming, I began to omit praying for it; though God says, "For all these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel, that I may do these things for them." It fell out one day that I called on a poor man, who complained that he could not attend the Word of God for want of apparel. This drove me to pray again for my new suit of clothes, that I might give my old ones to him. A few days after this I was desired to call at a gentleman's house near London. Indeed, it had been impressed on my mind for six weeks before, that God would use that gentleman as an instrument to furnish me with my next suit. And so it fell out, for when I called on him, upon leaving his house he went a little way with me; and while we were on the road he said, "I think you want a new suit of clothes." I answered, "Yes, Sir, I do; and I know a poor man that would be very glad of this which I have on, if my Master would furnish me with another." When we parted he desired me to call on him the next morning, which I accordingly did; when he sent a tailor into the room, and generously told me to be measured for what clothes I chose, including a great

coat. When I got the new, I furnished the poor man with my old suit. This was the fourth suit of apparel that my Master gave me in this providential manner, in answer to the prayer of faith. Thus God, who kept Israel's clothes from waxing old, though in constant use for forty years, gave me a new suit every year.

I was soon afterwards brought into another strait. Having contracted a debt of five pounds for some necessaries which I wanted, I promised to pay it on a certain day; and I put up many prayers that God would enable me to fulfil my promise. At last the day arrived, and I had not one farthing towards it. About ten o'clock the bell rung at my gate. Supposing it to be my creditor, I knelt down, and begged of God not to let him come till He had sent me the money to pay him. It proved not to be the man I expected; but soon after the bell rang again, and I knelt down again, and prayed with the same words; and was informed a stranger wanted to see me. He had much to say to me about the things of God, and when he left he gave me two guineas. Soon after this I went to work in my garden; and another person, who lived at a great distance, came to speak with me, and gave me another guinea. After that I took a walk in the fields, and met with two gentlemen who feared God, and who came from London on purpose to see me. They gave me two guineas. The next day my creditor came, and his money was ready for him. This is like the Lord's dealings with the poor widow by Elisha; when the creditor came to take her two sons for bond-servants, God sent the creditor all his demands in a pot of oil.

I have omitted one providence which has just occurred to my mind, and which happened at the time when I carried coals for my bread. It fell out one night that we were forced to put our little ones to bed without a supper, which grieved me much, and on which account I got but little sleep all night; for I lay and wept bitterly under my hard fate. While

I was weeping and praying, a person came to the window and told me there was a load of wooden hoops come to the wharf from Dorking in Surrey, and that I must get up and unload them, which I soon did. When I had done, the farmer told me he had brought me a little meat pie and a flagon of cider, of which he had heard me say I was very fond. As soon as he was gone I went home, and endeavoured to awake my young ones, but in vain; however, I set the things up on the bolster, and they began to eat before they were fully awake. Thus God sent food from a very remote place, in answer to the groaning petition of my burdened heart. God grant that, if my reader be a poor Christian, he may take encouragement from these accounts to pray and watch the hand of God in every time of trouble; until he sees, agreeably to the promise, that God causes all His goodness to pass before him. Oh, how sweet is the least mercy when fitly timed, and brought forth so seasonably! How it endears God to the soul! When the poor widow of Zarepta was gathering two sticks to bake the last cake for herself and her son, that they might eat once more before they died, then comes the man of God, and swears that the barrel of meal shall not fail till God send rain upon the earth. (I Kings 17:14)

At this time I had many doors, very wide apart, opened to me for preaching the Gospel. I preached at Margaret Street in London, at Richmond, at Ditton, at Cobham, at Woking, at Worplesdon, and at Farnham, in Surrey. This I found too much for my strength; but I continued for a considerable time, till at last I was generally laid up sick about once a month. I realized my great need of a horse, yet feared I should not be able to keep it, if I had one. However, it happened that I had a very severe week's work to do. I was to go to Woking and preach on the Lord's day morning, to Worplesdon in the afternoon, and

from thence to Farnham in the evening; to preach at Petworth, in Sussex, on the Monday, at Horsham on the Tuesday, at Margaret Street Chapel on the Wednesday, and at Ditton on the Thursday evening; but before I could reach Ditton on the Wednesday I was so far spent that I thought I must have lain down on the road; yet with much difficulty I reached home; and then I had to go to London.

Finding myself wholly unable to perform all this labour, I went to prayer, and besought God to give me more strength, less work, or a horse. I used my prayers as gunners use their swivels, turning them every way, as the various cases required. I then hired a horse to ride to town; and when I came there, went to put him up at Mr. Jackson's livery stables, near the Chapel, in Margaret Street, but the ostler told me they had not room to take him in. I asked if his master was in the yard? He said, "Yes". I desired to see him; and he told me he could not take the horse in. I was then going out of the yard, when he stepped after me, and asked if I was the person that preached at Margaret Street Chapel? I told him I was. He burst into tears, saying he would send one of his own horses out and take mine in; and informed me of his coming one night to hear me out of curiosity, because he had been informed that I had been a coal-heaver. He then told me that under the first sermon, God showed him the insufficiency of his own wretched righteousness, the carnality and hypocrisy of his religion, the true state of his soul, and the necessity of the Spirit and grace of Christ Jesus the Lord to change his heart if ever he was saved; and blessed God for sending me there. This was good news to me. He also said that some of my friends had been gathering money to buy me a horse, and that he gave something towards it. Directly after I found the horse was bought and paid for; and one person gave me a guinea to buy a bridle, another gave me two whips, a

third gave me some things necessary for the stable, another trusted me for a saddle; and here was a full answer to my prayer. So I mounted my horse and rode home; and he turned out as good an animal as ever was ridden. I believe this horse was the gift of God, because He tells me in His Word that "all the beasts of the forest are His, and so are the cattle on a thousand hills." I have often thought that, if my horse could have spoken, he would have had more to say than Balaam's ass; as he might have said, "I am an answer to my master's prayers. I live by my master's faith, travel with mysteries, and suffer persecution, but I do not know for what;" for many a stone has been thrown at him.

On my road home, while meditating on the manifold blessings I had received from God, both in a way of grace and providence, how unworthy I was of them, and how unthankful I had been for them, I told God that I had more work for my faith now than heretofore; for the horse would cost half as much to keep as my whole family. In answer to which this scripture came to mind with power and comfort, "Dwell in the land and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed." This was a bank-note put into the hand of my faith which, when I got poor, I pleaded before God; and He honoured it. So that I lived and cleared my way just as well when I had my horse to keep as I did before; for I could not get anything either to eat, drink, wear, or use, without begging it of God. Sometimes I found much murmuring in my heart against being held in with so tight a rein; for which I was sure to suffer afterwards, so I found by daily experience, that I could not add one cubit to the stature God appointed, no, not even in the least thing; therefore it was in vain for me to take thought for the rest.

Having now had my horse for some time and riding a great deal every week I soon wore out my breeches as they were not fit for riding. I hope the reader will

excuse my mentioning the word breeches, which I should have avoided, had not this passage of Scripture obtruded into my mind, just as I had resolved in my own thoughts not to mention this kind providence of God, "And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs shall they reach. And they shall be upon Aaron and upon his sons, when they come into the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity and die; it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him." (Exodus 28:42, 43) By which, and three others, (namely, Ezek. 44:18; Lev. 6:10, and Lev. 16:4) I saw that it was no crime to mention the word breeches, nor the way in which God sent them to me; Aaron and his sons being clothed entirely by Providence; and God Himself condescended to give orders what they should be made of, and how they should be cut. And I believe the same God ordered mine, as I trust it will appear in the following history.

The Scripture tells us to call no man master, for One is our Master, even Christ. I therefore told my most bountiful and ever-adored Master what I wanted; and He who stripped Adam and Eve of their fig-leaved aprons, and made coats of skins and clothed them; and who clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, must clothe us, or we shall soon go naked; and so Israel found it when God took away His wool and His flax, which He gave to cover their nakedness, and which they prepared for Baal; for which iniquity were their skirts discovered, and their heels made bare. (Jer. 13:22)

I often made very free in my prayers with my invaluable Master for this favour; but He still kept me so amazingly poor that I could not get the breeches at any rate. At last I was determined to go to a friend of mine at Kingston, who is of that branch of

business, to bespeak a pair and to get him to trust me until my Master sent me money to pay him. I was that day going to London, fully determined to bespeak them as I rode through the town. However when I passed the shop, I forgot it; but when I came to London, I called on Mr. Crouch, a shoemaker, in Shepherd's Market, who told me a parcel was left there for me, but what it was he knew not. I opened it, and behold there was a pair of leather breeches with a note in them, the substance of which was, to the best of my remembrance, as follows:

"Sir,--I have sent you a pair of breeches, and hope they will fit. I beg your acceptance of them, and if they want any alteration, leave in a note what the alteration is, and I will call in a few days and alter them. I.S."

I tried them on, and they fitted as well as if I had been measured for them; at which I was amazed, having never been measured by any leather breeches maker in London. I wrote an answer to the note to this effect:

"Sir, I received your present, and thank you for it. I was going to order a pair of leather breeches to be made, because I did not know till now that my Master had bespoke them of you. They fit very well, which fully convinces me that the same God who moved thy heart to give guided thy hand to cut; because He perfectly knows my size, having clothed me in a miraculous manner for near five years. When you are in trouble, Sir, I hope you will tell my Master of this, and what you have done for me, and He will repay you with honour."

This is as near as I am able to relate it; and I added, "I cannot make out I.S., unless I put I. for Israelite indeed, and S. for Sincerity; because you did not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do."

About that time twelvemonth I got another pair of breeches in the same extraordinary manner, without my ever being measured for them. But perhaps my reader may blame me for this rela-

tion; and think that, as the good man gave his alms entirely in secret, it ought not to be published to the world. To which I answer, our blessed Saviour, when He was on earth, spake His parables openly; but, when in private, He communicated to His disciples all the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge that lay couched in them. Thus Christ gave His spiritual alms in secret; yet He commanded them to proclaim the riches of His grace upon the house-tops. It is true, He charged His patients when He healed them not to tell any man what He had done; to show them that He sought not the applause of man, but the honour of God, while He remained a bond-servant under the law, and in a state of humiliation; yet, after His death, they were to proclaim the whole of it to all the world. And all that Christ healed by His disciples were allowed to proclaim it; and sometimes were presented before the councils as witnesses of His power. And, though our alms are to be in secret, and we are commanded to say we are unprofitable servants, yet the Redeemer, who graciously condescends to receive and accept the fruits of our faith, will proclaim them one day before all the offspring of Adam, "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; sick and in prison, and ye visited Me." And, being stripped of all Arminianism, they said, "Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered?" etc. etc. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these little ones, ye have done it unto Me."

These things plainly show us that our alms ought to be given in secret, and that the giver ought to be silent about it; but the receiver ought not to be mute, but proclaim it to the honour of God, who opens the heart, and to the praise of his brother, who has done well through grace. Thus Paul and John, in their epistles, commend many who abounded in the grace of liberality.

As I was one frosty night going to Richmond to preach, when there was much snow on the ground, I met a poor cripple in a very deplorable condition. He solicited an alms of me; and I refused him, because I had but one shilling in all the world, and did not choose to part with that. However, I found myself greatly distressed because I did not give it to him, he appearing in such a miserable condition. I thought, perhaps, on such a severe night as that was, he might perish for want of the necessaries of life. When I came to Richmond I told a friend of it, and said I thought him to be in a dreadful situation, because I was so much distressed about refusing to relieve him; declaring that if I met him again I would give it to him, if I never had another

shilling of my own. The next night, as I was going to preach at a village adjacent, I met the same poor object, and had got the same shilling in my pocket, and no more. The poor creature passed me, but asked nothing of me, however, I turned back and gave him the shilling. The poor man received it with great joy and thankfulness, and told me a deal of his sufferings, which fully convinced me he was in great want; and this blessed passage of

Scripture came to my mind, "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again". (Prov. 19:17) I went that night and delivered my discourse; and when I had done, a woman took me aside into a room, and put three half-crown pieces into my hand, saying, "I was commanded to give you that." I asked her, "By whom?" She replied, "By a gentleman; but you are not to know his name." Thus I received my shilling again, with very considerable interest; and thus also the fulfilment of the word took place, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to penury." (Prov. 11:24)

One providence I had almost forgot. We were at that time very badly off for beds and bedding; my children were no better provided than the Saviour when He lay in a manger, for they slept upon bags of hay; but prayer, in the long run, brought these things also. Some of my most intimate acquaintances knew how I was tried in this respect, though I never made it known to anybody who was capable of helping me out of my trouble. But one night, after I had done preaching at Richmond, a person invited me home to his house, and showed me a large bundle tied up, saying it was for me. I asked who was the donor? He replied, "You are not to know that." I carried it home, when lo, it proved to be bedding, and the very things I stood so much in need of! Thus the blessed Saviour fulfils His gracious promise which He made to His servants, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." (John 14:13, 14)

(Continued next month)

FALSE PREACHING

It is because so many untaught men, unregenerated men, now occupy the pulpits that "another gospel" (Gal. 1:5) is being so widely and generally disseminated. Multitudes who have neither "tasted that the Lord is gracious" nor have "the fear of the Lord" in them have, from various motives and considerations, invaded the sacred calling of the ministry, and out of the abundance of their corrupt hearts they speak. Being blind themselves, they lead the blind into the ditch. Having no love for the Shepherd they have none for the sheep, being but "hirelings". They are themselves "of the world" and therefore "the world heareth them", (I John 4:5) for they preach that which is acceptable unto fallen human

nature, and as like attracts like, they gather around themselves a company of admirers who flatter and support them. They will bring in just enough of God's Truth to deceive the unwary and give an appearance of orthodoxy to their message, but not sufficient of the Truth, especially the searching portions thereof, to render their hearers uncomfortable by destroying their false peace. ***They will name Christ but not preach Him, mention the Gospel but not expound it.***

Some of these men will preach Legality under the pretense of furthering morality and honouring the Divine Law. They will preach up good works, but lay no foundation on which they may be built. They confound justification and sanctification, making personal holiness to be the ground of the sinner's acceptance before God. They sow their vineyard with "divers seed" (Deut. 22:9) so that Law and Gospel, Divine grace and creature performances are so mingled together that their distinctive characters are obliterated. Others preach Licentiousness under the guise of magnifying the grace of God. They omit the Divine call to repentance, say nothing about the necessity of forsaking our sins if we are to obtain mercy, (Prov. 28:13) lay no stress upon regeneration as a being made "a new creature in Christ", (2 Cor. 5:17) but declare that the sinner has simply to accept Christ as his personal Saviour - though his heart be still unhumiliated, without contrition and thoroughly in love with the world - and eternal life is now his. The result of this preaching is well calculated to bolster up the deluded, for instead of insisting that saving faith is evidenced by its spiritual fruits, instead of teaching that the Christian life is a warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and that none but the overcomer will reach Heaven, they are assured - no matter how carnal their walk - that "once saved, always saved", and thus they are soothed in their sins

and comforted with a false peace until they awake in Hell. Shun all such preaching, my reader, as you would a deadly plague. "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth thee to err from the words of knowledge". (Prov. 19:27)

May, 1942

A. W. Pink

Palmer, Texas

Dear Editors,

As I see it is time for me to renew my subscription for the dearest paper that we ever did or ever will receive, the *Signs of the Times*. We are sending a check for \$13.00 for a two year subscription, and you may use the balance as you see fit.

My wife and I enjoy the paper so much. May the God of Heaven bless all of you is our prayer for Christ's sake. Your Sister and Brother in Christ, we

Hope,
Lillie and Arthur Jones

Ruston, La.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

I thoroughly enjoy reading your publication. I read each copy and then re-read it. It is satisfying to know that so many are refreshed by the doctrines advocated in the *Signs of the Times*.

I have moved to Ruston, La., so please change my address on my *Signs*.

May God bless,
Mrs. H. A. Patterson

NOTICE OF CORRECTION

On page 86 of the April Signs of the Times there has been a line omitted in the article entitled Grace and Predestination No License!. After the text is quoted (Rom. 12:1-2) the paragraph should start: *Grace is our grand theme from which*

Please make this change in your copy of the paper. We apologize for this error.

JFP

PAUPERS' FARE

Dear Friend,—Yours came safely to hand, and I was glad to find you still holding on your way, leaning on the Beloved, who has never failed to be our Helper, our Protector, our Supplier, and our Deliverer to the present day. Yes, and my soul is very strong and very confident at times that He will keep and guide me even unto death, and afterwards receive me to glory.

O what a blessing to have communion with the dear Jesus, telling Him of our helplessness and worthlessness, and entreating Him to be with us, stand by us, defend us, supply us, and never to leave us a moment to ourselves! And how sweet to hear His gracious words whispered in our hearts: "I will be with thee in six troubles, and in the seventh will not leave thee;" "I will go before thee, and bring up the rearward;" and, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

We can then enter a little into what David said: "The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver;" "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; he restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake;" "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance; and of my cup thou maintainest my lot;" "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

We can say with the prophet Isaiah, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name;" "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effects of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings and quiet restingplaces, when it

shall hail, coming down in the forest, and the city shall be low in a low place. Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass." "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree; and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be unto the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Your soul and mine, though we are so unworthy, have found His words precious hundreds of times. And we have not only found them, but have eaten them, and proved them to be the joy and rejoicing of our hearts. O the blessedness and sweetness of His lips when He whispers in our hearts, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Bless the Lord, we have proved again and again that the kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And we are living witnesses by felt experience in our hearts, that "the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law." O that your soul and mine may have more of the fruits of that blessed Spirit in lively exercise in our hearts. God Almighty grant it! What is all the talk and contention about religion without this? Nothing at all. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and

though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

What a mercy it is that we are poor paupers upon charity! We have to come from week to week, from month to month, and from year to year, wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and knock at charity's door, having no other place where we can obtain relief or a supply for our need. And bless the Lord's dear name, all blessing is stored up in charity, free, "without money and without price." This just suits such poor beggars as you and I, who know and feel ourselves totally destitute of anything that can help us. And we are obliged to come again with the old tale, "Lord, have mercy upon me;" "Let thy salvation lift me up on high;" "Keep me as the apple of thine eye;" "Hide me under the shadow of thy wing, from the wicked that oppress me, from the deadly enemies who compass me about;" "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer; from the ends of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the Rock that is higher than I; for thou has been a shelter to me, and a strong tower from my enemy;" "Thou hast been mine help, leave me not, O God of my salvation;" "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort;" "O Lord, show me one more token for good, that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed because thou, Lord, hast holpen me and comforted me."

And here my soul is obliged to wait, and to watch charity's own time to communicate; and sometimes it is so long before charity appears to take any notice, or give any answer to my request, that I begin to sink with fear that I have quite wearied him out, and shall never again be relieved. But having no where else to go for help, I am obliged to keep crying and knocking on, till by and by the door is opened, and hearty welcome given me: "Come in, thou blessed of the

Lord!" "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewed out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table; she hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled; forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding."

O what a delicious feast, for poor, famishing beggars to feast upon electing love, imputed righteousness, and atoning blood! We have proved, my friend, that "his flesh is meat indeed and his blood drink indeed." We know it, for we have experienced the sweetness of it. It has cheered our heavy hearts; it has made us forget our poverty, and swept away our misery. God says, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy name; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." And sweet drinking it is. We can then sing, and say--not because it is in the written word, but because it is in our hearts--"There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

O the wondrous pleasure, gladness, and joy in beholding and admiring charity in God the Father--in His electing love, in the gift of His dear Son, in imputing all our accursed sins to Him, and in preparing a home for us when all our begging is ended--a home of which neither hell nor Satan can deprive us, for it is "reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

And what unspeakable pleasure in beholding charity in God the Son--in taking our nature into union with His divine, being born of a woman, and "made under the law, that he might redeem those that are under the law!" What wondrous charity that He should

condescend to suffer, bleed, and die for our sins, conquer our enemies, bear all our burdens, and make a way to eternal glory for all poor beggars!

And what heart-breaking and soul-melting charity in the Holy Ghost, to stop us from going to hell, strip us of the filthy rags of our own righteousness, and adorn us with the robe of wrought gold; emptying us of all trumpery, fleshly idols, and enriching us with His humbling, drawing, comforting, establishing, holy, anointing unction! He brings down our high looks, that we may experience His mighty exalting power. He suffers the cursed enemies of our souls to come in like a flood, so that sometimes we can only just say, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me," that He may exalt His glory in lifting up a standard against Him. And He brings our souls out of the miry clay, that we may sing a song of praise to Him to whom all praise belongs: "He brought me up out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God."

Bless the Lord, "Charity never faileth."

But where am I running to?

Yours in love,
J. W.

Trowbridge, Sept. 15, 1847

Salisbury, Maryland

Dear Elder Smith:

I am enclosing my check in the amount of \$10.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs* for two years. Use the balance as you wish.

You may or may not know that my eye surgery was successful and I'm now able to read almost anything, for a short while at a time. I can never tell anyone how thankful I am to the great Giver of all things and what it means to me to be able to read and study the precious Scriptures again. I feel sure that the Lord withholds something very

precious for a time that we be shown again and again from whence our blessings come and where our supply is. As I say this, I am not thinking altogether of the natural blessings but even more of the spiritual gifts, "the things that are not seen". At times His dear face seems to be hidden and we are unable to feel "the joy of our salvation" but He is with us all the time whether we walk in the wilderness or on the sunlit mountain. I only hope I may "learn in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content" and in "all things give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ concerning you".

I wish you might visit among us again. It was a joy to have you, your dear Mother, and others when you were here.

May the Lord continue to bless you and all of His "little flock" for His dear Name's sake.

With my love in that inseparable tie,
Mildred Dykes

ANECDOTE

At a great meeting held some years before the general separation took place between the Arminian and Predestinarian Baptists, one of the advocates of the former doctrine had been expatiating upon the creature-exalting doctrine of chance, and having concluded, an old veteran of the cross arose, with a very solemn air, and addressed the audience in something like the following words: Men and brethren: As I happened to be sitting and listening to what our brother happened to say about what happens to come to pass, I happened to think of an old man who happened to live a great while ago. This man happened to be a prophet, but he did not happen to possess a very patient or happy disposition. It so happened that the Lord spake to this prophet, and bade him go to a city called Nineveh, which happened to be very wicked, and to prophesy, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" Now Jonah did

not happen to feel inclined to go, and as there happened to be a ship just ready to sail, which happened to be going to Tarsus, the prophet took passage in her, that he might run away from the Lord. On the passage, however, there happened to arise a terrible tempest, and the ship did not happen to be sufficient to endure the gale with safety, and the crew happened to be superstitious idolators, and they cast lots to see on whose account this disaster had happened; and the lot happened to fall on Jonah, who happened to be fast asleep at the time these things happened. As none of the gods of the mariners were able to control the winds of heaven, or make the seas obey them, they awoke Jonah, and bade him call on his God, if peradventure he might happen to be able to save them. But Jonah happening at this moment to perceive that this catastrophe had all taken place because he happened to be on board, it was determined that Jonah should be thrown overboard; and when the men threw Jonah into the sea, a monstrous fish happened to dash along at that very moment, and his mouth happened to be wide open, and Jonah happened to fall right into the mouth of the fish, which happened to start directly towards the shore; and the fish happened to become very sick, and even happened to vomit out Jonah just as he happened to reach the shore, so that Jonah happened to land on the dry earth; and it so happened finally that Jonah went to Nineveh and there preached the preaching that the Lord bade him.

April 1, 1875

Signs of the Times

S. Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Brethren,

I see by this issue that I should send in my renewal. You will please find a money order to cover one more year. I enjoy the writings in the *Signs*, especially the editorials. The *Signs* sets forth

the doctrine of the God of all grace that I hope, He has made me to believe in. Because the Blessed and Holy agreed in covenant before the world was that He would leave His glory with His Father in heaven and come down to this sinned world to save sinners. Paul said, "Of whom I am chief." I feel to be the chief, also.

In John 1:14 it says, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father,) full of grace and truth." I believe that the Flesh was Jesus, and the Word was God, for He was both God and Man. He came to save sinners and them only. He never came to save any but His - the ones who were created in Him by the Father, and that was before the world began. It was a perfect agreement between the three in One, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Blessed and Holy Jesus suffered in the flesh for all the children of the Living God - all those that the Father gave Him. Jesus fulfilled the law completely for the children. By reason of the weakness of the flesh and sin that dwelt therein, they could not keep the least commandment, then surely they could not keep the whole of it. But the Lamb of God could keep it and did, to the jot and tittle.

He died on the horrible tree of the cross, shed His precious blood for the object of His love, the Bride, the Lamb's wife. He went to the grave for their justification, and was raised the third day morning for their glorification. They are just as safe now as if they were already in heaven. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is our salvation, our all in all. He will not come back to this earth to die again. He is trying to save no one! He finished their salvation when he arose from the grave and returned to the Father. He is now sitting on His right hand, making intercession for them. He is keeping them from harm in this world.

Oh, Brethren, I only meant to scribble a few lines. Please excuse the bad writing and spelling. I am 90 years old, and every day I see myself a worse sinner.

May the most high God bless all the Editors and Associate Editors. Keep in the very same direction of the God of all Grace. Amen.

In Hope of Eternal life,
John J. Smith

Duncanville, Texas

Dear Elder Smith:

Enclosed is a check for ten dollars for two subscriptions as noted.

I have been enjoying the *Signs* thoroughly, and if not deceived, my prayer is that you and the other brethren who prepare, edit, and distribute the *Signs* will continue to be blessed from on high in all of your labors.

In that blessed hope,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

December 19, 1977

Elder David V. Spangler

Route 7, Box 483

Burlington, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler,

Enclosed please find a check for nine dollars (\$9.00) for which please renew my subscription for two years, as it expires January, 1978. I want you to know that I dearly love the *Signs*. I guess it's because they advocate that sweet doctrine, "Salvation by Grace." The Lord says, by Grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it's the gift of God.

Holy writ teaches without the shedding of blood there is no remission. And as Christ shed his blood to fulfill the promise of a Saviour, the blood was shed to redeem the chosen ones in Christ. We have no need for more offering for sin. At the end of time Christ will come and call all he shed his blood for. He will call

all the redeemed from the four winds of the earth; He will bring his sons and daughters from afar, and they will be caught up with Christ in the clouds, and the wicked will be judged--according to their works. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15)

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:24-26)

He made all things for a purpose. He has all power in heaven and on earth, and we have nothing to say concerning our salvation, for our lives are in the hands of our maker. The Apostle says to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God works in purpose and righteousness, and we should rejoice and love him, and thank him for the gift that worketh in us a work--pleasing to our maker.

He calls and redeems his elect, and when their days are fulfilled here, there will be no more sins to be forgiven, as the blood of Christ hath cleansed them from all sins, and they shall live with Christ forever.

Elder Spangler, I was stricken with spastic muscles the first week in June, haven't yet fully recovered. Please remember unworthy me at the throne of Grace.

God bless you is my sincere prayer.

Mary M. Pearson

Thoughts and meditations, as proceeding from spiritual affections, are the first things wherein spiritual-

mindedness doth consist, and whereby it doth evidence itself. Our thoughts are like the blossoms on a tree in the spring. You may see a tree in the spring all covered with blossoms, that nothing else of it appears. Multitudes of them fall off, and come to nothing. Ofttimes where there are most blossoms, there is least fruit; but yet there is no fruit, be it of some sort it will, good or bad, but it comes in from some of those blossoms. The mind of man is covered with thoughts as a tree with blossoms. Most of them fall off, vanish and come to nothing, and end in vanity; and sometimes where the mind doth most abound with them, there is the least fruit; the sap of the mind is wasted and consumed in them. Howbeit there is no fruit which actually we bring forth, be it good or bad, but it proceeds from some of those thoughts. Wherefore ordinarily these give the best and surest measure of the frame of men's minds. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7) Owen

Richlands, N.C.

Dear Brothers,

I am so sorry I have waited so long to send in my payment for the *Signs of the Times*. I am sending in the money to get it paid up so forgive me. I am almost 75 years old and have had 2 heart attacks, and my mind is not so good.

I am not able to go to church as I wish, but when I can read the good old paper and read something that coincides with some of the difficult travels here on this old sinful world it revives my hope a little.

I am the first name on the book at Cypress Creek Church. I joined the church when I was 26 years old, and I still enjoy being with the ones I hope are the brothers and sisters. I don't feel to be one of them, but I know something happened to me that I did not do myself, and I am glad the good Lord showed me

I was a vile sinner and still am. As Paul said, "Things I should do, I do not, and the things I should not do, that I do." The older I get the more I am made to realize how sinful I am.

I am sorry I waited so long but hope you will forgive me. I feel the good Lord knows all about how it would be before I was born and it seems this world has been so full of trials and troubles and sufferings until sometimes I wish it was all over. My trials and sufferings are a pleasure to me now, because I hope I have all my troubles and trials here in this life. Sometimes I hope I have seen the cross that Jesus bore. It improves my little hope, and that is all I have. If I only knew I was one that Christ died for I would be satisfied to leave this old world as it has no charm for me. Even when I go to church I feel to be one of the least, if one at all.

Hope this finds you in the best of health, and may God be with you and bless you always. When at the Throne of Grace remember this poor sinner and pray for me when you can.

A little sister, I hope,
Mrs. Bessie Foy

Many of God's people lament the badness of their memory. And yet, after all, a heart-memory is better than a mere head-memory. Better to carry away a little of the life of God in our souls, than if we were able to repeat every word of every sermon we have heard.

Toplady

Gospel ministers should not be too hasty and eager to wipe off every aspersion that is cast on them falsely for Christ's sake. Dirt on the character (if unjustly thrown), like dirt on the clothes, should be let alone for a while, until it dries; and then it will rub off easily enough.

Toplady

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THE TIMES TO FEBRUARY, 1978

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EDITORIAL

THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH
Gal. 3:11

If there is a diversity of opinion among the saints as to who the just are, I am not aware of it. Therefore, it is my present intention, as the Lord blesses

me, to take the position that they are the Lord's redeemed people in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In case that this is a disputed matter, I am not writing to those who disagree, and they need not be offended at anything I say. If there are those that claim the just to be our Lord Jesus Christ, they need not be offended at anything I say because I am not writing to those people.

The just are those that God loved from all eternity, and in that love stood His Son as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world to pay the price of their redemption. They are the ones that God foreknew in a covenant of grace. "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 (not what) He did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image (whatever that entails) of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified. (Rom. 8:28-30) God knows all things, and He knows that I do not write for controversy. I do not have one word in reply to any man that finds a fault with the passage that I have used to show who the just are before God. Nor do I intend to argue anything about the degree of their justification before God. If the text is mine by the gift of God, it is in regard to how that they live.

That there are many in the world who are not just is a fact that must be granted to me. If I know my desire, it is to know how these just people live. If they have two ways of living, I will do my best to find the other (or others) besides the way in the text. If I do not find any other way stated in the divine record, I will, as blessed of God, continue to advocate at home and abroad, on the land and on the sea, that God's children are now living by faith. I am sure that we could not biblically say that they

used to live on faith; I am equally sure that we cannot say that they are going to live on faith after this life is over. Therefore, I am compelled to advocate the security of the believer by the faith of the Son of God as freely given to them. While speaking in detail about what they live on, we must urge that the just do not live by the deeds of the law, for in that way we would not have any just to live by faith. (Acts 13:39)

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity". (I Cor. 13:13) All three of these gifts are now abiding in the life of these people of God. They are not leaving us; they are abiding with us today, in this present life. We are living now on all three of them. As long as we live here in this life we will have the sustaining power of all three of them. It is noteworthy that they now abide. But sometimes there is a tendency to minimize the power of them while abiding with us. The most wretched existence that I ever heard of was in the life of an apostle that was often in error, and on a special occasion he seemed to be at the turning point in his life, and that truly he would return to his fishing from then on. What is the explanation of his not turning? Who will come forward with an explanation that would say that period in his life was left in his hands? Remember that men, that is the just men of God, live by faith. A few hours before Peter got into this terrible ignomy and shame, another had told him what he was going to do that night. If you had been there do you think you could have concocted something to keep him living in favor with God. If so, what would it have been. There is no need to say Peter was capable of rendering any solution to his dilemma, for the Master had already told him what he would do. But will you kindly notice what the Master told Peter that He would do for him in this sad hour? I delight in what He told him, for I have needed time and again that kind of

care, that kind of lean post. After telling Peter how ignominiously that he would deny Him, before He had ever committed that sin, the Saviour put in a living word for that harried and tried apostle. It was in the hour of Peter's greatest need. "But I have prayed for you that your faith fail not....". (Luke 22:32) The casual observer tells me that if there ever was a failing case of faith it was in this tragic time of Peter. What! Thou knowest not wot thou art saying! We are told that the communication between the Father and the Son was good; that God always heard the Son. The Son prayed that Peter's faith fail not, and I am sure that the Son prayed to His Father, and I am sure that the Father complied with the request of the Son. Verily, Peter was one of the apostles, and verily, he, as well as you and I (if we are living) are living by faith.

This same apostle declared that there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved. It was this only name that was with the poor sinner, the apostle Peter, and saved him on this occasion. No other name to be named. If so, who? Ah, you say many could have prayed for him, but would he have lived through the night had not his faith remained? By whom did it remain?

Our text embraces how a child of God lives. How do you live? Is it by a given faith? If a given faith, who gives it? Is it a fruit that grows on a good tree or a bad one? Who makes the tree good? Does the unborn man make it good before regeneration? If so, the world has everything that matters in religion. If God makes the tree good, then the fruit is a gift of God, and we readily see that we are living by what is produced on the good tree, which is the handiwork of God. Since when has it been Primitive Baptist doctrine (or better still, Bible doctrine) that the man dead in sin makes a good tree out of a corrupt tree? If it has ever been done, then the patriarch Job is a fake and an imposter,

and his tormentors have been princes to God's humble poor. The truth is, as every one living by faith well knows, that God had charge of the whole life as it is laid down in the book of Job. It was God who called the attention of the devil to Job; it was Job that did not know the way, but it was God that did know. It was under the effectual teaching of God that Job realized that God was trying him, and that when the trials of this life were over that he would see His Saviour for himself.

What a complete life is this. What a victorious life is this. What a victory was obtained in this life of the patriarch. Do you know who kept him alive for those trying years and humiliating experiences? From whence came the faith that he manifested from time to time? You know, dear reader (that is, if you know anything) that the life that Job lived in the flesh was lived by the same faith that another man lived by in this life. (Gal. 2:20) You might well lay the life of Job, the patriarch, and Paul, the apostle, down parallel with each other, and at all times each of them attributed their life to the goodness and mercy of God Almighty as made manifest in the life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Far too many times the Bible is treated as the mouthpiece of men, but it is the testimony of the True Witness. Too many times men treat upon faith as a partner with selfrighteousness, but it is not. The faith by which saints live in this present evil world is the sure support and help of every one of them. They live on it; they live by it. It gives life, yea, it is the life of every just man and woman. Anything that we do in this life that is acceptable to God, yea, everything that we do and say and think as children of the kingdom is effected in us by faith. If it is not by faith, then everything we do and say and think is sin. It doesn't matter in the least what slurring remarks are made against the free woman and Isaac and those purchased by the blood of the Redeemer God, it still

stands like a bulwark of defense to the children of God that they live by faith.

I have read after learned man (at least they said they were) who try to explain about the two brands of grace and faith. When they get through with their surmisings, I am still the same, to wit, there is but one grace and there is but one faith taught in the Bible, and in the experience of God's humble poor. Grace is bestowed upon an unworthy creature, and faith is bestowed upon one that is weak; one that is poor; one that is ignorant; one that does not know the way. This grace and this faith are effectual. There is not a semblance of truth in the thought that one phase of it, or one kind of it, is effectual and that the other can be, if used. How in the name of all that is scared and all that is precious to a poor sinner, can such a doctrine be comforting? Our forefathers were placed on trial for such a doctrine and it was a galling yoke to them, and God loved them in such a measure that He removed the galling yoke from His burdened children and put it (manifestly) on the precious Saviour to bear instead. Since then (that is, since He has been given to them in manifestation) they are living better now. They are living by faith. Grace is given them for grace, and in Him they see and have light in His light and liberty of the faith as it brings to them the benefits of its sustaining power as they live in it.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. 5:1-5) As far as God the offended One was concerned, when Christ arose and went back to heaven,

we were then justified, but that would not have ever done us any good in this life. When it was manifested to us what a miracle of love had been performed for us, then and there faith was manifested in the tree which had been made good or just in Christ and the good news was sealed home to our wearied frame. The next hour, the next day, ever since that memorable day faith has been springing up in our life and we have been living on it and by it.

It continued from then. By this faith we also have had a measure of peace, which has been a great boon in our living in Him. Being poor and needy with seemingly an empty and barren cupboard, also to us was given access into this grace wherein we stand. Even in the midst of many sore conflicts, we have had many periods of rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. And how broad the field grows as we contemplate the glorious beauty of it; how filled is our soul and how our cup runs over in ecstasies as we are made to rejoice in tribulations. Ah, we formerly murmured at them; we found fault with God about them, we thought they were road blocks and stumbling stones placed in our pathway, but now we find them, when rightly understood, as stepping stones to higher ground. Our joy became greater as we saw the unfolding of God's mercy to usward, even the work whereby we were given patience to eat the meanest of fare, to bear the hardest of sneers and slurs, realizing that these things were all done to the green tree and that certain it is that we dry branches cannot expect less than what our Master endured for us.

This faith, since first revealed to us, has continued as our life. That which we have needed for the journey has been given as a flowing and continuing stream. Even if this poor vagabond in the earth is mistaken, and I have not been filled on the riches of His grace, that does not change the fact that it is flowing to all of His little ones, and that

from day to day these tokens of things to come are coming to hand as needed. To one and all of these little ones it makes them not ashamed to depend on him as the storehouse from whence comes our faith. And dear reader may God teach you that it is a gift of God, and that His way of bringing it to you is by the sovereign work of the Holy Ghost which was given to you to bring you these rich supplies of faith and grace and all other things necessary for you to live on.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. 11:1) Sometimes I am confronted with the divider of salvation. This has not been going on too many years in just that form. As the saints stood facing Calvary they were trusting (by faith) in that salvation that is of the Lord. This salvation had spoken in the Old Testament all told nearly a hundred times, and has spoken many times in the New after Calvary. My text is that the just shall live by faith. Faith is not a product of nature, but it is a fruit of His Spirit, and it is a gift of God. In Hebrews 11:1 we are told that it is the substance of things hoped for; that it is the evidence of things not seen. Now let us remember that the just live by faith, and that faith is the substance of what we are now hoping for.

As we struggle here below but a short time we are waiting for the glorious appearance of our Pilot, Who will pilot us into the haven of rest that we are longing for. Our faith goes ahead, it reaches above. It looks up to the blest abode of saints and it gets tokens and sips and small draughts of the water of life and it is felt as rising up into everlasting life. That fair land is self-satisfying. Nothing more to be desired other than to be there where our Saviour dwells and to be with Him and like Him forever, to be with all of the blood-washed throng, to be like Jesus and to enjoy all that heaven means. As our faith leaps forward at this heaven of heavens all is seen and felt and laid hold

upon, and it keeps us plodding on in that way enjoying the substance of that fair land now.

Draw near, bankrupt sinner, lay aside all of your fears, and come to Mt. Zion, the City of God, and eat your fill and drink to satisfaction, for we are (if we are His) now eating and drinking at His table. We are faring well, living by faith on what is in the prepared city of God. The life now is indeed rich, for it is supported by the precious things of heaven. Yea, we will, through faith, stem over every rising tide that awaits us here for the maintenance of us while on this journey is by the substance of what we will have in abundance forever and forever.

Now one other point I feel to consider. Paul was chosen as the apostle to the Gentiles, and I am a Gentile (at least by nature) but it is better than that, for I hope that I am one whom the Lord turned to when He turned from the rich nation of Jews (by nature). Furthermore, the apostle being brought into the fold with Gentiles was far reaching, even to all them that are called to that end. My hope embraces the precious thought that I, too, am not fit to be a minister, and that if through grace I am one, then the least.

This pattern to believers was the rule for him, and the present text tells us that he lived by the same rule. “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20)

The life of our precious Saviour, as well as His death, was according to what (not whom) our Father determined, and as the Master, so the servant, thus I am assured that life and death and hell shall not ever bring up an obstacle that will hinder all of the blood washed throng from living on the faith that God has so freely given us in His Son.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Waverly, Bremer County, Iowa
Dear Brother Beebe:

If one so sinful and so depraved as I feel myself to be, and ever have been since I have professed before the world and the church of the living God to have a hope in Christ, may be allowed the expression - convinced as I am that none have a right to use the terms brother or sister in Christ, or to claim relationship with the church of God, but those who have been born of God; and I am often left to doubt and fear that I am not one of that chosen number, but fear that I shall eventually bring reproach upon the cause. Yet, notwithstanding my doubts and fears, I feel sure of this fact; "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

I have read the *Signs of the Times* for three years past with a great deal of interest. Although I have had access to them for years past, yet I did not always relish the doctrine they advocate. The communications from the brethren and sisters are not only instructing, but they are filled with expressions of love and fellowship one for another; especially, the editorials on some particular points of doctrine have been blest to my understanding; or, in other words, my understanding has been opened to receive them as the truth as it is in Jesus. I have had a great desire for some time past to relate, through the *Signs of the Times* some of what I trust have been the dealings of the Lord with me prior to and since I professed to know and love God. I well remember when I was a small lad, of often weeping when alone on account of my sins, and I frequently passed resolutions that I would mend my ways and do better, but as often broke them. Still those feelings and resolutions followed me to manhood with the same results. I

often set times when I would apply myself more earnestly to get religion, for I verily thought it was in my power to obtain it; not only so, but a moment of serious reflection convinced me that I was a sinner, and if I were called to give account of my stewardship, my sentence would be: "Depart thou cursed," etc. Thus it was with me for half the number of years allotted to man, sometimes careless and unconcerned about my future state, and then again like the troubled sea that casts up mire and dirt. I had fearful forebodings of the future, under a sense of my sinfulness, for I felt that man was an accountable being, which cut off all hope. I believed, from observation, that the Methodists were the most zealous, devoted people, and were doing the most good of any denomination that I knew of; and their sentiments were more congenial with my feelings. Myself and wife attended their meetings; we were taken in on probation, and finally united with them, and in a short space of time I was chosen Class Leader, and for a few months was a zealous advocate of their doctrine, and as bitter an enemy to the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as was Saul of Tarsus, if I had possessed the same power and ability. Against the Old School Baptists I felt the most inveterate religiously, although my mother, who was then dead, and brother and sister, and mother-in-law belonged with that despised people, and were members of the Brookfield church in Orange County, N.Y. But I soon became dissatisfied with my position, from circumstances that transpired in the Class, and in dealings with some of the members, and from observing some of the members, and from observing their daily walk I lost all confidence in them as christians, as also in myself; for I became careless and indifferent, and tried to embrace the Universal doctrine. To this end I studied different books; the result was we left the meetings entirely.

Time passed on until the summer and fall of 1857. I was aroused from my death-like slumber by a voice (not audible) which seemed to speak to my inmost soul too plainly to be misunderstood, that I was a sinner, lost to all intents and purposes. I had denied the Saviour before the world - denied the faith, and consequently there was no salvation for me. My feelings none can tell but those who have felt the same. While in this condition, and feeling that my case was hopeless, I could not refrain, when in some secluded place from pleading for mercy, although the very act seemed to rivet the chain with which I was bound still tighter. My wife, previously to this time, had obtained a hope. My anxiety to search the scriptures was great, but I did not want any one to know my troubles, or see me reading the Bible. My wife afterwards told me she had sought opportunities, especially before she retired to rest in the evening, to place it in my way so that it would be no trouble for me to find it. And it seemed while persuing it that there was not a chapter or text but what sealed my condemnation. I could look back upon my past life and trace the goodness of God in all His dealings with myself and family; although in every instance I had requited evil for good. My troubles were still augmented when I discovered that my eldest two children were laboring under the same distress of mind, and I had for a series of years set them pernicious examples. My trouble seemed greater than I could bear. I felt that I was justly suffering the wrath and vengeance of the Almighty. I could not point them to the Lamb of God as the Saviour of sinners. Despair and gloomy forebodings came over me. I had tried every conceivable way to find help, but none came, and my stock of good works were used up. One evening as I lay upon my bed, pondering over my lost condition, almost every sin I had committed from my youth seemed vivid in my

recollection, and so agravating in their nature, and in such magnitude, and myself so helpless and perfectly wretched, that I could not think one good thought, or perform one good act. I felt that I merited nothing but the displeasure of that holy Being who had strewed my pathway with blessings, and on whose bounty I had subsisted all my days, but had never realized it. I felt my heart drawn out in love to that God whom I had so much dishonored. I felt that if I were forever banished from His presence, I could but acknowledge that it was just. While in this train of thought, these words came to my mind with such power that I forgot for the moment the past: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." And surely my mind was like the troubled sea, when Jesus spake and said, "Peace! Be still!" My burden was gone; instead of sorrow, there was gladness; instead of mourning, joy. I could but rejoice in the goodness of God, and the prospect of being permitted to prostrate myself before Him as a humble worshiper, and with the psalmist say: "He has taken me up out of a horrible pit and miry clay, where every exertion I made, or prayer I had offered, only sank me deeper and deeper." But I felt that Jesus had taken me up, and had set my feet upon the Rock of Ages, and put a new song into my mouth - even praises to His adorable name. I had not been at meeting in a long time, having lost all confidence in that class of people that I once thought were so pious, but still thought, I loved sincerely all those whom I believed were christians. I was somewhat acquainted at the time with Elder Brome, and myself, wife, and family went to hear him preach, and I verily believe my heart was opened, like that of Lydia, to receive the truth in the love of it. His discourse so corresponded with my feelings and experience that I could but sanction it. Suffice it to say, myself, wife, and two children soon after

attended church meetings, related the dealings of the Lord with us, and were received, and on the next day were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in presence of a large concourse of people. This was in May 1857. We then lived in Sullivan County, N.Y. This was soon after the split in Warwick, and some other associations, and the contest was still kept up. I believed with all my heart that the doctrine held by the Old Baptists was the doctrine taught by Christ and His apostles, and that they were God's people. But the questions and queries in dispute I did not understand. I saw one of Elder Clark's papers called "Zion's Advocate", and subscribed for it. It was in the most of its editorials and communications inveterate against the Signs of the Times, denouncing them as being everything that is bad, and you, as well as many of the ablest defenders of the truth, as the worst enemies of the cause of Christ.

In the spring of 1858, we moved to Fondulac County, Wisconsin, where we were surrounded with mocking Ishmaelites on every side, where the system of works was advocated with great zeal, but where we found not one advocate of the truth. I became restless and dissatisfied, and could but weep when I remembered Zion, and the privileges I had enjoyed in meeting with those I loved. The Advocate was a poor substitute for preaching. The editorials and communications were not what I desired. We being strangers in a strange land, and surrounded with enemies to the truth, the Bible was my only study, and my prayer was that if I were one of God's chosen ones, He would by His Spirit direct me into all truth needful for me in defending His cause, and all that was for my good and His glory, and that He would save me from all prejudice and self-righteousness, and teach me to lean entirely on His omnipotent arm for strength and wisdom. I was unsettled on

some points of doctrine, and had a great desire to see the Signs of the Times, but for fear of hurting the feelings of some brethren in the east who were so much opposed to them, I sent for them in the name of my brother-in-law for one year. They came to us richly laden with the precious truth which is so comforting and consoling to God's little ones, and especially so to those who were situated as we were. One particular point was the union of Christ and His church. I read one of your editorials of the subject, headed, I believe, "Eternal Vital Union". And in comparing it with the standard of truth, the holy scriptures, it appeared to be blest to my understanding, and every obstacle was removed from my mind.

I shall have to close for want of room. We now receive the Signs of the Times regularly, and if the Lord favors me with the means, I will try to forward it in due time. I have written this while my mind has been much troubled on account of my _____ who lays very low with typhoid fever, and while watching at her bedside. Please therefore excuse all mistakes. At some future time, if the Lord will, I will try to give you the reason why I moved to this state, and of my ups and downs since I made a profession of religion; of the people I found here, and the condition of the churches. Yours, in hope of eternal life.

A. T. Beebe, April, 1864

OBITUARIES

MRS. OAKEY ANN MILLS STUMP

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our precious Mother in Israel, Sister Oakey Ann Mills Stump. She was born in Floyd County, Va. on Oct. 19, 1886 and entered into that peaceful rest Dec. 26, 1977 in a Roanoke, Va. hospital, making her stay on earth 91 years, 1 month and 7 days. She was preceded in death by her husband, George Robert Stump, in Jan.

1957.

She is survived by one son, J. Luther Stump, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; three daughters, Mrs. Pula Pearn, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Ruth Birkelund, Bellflower, Calif.; and Miss Sibyl Stump, Roanoke, Va. One daughter, Mrs. Evelyn Wood preceded her in death in 1971. Three sisters, eight grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren also survive.

"Ma Stump", as she was so lovingly called by her church friends, united with the Pine Forest Primitive Baptist Church many years ago and moved her membership to Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church in 1940. It is believed she was a member for more than sixty years.

Neither time or space would permit us to say all the beautiful things that was the life of our dear "Ma". Her kind, gentle concern for each one of her family and her church friends made their life much richer for having known such a dear lady. Her love for her church, her love for her Lord and Master was manifested in her words and her deeds. Her children was blessed to manifest that "they will arise up and call her blessed." There was nothing left to be done for her welfare and comfort that their hands could do.

After a broken hip about eighteen months ago, she was never able to attend her church again but her desire always was to go. In many situations when the trials of this life were many, she never complained but would always say "It's alright, It's already fixed." She told this unworthy writer a few months before her death that she was just waiting for her Lord to come and that she had waited so long.

Her funeral was conducted Dec. 28, 1977 by her pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner at the Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest in Sherwood Memorial Park under a beautiful blanket of flowers beside her beloved husband of more than fifty years, there to await the second coming of her Lord and Master whom she adored.

Now as she rests in Peace, may the memory of our dear "Ma Stump" always be a blessing to her lovely family and to her many brethren, sisters and friends.

By the request of her daughter, Sibyl, this memorial was written and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

Mrs. H. C. Houchins

DAISY ADELLA BAKER

It is my sad duty to write the obituary of a very dear friend and sister in the Church. Our beloved Sister Daisy Baker of Naches, Washington, has gone to her reward. I can only say "Praise the Lord!" She served her Lord in our Pleasant Grove Church for many years. Though her husband never joined the church, we claimed him as one of our own and together they made welcome any and all who came from far and near.

Mrs. Daisy Adella Baker, age 96, died at Summetview Manor Nursing Home on January 18, 1978. She was born at Pilot Oak, Kentucky, January 5, 1882. She was married to her late husband, Dennis Baker, on December 24, 1899, in Kentucky. They came to Naches and started ranching there in 1920.

Sister Baker is survived by three sons, Athol, of Everette, Wash., Dewey H., of Naches, Wash., and Lynn, of Gig Harbor, Wash.; two daughters, Mrs. Beatrice Haan of Ellensburg, Wash., and Mrs. Kenneth (Grace) Lofthers, of Tucson, Arizona; 6 grandchildren; 14 great grandchildren; and 1 great great grandchild.

Mildred A. Simpson, Church Clerk
Pleasant Grove Church, Naches, Wash.

PENNIE BARNES LAMM

On November 20, 1977, our Heavenly Father called Sister Pennie Lamm from this present world. She had been blessed to live for 81 years and to walk in the way that is Life and Truth.

Sister Lamm was born January 31, 1896, in Wilson County, North Carolina. Her parents were Mr. and Mrs. William H. Barnes. She is survived by her husband, Lloyd Lamm, of Kenly; 3 sons, Relmar of Wilson, Edward of Lucama, J. L. of Kenly; one daughter, Mrs. Lucille Jones of Kenly; 4 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Sister Pennie united with Pittman's Grove Church on May 11, 1929, and was faithful in attendance until sickness prevented her from attending church. Following a long period of illness, Sister Pennie died in Wilson Memorial Hospital. Funeral services were at Grizzard Funeral Home with Elder Curtis R. Rains and Mr. James Joyner officiating.

We feel that our loss is Sister Pennie's eternal gain. Her race has been run and now we can say "Sleep on until that great day shall come." May God bless and comfort the family which has been left behind not to sorrow as those who have no hope, but rejoice that God giveth and God taketh away. Blessed by His Name.

Writtbed by order of conference by:

Elder Curtis R. Rains

ELDER DAVID ARCHIE O'BRYANT

It is with a feeling of unworthiness and inability that I attempt to comply with the request of the church and write a few lines in memory of our dear brother and pastor, Elder David Archie O'Bryant.

Elder O'Bryant was born October 10, 1899. He departed this life, January 2, 1978, making his stay on earth, seventy-eight years, two months, and twenty-three days. He is survived by his wife, Pauline (Noah) O'Bryant, three sons, one daughter, nine grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, five sisters and three brothers.

The funeral was conducted at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church, where he has been a member of almost fifty-five years, with Elder B. D. Hutchins officiating.

Elder O'Bryant was united with the church in May, 1923, and he was ordained to the ministry, September 28, 1927, and served faithfully in this office for more than fifty years.

He was a wonderful speaker, and it was a pleasure to be in his presence, and a privilege to hear him preach the doctrine of salvation by grace and the absolute Sovereignty of God. He stood firmly in the principals of doctrine that were (as he often stated) sweeter to him than life. He loved the meetings dearly, and in his many years of service, missed but a few.

He was a wonderful and faithful pastor, to the four churches he served, and would travel many miles to serve his church, or visit a sick or bereaved brother or sister; never sparing himself, but always willing to spend and be spent for the good and comfort of his brethern.

Many good things could be said concerning this faithful old servant, but his record stands out, making further comments

unnecessary.

Elder O'Bryant was laid to rest in the cemetery at Hillsdale, there to await the coming of our Lord, when He returns to carry His little ones home.

Although we mourn his loss, we bow to the will of our Heavenly Father Who does all things well.

So let us comfort one another with the thought, that he has gone from the cares and sorrows of this life, to rest forevermore in the presence of a loving Saviour.

Written by request of the church.

Florence B. Knight
Church Clerk

PEORIA LAMM BARNES

Sister Peoria Barnes was born to Edwin and Catherine Lamm in Wilson County, North Carolina. She was married to the late William Joseph Barnes and is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Doris Evans, Mrs. Sallie Thorne, and Mrs. Agnes Bedford all of Selma, and Mrs. Alma Scott of Kenly; five sons, Raymond and Randolph of Kenly, J. E. of Wendell, Roland of Clayton, and Odis of Lucama; one brother, Lloyd Lamm of Kenly; 32 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren.

Following a short period of illness in Wilson Memorial Hospital, God called Sister Barnes home on July 20, 1977 at the age of 84. Sister Barnes united with Pittman's Grove Church the second Saturday in October 1918 and had been a faithful member and loyal mother to her family and a friend to everyone. We know that her labor has been finished here in this world and now when Christ comes again surely she shall see Him as He is and be satisfied. The loss of Pittman's Grove Church and her family shall truly be felt; however, our loss is her eternal gain. We feel that there was no sting in death for her for Christ had taken it out.

Funeral services were conducted at Grizzard Funeral Home by Elder Curtis R. Rains and Elder Harvey Holland. Burial was in the Barnes Family Cemetery where Sister Barnes was laid under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the Morning of the Resurrection.

Written by order of conference by:

Elder Curtis R. Rains

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Burlington, N.C. 27215

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/78
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

BANK OF FAITH

(Continued from June)

Some time after this I took gospel courage, and asked My Master to give me a new bed; and importuned His ever-blessed and most excellent Majesty until I got it. Perceiving that the Lord approved of a bold, though not of a presumptuous beggar, agreeably to His word, "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace", etc., I boldly asked Him the favour, and persevered in it, until I was one day informed by a friend that four or five pious people were coming on such a day from London to visit me. Then my faith told me I should soon have the bed. Accordingly they came, and we had some comfortable conversation together. Towards evening they departed, giving my four guineas. O! what Christian in his right mind would murmur and complain at his poverty when, with a watchful eye, he sees such liberal supplies poured forth from the inexhaustible stores of Providence! Thus God, who provided a comfortable lodging for Elisha the prophet, provided me with "a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick". (II Kings 4:10)

I was determined to keep this money for a bed; and therefore went to a good man in London, and bespoke one; which he very soon sent me, with a rug also and a pair of very good blankets. Soon after I called to pay him for it, when he told me to pay his clerk, who gave me a receipt for the same; but afterwards the gentleman went a little way with me, and at his departure gave me all the money back again. How sweet are the temporal mercies, when received by

those who are under the influence of grace! when they are seen to come from a covenant God and Father, in answer to the simple prayer of faith! Surely he that "will observe these things, even he shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." (Ps. 107:43)

The promises of God, pleaded in humble prayer, and promised mercies received in answer thereto, always come so as to make a divine impression, being sweetened with love to us; for every such mercy is "sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." But to the unbelieving and prayerless there is nothing clean, though there be ever so much stock in hand. "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the treasures of many wicked." (Ps. 37:16)

I have sometimes been proud and vain enough to think that my habitation and temporal mercies, which my God has sent me attended with the blessed influences of comforting grace, have been as much consecrated to me as any cathedral, church, or church-yard in Europe, which had even the consecration of a bishop to make it sacred; being persuaded that it is the presence of God, and that only, which consecrates a house of prayer; that it is God's blessing the habitation of the just with His presence that makes their tents holy; and that on whatever spot God is pleased to visit a soul with His powerful and free salvation, and to manifest Himself a sin-pardoning God, through Christ, by His most Holy Spirit, such spots of ground, and such only, can with propriety be called holy ground. And I believe it would puzzle even the learned themselves to show any other consecration than this, that is good for anything.

As for the consecration of church-yards, which some are so fond of for laying their bodies in, I have no desire after them, as I believe all the corpses that lie there were sown in weakness, sown in dishonour, and sown in corruption; and living consecration

doth not dwell with dead men's bones and all uncleanness, but with living souls, who are consecrated kings, priests, and Nazarites, to God for evermore.

I hope my reader will excuse my running so far out of the way after consecration; but indeed I am not the first man that mock consecration led astray; however, I should not have meddled with it had it not intruded itself into my thoughts; wherefore, rather than displease my reader, I will resume my subject.

Another year having rolled over my head, I began again to look about for my livery; for I always took care to let my most propitious Master know when my year was out. And indeed I wanted it badly enough, for riding on horseback soiled my clothes much more than walking did. However, my Lord exercised my faith and patience for six weeks together about this livery; and I looked all manner of ways for it; but every door seemed shut up; and I could not see from what quarter it was to come. (You know, reader, we are all very fond of running before God; but He takes His own pace.) At length I was informed by Mr. Byrchmore that a gentleman in Wells Street wanted to see me. Accordingly I went; and was admitted into the parlour to the gentleman and his spouse. He wept, and begged I would not be angry at what he was going to relate; which was, that he had for some time desired to make me a present of a suit of clothes, but was afraid I should be offended at his offer, and refuse it. "Ah!" says Envy, "there need be no fear of that, for Methodist parsons are all for what they can get." It is true; for we are commanded to 'covet earnestly the best things,' and so we do, and expect a double reward of the Lord, one in this world, and the other in the next. And this is no more than our Master has promised to give us; for we are to receive a hundred fold in this world, and in the

world to come life everlasting. I told the good man that I had been for some time expecting a suit of clothes, but knew not how to procure them. They both wept for joy upon my accepting them, and I wept for joy, that they gave them so freely. As they had been fearful that I should be offended at their offer, and not receive them; so I had been much exercised in my mind, lest my Master would not give them to me, as He usually had done. However, our minds were now eased of our fears on both sides, and I was clothed; and it was the best suit that I ever had. This is the fifth livery that my trembling hand of faith put on my back, and every one came from a different quarter. The name of the good man who gave me this suit is Randall, in Wells Street, Oxford Market. I mention his name to show that I cannot keep such secrets, because he strictly charged me not to let it be known. However, I have imitated the disciples of old in this, for it is said of them that "the more Christ charged them to keep silent, the more they spread it abroad." And indeed it must be so, or else the Lord would be deprived of the honour that is due to His holy Name. Though by the Saviour's charge it plainly appeared that He sought not the applause of men, yet it is the indispensable duty of every Christian to applaud the Saviour.

With my reader's permission I will show my opinion why He charged them to keep His miracles concealed. I believe one reason was, because those whom He healed were in general very ignorant of His deity; yea, and even His disciples themselves, at that time, had very gross, low, and shallow thoughts and views of His being the omnipotent and self-existent Jehovah. We often hear them calling Him by the name of His manhood only; as when He rebukes the waves of the sea, they said, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" And as two of them were going to Emmaus, and

the Saviour drew near to them, asking them the reason of their being sad, they said, "Art Thou a stranger in Jerusalem, and knowest not these things?" When He said, "What things?" they replied, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man mighty in word and deed before God and all the people," etc., mentioning His manhood only. And Martha at her brother's grave, had her gross thoughts lifted up no higher, when she said, "But even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee." The Saviour's answer was, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me" (mark, in Me). "though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Dost thou believe this?" Thou believest that I am prevalent with God in prayer, and that God will give me what I ask of Him. If thy faith, Martha, centres in Me as one who is only prevalent with God in prayer, thou makest Me no more than Noah, Daniel, and Job were. But dost thou believe that I am the Resurrection itself, and that Eternal Life which lives in all the just and which all the just live in?--Dost thou believe this?

It is to be observed that if any came to our Lord Jesus Christ with their carnal thoughts hovering altogether about His manhood, they generally met with a sharp reproof. "Good master, what good thing shall I do?" said one. "Why callest thou Me good?" said the Saviour, "there is none good but one, that is God." But if any approached Him as the Omnipotent Jehovah, the real object of faith and worship, they were sure to meet with His approbation. Thus the tenth leper who was healed, worshipped Him as the real object of faith, and his faith was approved, and peace added to it. "Go thy way," said Christ, "thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." And when Thomas cried out, "My Lord and my God!" "Aye, Thomas," said the Saviour, "Aye." And again, "Ye call me Lord and

Master, and ye say well, for so I am." Thus it appears that our dear Lord often lifted their thoughts up to His Godhead, when (like the birds upon Abraham's sacrifice) they were settling upon His flesh and blood only; as the Arians in our days do, just like a shoal of eagles, always working upon the carcass, but cannot see the altar that sanctified the sacrifice. Job's eagle did not so; she mounted up when God commanded her, and made her nest on high. She dwelt and abode upon the rock, not upon the sand; yea, she sat upon the crag of the Rock, even the arm of Omnipotence, that strong place; thence she sought the prey; that is, she fed upon Christ crucified by faith. And her eyes beheld afar off; that is, in hope she looked at Christ glorified, now in the highest heavens; "and there she saw the King in His beauty, in that land which is very far off." (Isa. 33:17) "Her young ones also suck up blood;" they live by faith on the atonement; "and where the slain are, there is she;" (Job 39:27-30) agreeably to the Saviour's comment on these words, "Where the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together." (Mat. 24:28)

But to return to my subject. I had an invitation to go and preach at Horsham in Sussex, on Monday evening. On the preceding Lord's day I preached at Woking, in Surrey, and had to ride from thence to Horsham on the Monday. Then I set out to go across the country (it was in the winter season); and just as I got out of Guildfold town it began to rain, and continued in a violent manner all the time I was on the road. It so happened that I had but one shilling in my pocket, which would only procure a feed of corn for my horse, and pay the turnpikes. My surtout, which was a very thin Bath coat, was of very little use, being almost worn out, wherefore I was much exposed to this violent storm of rain; and I think I never had been so wet before. I was obliged to strip, and even to have my shirt washed before I could

preach. I then secretly wished for a large horseman's coat, being obliged to ride in all weathers; but as I had been begging so many things of my most indulgent Master, I thought by my continual coming I should weary Him; not considering that God commands us to open our mouths wide that He may fill them; which I believe means that our desire should be as extensive at the throne of grace as God's pregnant promises, which He made us in the dear Son of His love. Christ is the heir of all things, and the Christian is an heir of promise; therefore he has a right to ask for those things which will defray his expenses through this world with that honour which becomes a saint, and not a miser.

My mock modesty would not allow me to ask God for a great coat; though I earnestly desired it, and murmured at God's providence because I was kept so poor that I could not purchase one. However, it was not in the power of my unbelief, nor yet in the power of my sinful murmuring, to close the bountiful hand of my Maker, for when I came to London on the Wednesday following, and had preached at Margaret Street Chapel in the evening, a person approached me just as I came out of the chapel, saying, "I want to speak to you:"

which was to inform me that he intended, with the assistance of some more friends to make me a present of a horseman's coat; wherefore he desired me to be measured for it; accordingly I was, and that gentleman with a few others honourably paid for it. Surely to deny the overruling providence of God is to deny the whole journal of the children of Israel, and all the wondrous works of God which daily appeared on their behalf for forty years together. But there are some who consider not the "operations of God's hands; therefore he shall destroy them, and not build them up." (Ps. 28:5)

Thus my mock modesty and unbelief could not make the promise of God of

none effect; and God forbid it ever should. Zacharias desired a sign when the angel told him that his prayer was heard, and a son was to be given; and God gave him an awful sign, but his unbelief did not hinder the birth of John. After receiving the above mentioned gift from God, this Scripture came sweetly to my soul, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need". (Phil. 4:12) And indeed I found in all these trials that I also was instructed; for I learned one blessed doctrine by this Providence, which I never saw clearly before; namely, the power of internal or mental prayer ascending so prevalently to God, under the influence of the Spirit, even when the understanding and the lips were both unfruitful. And the application of the following texts gave me sweet views of it: "Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble: Thou wilt prepare their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear." (Psa. 10:17) "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass". (Psa. 37:4, 5) These Scriptures led me to consider, and apply with comfort to my own soul, the many precious promises which God has made in Christ Jesus to the spiritual anxiety of a renewed soul at the throne of grace, even when the sound of the voice, the sound of the organ, and that confused gabbling of monkish mimicry, called chanting of prayers, are left quite out of the promise; as will appear in the following passages, which I beseech my reader to consider: "The desire of the righteous shall be granted". (Prov. 10:24) "For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.: (Psa. 107:9) "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." "For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner". (Mark that, to hear the groaning of the prisoner); "to loose those that are appointed to death." (Psa. 102:19, 20) Thus the Holy Ghost makes "intercession for the saints according to the will of God; and God, who searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit." (Rom. 8:27)

Hence observe, reader, that the promise is made to a spiritual hunger, a spiritual thirst, a holy longing, a deep, heart-felt sigh, an earnest desire, and groaning, from a burdened mind. All these are petitions put up by the blessed Spirit of supplication alone (without the use of the lips), who "maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." These were the prayers which our blessed Saviour put up at Lazarus's grave, when "He groaned in the spirit and was troubled." "Jesus therefore again groaned in Himself." (John 11:33, 38) Again: "And Jesus, looking up to heaven sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain." (Mark 7:34, 35) Thus it appears that agonies, tears, groans, and sighs were chiefly the all-prevailing petitions put up by our dear Redeemer when in a state of humiliation. Christian, learn thou of Him, who is meek and lowly in heart, and thou shalt find rest for thy soul.

It is not an eloquent voice, elegant speech, lofty compliments, swelling words, much speaking, long prayers, nor yet the numberless repetitions of "We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord," that shall prevail with God; it is "not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom." The foolish virgins were too late with "Lord, Lord." God will accept of no sacrifice but that which comes in the hallowed flame

of His own kindling, and perfumed with the sweet-smelling savour of that blessed, ever-availing, and ever living sacrifice of His dear Son. The prayers of that man who calls himself a Christian, or a follower of the Saviour, but is an utter stranger to mental prayer, have never yet reached the ears of God; for God is a Spirit, and will accept nothing short of spiritual prayer. It was the groanings of the children of Israel that went up before God, and brought Him down to deliver them, as declared by God Himself to Moses at Horeb. (Ex. 3:7) Let this encourage thee, reader, if thou art one who cannot find words to express thyself at a throne of grace. If thou canst pour out thy soul before the Lord, show Him thy trouble, and leave thy burdens with Him. These are precious prayers; and if thou comest from thy knees with thy mind eased, thy faith strengthened, thy hope encouraged, thy bowels refreshed, and with confidence that God hath heard thy prayer, for His dear Son's sake, O, these are sweet answers from God. Be thankful, and pray on. Such was the answer that Hannah got when she went from Shiloh, with her countenance no more sad.

During the space of three years I secretly wished in my soul that God would favour me with a chapel of my own, being sick of the errors that were perpetually broached by some one or other in Margaret Street Chapel, where I then preached. But, though I so much desired this, yet I could not ask God for such a favour, thinking it was not to be brought about by one so very mean, low, and poor as myself. However, God sent a person (unknown to me) to look at a certain spot, who afterwards took me to look at it; but I trembled at the very thought of such an immense undertaking. Then God stirred up a wise man to offer to build a chapel, and to manage the whole work without fee or reward. God drew the pattern on his imagination while he was hearing me

preach a sermon. The ground was taken, this person executed the plan, and the chapel sprung up like a mushroom. As soon as it was finished, this precious scripture came sweetly to my soul, "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him." (Psa. 145:19) Thus the chapel appeared as an answer to the earnest desire which God had kindled in my heart, and which He intended to fulfil in His own good time, to the honour of His own great name, the good of many souls, and to the encouragement of my poor, weak tottering faith. It is confessed in the church of England service, that "all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works proceed from God;" and I believe they do.

Another kind of providence I experienced while I resided at Thames Ditton. My surtout coat had got very thin and bad, and the weather at that time was very cold. It happened that I was invited to preach at a little place near London. As I went thither I felt the cold very severely; and, as soon as I had delivered my discourse, I desired a young man to fetch my old great coat, in order to put it on before I went out of the warm meetinghouse. When he came back, lo, he brought me a new one! I told him that was not mine. He said it was. And though I insisted that it was not, he persisted in saying it was. So I put it on, and it fitted me very well. In one of the pockets there was a letter, which informed me that my blessed Lord and Master had sent it to me to wrap my poor worthless carcass in during that very severe winter. O, the tender care of our most gracious Lord and Master! Solomon says, "The favour of a king is as a cloud of the latter rain." I think he must mean the cloud of God's divine favour, which blotted out our transgressions as a cloud, and appears as a cloud by day to screen us from the storm of wrath; and, if my reader watches the bountiful hand of God, he will see this blessed cloud daily discharging itself in the genial showers of grace and provi-

dence; as it is written, "And I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessings." (Ezek. 34:26)

They have a common saying in the Weald of Kent, when the daughter of an old farmer is married. If it be inquired what portion the old man gave, the answer is, "He gave not much money, but the old people are always sending them something, there is always something sent from a farm-house." Then the observation usually is, "Aye, hers is a hand-basket portion, which is generally the best; for there is no end to that." Even so our everlasting Father gives to His poor children a hand-basket portion, a basket being that wherewith we generally fetch our daily provisions. And God sometimes puts His blessing even in the basket, and then it seldom comes home empty; as it is written, "Blessed shall be thy basket." (Deut. 28:5) Our blessed Saviour eyed this promise when on earth. When He was going to feed five thousand men, besides women and children, with five barley loaves and two small fishes, it is said, "He looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake." etc. And that blessing was enough; for they were all filled, and there were twelve baskets full of fragments. Thus the blessing appeared in the basket; and that made the Saviour so fond of the fragments as to give this strict charge to His disciples, "Let nothing be lost." Thus, too, the proverb of the handbasket portion appears true; and our blessed Saviour himself lived on it while He dwelt below, yea, the whole Levitical tribe lived on the hand-basket portion, for the show-bread, that was set hot before God on the golden table, was brought in a basket. So that God Himself has highly honoured the basket.

(Continued next month)

Bassett, Virginia

Dear Editors of the *Signs of the Times* and all the dear ones who are blessed to write in the Signs:

I am sending money to renew my subscription for 2 more years. I haven't missed a single copy of the dear *Signs of the Times*. I thank you dear ones for sending it to me. I do enjoy reading it very much. I love the experiences of God's little ones who He, in His tender mercy, gives them a mind to write and send to the *Signs*. I read the most wonderful poem given to Elder David Spangler. I have read it over and over and receive a blessing each time. Also the Editorial by Elder J. F. Poole is so good to read. I would love for all the dear children of our blessed Lord to read that good letter. It in in the November, 1977 *Signs*. I love to read sweet letters J. C. Philpot was blessed to write. They are good sermons to me. These wonderful blessings are from the dear Lord to His little ones. I feel so unworthy of the sweet blessings of the good Lord. He has been so good and kind to me and mine all the days of our lives. He has blessed me to meet with His dear little ones at church since I was a child, and Oh, it is a most wonderful blessing. Oh, may blessed Jesus give me grace and mercy to thank Him for all His loving kindness He has freely given to one so vile and sinful as I am. We cannot even have one good thought without God in mercy giving it to us.

I miss Elder Wood's good sermons in the *Signs*. I hope he will be blessed to write more from time to time. May it please the good Lord to bless all the dear Editors of the *Signs*, and bless them to continue to print the blessed truth as it is in sweet Jesus, Lord of Lords and King of Kings. Bless His Holy Name.

The older I get the more sweetness there is in meeting with God's dear saints and clasping their dear hands in tender love and hearing the prayers of God's dear ministers prayed so humbly. And how blessed it is to hear the gospel

of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ set forth so wonderfully by His called ministers. It is a heaven below to me, one of the least, if one at all. I feel to be less than the least, if one at all. Only through the grace and mercy of our Heavenly High Priest can we be one in that blessed number that was chosen in the covenant of Grace before the foundation of the world.

With love to all the dear ones who feel so little and long for the tender mercy and blessings of Jesus our Lord.

In hope of His tender mercy,
Callie Clark

Deatsville, Alabama

Dear Brethren,

I am submitting a check for \$17.00 to extend three subscriptions to the *Signs*, and the balance to be used as you see fit. The extensions are for my own subscription, my mother, who is 90 years old, and my son, Mike H. Carter.

My mother is in the Pike Manor Nursing Home at Troy, Alabama, but the paper mailed to her home address will be delivered to her. When she feels like it (and that is most of the time the weather is suitable) I still take her to our home church at nearby Elam.

I am clerk of Elam Church and also of the 150 year old Conecuh River Association. I have been a subscriber to the *Signs* for probably 20 years or more. I have also had it sent to my mother and son for 10 or 15 years. My uncle, Wiley Carter, gave me the first copy of the *Signs* I ever saw, and that was quite a number of years ago.

Elder Spangler has been in our home, at our home church, and at our Association a number of times. We were always glad to have him and hope he and others will come our way when they can. We have also had Elder W. D. Griffin and Elder E. J. Lambert with us in times past.

In recent years you have republished a number of articles written by Elder H.

M. Curry. I have enjoyed them immensely. It was my very great privilege to go to school to Elder (Professor) Curry for 4 or 5 of the last years he ever taught at Rodgers School near Elam Church in Pike County, Alabama. Without question he was the most remarkable person I ever knew, and I did later receive a college degree. I am just sorry that at the time I was not fully able to appreciate his gift as a preacher.

It was my great privilege last October to visit the Sulphur Fork Association in East Texas. Many of the original members of that Association migrated from our Association in South Alabama and their descendents are still prominent in it today. As the years have passed by I have learned more of the connections with such family names as Wall, Hill, McLeod, Richbury, Beard, Carter, Harris, Vickery, Rouse, McRae, McCrary, and others. Not only did I enjoy the Association, but I met 17 blood relatives while there and learned that there are still quite a number of relatives in that area that I did not meet.

Our District Meeting will be the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1978, at New Providence Church, Glenwood, Pike County, Alabama.

Our Association will be the second Sunday, Friday and Saturday before, in October, at Union Springs Church, 12 miles South East of Troy, Pike County, Alabama.

I am enclosing a copy of the first (1828) and the last (1977) Minutes of our Association. You may make any use you see fit of them.

Sincerely,
A. C. Carter

Elon College, N.C.

Dear Elder Donald Smith,

I have been writing down some of my thoughts which I hope the dear Lord has blessed me with from day to day. I do not know if they are suitable for publication in the *Signs*. If they are not just throw

them in the waste basket.

January 14 - There is ice over the trees today, and they are bowed down. It causes me to think of God's people and how they feel sometimes, bowed down to the earth. But I see also something wonderful of the Lord's power. Sometimes it is good just to look and see His handiwork. At times I lay in bed and meditate on life. I cannot see any good in me, only a deep feeling of guilt before Him. I cry, "If He died for me, a poor worm like me, how great and how merciful He is"! The Bible says that we cannot say He is our Lord except by the Holy Ghost. I can say that I have felt this at times. It is so wonderful when He blesses us to feel this way.

January 15 - I was disappointed this week-end. We could not go to preaching at our church. We cannot always have our way. We must bow to the good Lord's ways. We must see His shalls and wills.

We went to meeting at McCray's Church. Brother Donald spoke on Jacob and Esau, and also on Peter. I enjoyed it so much. He talked about the trees being bowed down. This is the way God's people must go. I had made some notes on Saturday about the same thing. Today the trees looked beautiful with the sun shining on them. They looked like millions of diamonds. The pines and cedars were bowed low with their weight. God's people, too, must be brought very low. I try to pray, Lord help me. He is the only One who can. I would feel so alone without my dear Lord and His Son.

January 16 - I feel so sad tonight. I tried to thank the dear Lord for being so good to me all the days of my life. His goodness has been great to a sinful worm as I feel to be. He has given me good health, and five wonderful children. He gave me a good husband for a short time, and then it was His will to take him home. With the Lord's help, the older children and I made a living, and we had a place to stay and something to eat, and clothes to keep us

warm.

Dear Jesus, I need You every moment of the day. Oh, keep me in the right way!

I cannot say that I know I am saved, but I do say that I have been made to know there is a God. He has given me a heart to love all of God's people, and this gives me hope, for God is Love.

January 17 - I am very tired tonight. Dear friends, I do not know if you believe in dreams. I do, when the dreams stay with me for a long time. I spent the night with Sister Annie Saunders when she came home from the hospital. I dreamed I saw two women standing a little way from me. They were all dressed up, with their hats on. They were laughing and talking and seemed to be so happy. The sun was shining on them. In the dream I thought they were my Mother and Jennie Cobb. There was another, younger woman. She was slender, wore a green dress, and her hair was black. We were in the shadow and she reached her hand to me. I tried to reach her hand, but my arm was wrapped in a sheet. When I finally freed my hand I tried again to reach her, but she faded away. I have thought a lot of the dream, but do not know what it could mean.

January 19 - Dear friends in Christ, I hope I am your friend, too. I have had a taste that the good Lord was pleased to give me. I thank Him for it, for it causes me to love Him more and more. I love my dear Jesus. He has been so good to me. When I was given the right mind to think about what great suffering He bore it causes me to cry, "My sufferings are nothing"! Whatever trial or troubles I have, I know I deserve them. My Lord cannot do anything wrong. It is so wonderful when I am blessed to see His power everywhere I look.

January 20 - We had another big ice storm. As I walked out I had to stop and look in amazement at God's wonderful power. I just cannot express what I felt. It seemed that I was both sad and happy. At such times I know that the rich and the poor are alike, none are

more important than the other.

Rosa S. Page

Bracey, Virginia

Dear Elder Smith,

Tom and I wish to renew our subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. We think you all are doing a fine job with the publication. It is good to read of the experiences of the writers, whether ministers, or brothers, or sisters, or those of like precious faith. They each tell the story of man in the earth which the Bible relates from beginning to end. In the writings of both the *Signs* and the Bible we are given to see the depth of sorrow and height of joy. I feel the Old Testament is the story of man's suffering; the New Testament of the joy of the Spirit. It is through our experience of suffering that we are given joy. Joy cometh in the morning, after darkness. Thus the darkness is as necessary as the light. Psalms 139:12 says, "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Matthew 5:39 says, "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." And in II Peter 1:19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

I have never met a Primitive Baptist who did not readily admit to being the vilest of sinners and for me, myself, I feel to be chief. So is it not truly those we see experiencing sin; are they not truly those experiencing the things of the flesh, being brought and bought, paying the price, spending all the Father's inheritance and thus returning thereby to his Father's house? Is this not the light shining in a dark place? Are we not being made to understand that we are to look for that light that is found only through darkness?

In understanding this, then truly we will be given the understanding of a belief in One God - not in a God of good and a power of evil. Jesus said, "You would have no power over me except my Father give it to you", speaking of the Devil. (This is not the exact quote, as you know.) Somehow I must know that all things work together for the good of them, called according to His purpose. Consider an earthquake. It will kill thousands of people, wound hundreds more, leave them homeless - yet can you or I cause or force an earthquake. But I know within the depth of my being, it is of God and is perfect.

Oh, Elder Smith, what on earth am I writing. Tom just asked me to renew the *Signs*, and express our appreciation.

May it be God's will to know that truly we live and move and have our being in Him. He is my Shepherd, Saviour, Husband, Friend, my Prophet, Priest, and King, the Alpha and Omega. He gives me the necessary darkness and the necessary light. He is my All!

In bonds of love,
Florence and Tom Martin

Shady Spring, W. Va.

Dear Editors and brethren of the Household of Faith:

Please find enclosed a check for \$10.00 for the continuation of the *Signs* to me for two more years, and use the balance for the best interest to you. I have been taking the *Signs* for several years now.

We have only two churches that I am privileged to go to for distance sake in winter time. However, I did attend the Pigg River and Smith River Associations, and was very pleased to hear Elder D. V. Spangler's report at Pigg River Association, and Elder W. D. Godwin, also, and Elder Donald E. Smith at Smith River Association. He made one quotation by the late Elder J. W. Wyatt, and I have been re-reading Elder Wyatt's piece on Predestination, published in 1935, and it is just as impor-

tant today as when published. I enjoyed the late Elder Curry's writings dated 1895, on "Able to Stand but Liable to fall", for he was blessed to write the truth.

So may it please the good Master to keep you shackled with the truths of righteousness. May the *Signs* continue with its comforting messages of today's writers as well as the voices of the past. May we ask an interest in your prayers.

Thanks,
Wallace Harvery

St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Brethren in Christ,

Just a short note to say the Lord has blessed us greatly with good health and been able to attend our meeting regularly.

We think of all the Old Baptist in North Carolina and Virginia, often. We hope the Lord has also blessed you and yours with all the things for your good and His glory.

I am enclosing a money order for two years to the *Signs* with the balance to be used as you deem necessary.

May the Lord provide a way for us to visit you in the near future.

With bonds of love,
James Cunningham

Tallahasee, Fla.

Dear *Signs* Editors,

Please find enclosed a check for \$9.00 for 2 years subscription. God bless you dear Editors to keep this wonderful news spread abroad.

Due to poor health I can't get out to church any more, or read very little. My wife reads to me.

I love the Lord's humble poor everywhere.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
(Elder) O. L. Wise

The best clock in the world will be

spoiled if you are perpetually moving the hand backwards and forwards, and altering it in order to make it keep time with a variety of other clocks; it will hardly ever go regularly and well. So a minister, who shapes and accommodates his sentiments and discourses to the tastes and humours and opinions of other people, will never be happy, respectable, or useful.

Toplady

PLEASE NOTE

We must again ask your help in getting notices to the *Signs* on time. *We must have any notice at least two months in advance of publication date.* Otherwise we are put to extra work and expense in order to help you.

We have several who send in notices as far in advance as possible. This is excellent, for we have a filing system to assure that it goes in the proper month. A notice sent in one year in advance would be much better than one sent two days late.

Thank you, Editor

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Scotts the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1978.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 72nd annual session of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 15, 16, and 17th, 1978, which is the third week-end in July. Meeting will begin at 11:00 o'clock on

Saturday, the 15th, and end on Monday, the 17th. Elder D. V. Spangler is appointed to preach the introductory sermon.

Dan River Church is centrally located between Eden, N.C., and Danville, Va., on Highway # 700, approximately 12 miles southeast of Eden, and 11 miles southwest of Danville, in Rockingham County, North Carolina. We extend a cordial welcome to ministers, members, and friends of like faith and order to join with us in this meeting.

(Elder) Donald E. Smith
Assoc. Clerk

BETHEL CHURCH

Dear Brethren:

We are making an effort to rebuild our meeting house at Bethel Church, which is located 3 miles east of Steens, Mississippi. We are a member of the Buttahatchie Association. We have but few members, but a fair attendance. Our people are poor in this world's goods, and most of us are living on Social Security. If you find it in your heart to assist us in any way it will be appreciated by one and all. Any contributions should be sent to:

Bethel Church Building Fund
Box 445, Route 1
Steens, Mississippi 39766

Elder E. E. McCool, Moderator
Brother Charlie Baines, Clerk

To Our Brethren at Large:

I would like to speak a word in behalf of this faithful little Church. I was in the constitution of it in May 1937, and continued to serve it for many years (until I moved to Maryland and Delaware), and I still visit there often. After I left Elder Clydes Moon served for many years, and then the present pastor joined and soon began speaking. I have known him all his life, his father having baptized me, and later laid hands on me in ordination.

If you feel in you heart to assist them, I assure you that they are worthy Old Baptists, and that it will be truly appreciated.

Your servant for Jesus' sake,
(Elder) W. D. Griffin

THE BELIEVER'S RULE OF LIFE

William Huntington, in treating on law and grace, shows that the true born-again believer in Christ is no longer under the law of Moses, but under "the law of the Spirit of Christ". This has been a sadly neglected subject, yet it is a vital gospel truth. It has been abused and distorted by Christendom since the Galatian Judaizers. This writing by Huntington has been reprinted, and is available at \$2.00 postpaid, from:

Primitive Publications
Route 2
Elon College, N.C. 27244

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The one hundred and thirty seventh session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Springfield Church located in the town of Gretna, Va. The meeting is scheduled to begin on Friday July 7th at 11:00 a.m. and continue through Sunday July 9th. The church is located on business Highway 29 in the city limits of Gretna, Va. near the intersection of Highway 40.

Our ministers and brethern would appreciate the presence of our correspondents and other believers in the Primitive or Old School Baptist doctrine.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1978 session of the Pigg River Association convenes, the Lord willing, with the Pigg River Church, Franklin County, Virginia, the 1st Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before. (August 4, 5, 6)

To get to the Pigg River Meeting House, those coming from the north on U.S. 220 turn right on to State Route 919 (which in three-quarters of a mile south of Boones, Mill Va.) Follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn right on 641 to Callaway, Va. Then turn left in Callaway on State Route 602, and follow signs to Meeting House.

Those coming from the south take State Route 919 to the left just north of Rocky

Mount, Va., and turn left on State Route 641 to Callaway, Va., then turn left on Route 602 and follow signs to the Meeting House.

A cordial welcome is extended to our correspondents and all lovers of the truth.

(Elder) John D. Wood, Clerk

CHURCH DIRECTORY

We will soon reach the time to prepare the January Church Directory for the *Signs*. The response last year from the churches was very minimal. It is hoped that our people are interested in this work and will assist us in the following ways:

1. Will either the Church Clerk or the Pastor submit information for the Directory no later than October 1, 1978.
2. If you send information regarding other meetings or discontinued meetings, make certain your information is accurate. We do not wish to print erroneous information.
3. Please do not send in church information regarding any church that is not in fellowship with the main body of Baptists. We can not print notices of those who are for one reason or another not in fellowship.

This should not be regarded as judging or standard setting. The *Signs of the Times* staff cannot in good conscience direct someone to a church which we ourselves could not feel free to go to. The church may be composed of lovely brethren but for some reason be set aside. We are not fully capable of knowing the circumstances of every church, so we must trust to your honest judgment in this regard.

Again, please get your notice in early. We will not print notices from the past unless we know the information is reliable. Your cooperation and help will be appreciated.

Thank you,
The Editors

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| Mrs. Fannie Mae Calhaun, N.C. | 1.00 |
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| Mr. Job T. Wood, Va. | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Bernice Dailey, Va. | 1.00 |
| Dr. & Mrs. Frank Ruston, Canada .. | 16.00 |
| Little Creek Old School Baptist Church and friends — In Memory of Elder Arthur Warren and wife, Sister Mattie Warren, Del. | 80.00 |

(It is with grateful appreciation we acknowledge the above contributions and continued support of the *Signs of the Times*. Donald E. Smith)

EDITORIAL

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: 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 1:18.

Never has the writer felt more unable to set down anything in print that might be worthy of publication. The same God who inspired Isaiah has said that His strength is made perfect in weakness. Oh, Lord how I feel that weakness.

Isaiah saw a vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem. The message that Isaiah had to deliver was one which put flesh in its proper place and exalted the God of Heaven. We often feel with Isaiah, “Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” Isaiah 53:1. Also in Isaiah 1:9, “Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.” We know that Isaiah is speaking the Lord’s words to the Lord’s people. The Lord’s portion is His people.

Let us again emphasize that the words at the heading of this editorial are the Lord’s words spoken to the Lord’s people. They are not spoken to the world, that is, the natural man. The natural man cannot hear them (that is understand them) as the natural man is not expected to hear them.

The Lord’s people are created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” II Cor. 5:17 The words of the editorial are spoken to the new creature.

The Lord’s people are often discouraged. They were in the days of Isaiah, they were in the time that Christ was here on earth and they are today. Unbelief, the sin that does so easily

beset us is to be set aside and we are to run with patience the race that is set before us looking unto the author and finisher of our faith, Christ Jesus. Unbelief is a terrible sin. It surely doth so easily beset us. Only the Lord can deal with our case.

The Lord says “Come now”. Remember He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, yes King of Saints. When he says “Come now” we must come and come now. That is the way, at least, I have experienced it. The words “Come now” are the words of the King, they are a command and they are only said to those who are quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins. How many times the Lord has appeared precious to me in His words “Come and see”. I believe if we hear His voice here we shall see His face hereafter.

When the Lord has our immediate and complete attention more words are spoken, “and let us reason together”. Who is expected to reason “the old man”? or “the new man”? “the old I”? or “the new I”? The old man reasons only natural things, the new man spiritual things and these are spiritual things. Mind you the old man will reason that self-righteousness is sufficient to gain eternal favour. The new man reasons that “Salvation is of the Lord”. The new man reasons that there is nothing in us that can merit esteem or give the Creator delight. It was even so Father we ever must say, for so it seemed good in thy sight. How beautiful is the thought of reasoning together with the Lord. Remember also it is the Lord who says “Come now, and let us reason together”. Not only “Come now” but, “and let us reason together”. “Let” is a beautiful word when used by the Lord. Think of the times it is used in scripture. What majesty, what power! I believe that once we have tasted “togetherness” with the Lord, that we shall never be satisfied until we see Him, and are like Him. Then, and then only shall we be satisfied. Dear friends, we want a “thus saith

the Lord" and we do indeed have a "thus saith the Lord" for what we believe. Indeed, that is why we believe in the first place. Yes, it is the work of God that we believe on Him whom He hath sent.

The first matter that we are to reason together is that "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow". Thank God that we are not left to reason this out alone. We have met that man that told us all things that ever we did. We did not like what He showed us and what He told us and what He caused us to feel. It made us loathe ourselves. It made us say "Unclean, unclean". We were ashamed of ourselves. Our eyes (like Isaiah) had seen the Lord of Hosts. In the reasoning together we saw ourselves measured up against Jesus the straight-edge. He was without sin and no guile was found in His mouth. We saw our sins and we were ashamed, oh how ashamed. We saw also that the wages of sin is death and we knew that we deserved the second death, eternal separation from God, because we knew that God was a holy God, yes, He was a just God.

God does not leave the matter half done. He not only shows us our desperately wicked heart, and that we are altogether vanity. He also shows us that it was our sins that drove the nails in His hands, and His feet. It was our sins that were the thorns in the crown upon His head. As John Newton wrote

"I saw one hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood:
Who fixed His languid eyes on me
As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had shed,
And helped to nail Him there."

Now we were truly made to feel our sinfulness. Yet in our reasoning

together with the Lord He showed us that the Lord had laid upon His dear Son the iniquities of us all. Yes, He had been delivered according to the determinate counsel of God to die in our room and stead. He, who was without sin bore all of our sins in His own body on the tree. As Newton wrote

"A second look He gave to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures."

How were our sins like scarlet? He paid the wages of death for our sins. He died in our room and stead. He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not freely give us all things?

In the Lord's reasoning together with His people He causes them to believe as He speaks of the few in Sardis "and they shall walk with me in white for they are worthy". He gives us faith to believe and we do believe and He counts it unto us for righteousness. Our sins are imputed unto Him and His righteousness is imputed unto us. In Songs of Sol. 4:7, Jesus says "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee".

"How bitter that cup
No heart can conceive
That He drank quite up
That sinners might live."

"He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment". Rev. 3:5. We must and shall overcome through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us. What can you think of here on earth that is whiter than snow?

The second thing we are asked to reason together with the Lord is that though our sins be red like crimson they shall be as wool. Naturally, we think that if we do enough good we can overcome or outweigh the bad. The devil would have us believe that. However, the Lord reasons with us that without the shedding of blood that there is no remission of sins. Also, that sins are transgressions of His holy law. He

reasons with us that He is the faithful witness that loved us, that washed us from our sins in His own blood. He reasons with us as He did with Job that our witness is in heaven and our record is on high. He reasons with us that tribulation works patience, and patience experience, and experience hope and hope maketh us not ashamed of Him because He reasons with us and causes us to have hope in Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. He gives us faith to believe that we shall indeed come through great tribulation and have our robes washed and made white in the blood of the lamb. What an amazing thing is this that something that is washed in blood should be made white, yes indeed white robes. Wool is the white covering of sheep. It is a warm and protective covering hiding all of the blemishes and imperfections.

The Christian cries unclean, unclean, even though released from guilt. The Christian cries

“Rock of ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.”

This is working in us both to will and do of His good pleasure. Our Saviour’s obedience and blood hide all of our transgressions from view. Our Saviour was obedient even unto death, yes, death upon the cross. He shed His precious blood and took it into the Holiest of Holies, even Heaven itself to present it for our sins. “It is finished” said the same Lord. What a beautiful sermon that is to us! There was no other way of peace, reconciliation, and atonement being made, but by the death of the Son of God, who being God as well as man, could and did give virtue and efficacy to his blood, sufferings and death, in human nature united to His person, as to make them adequate.

Pardon of sins properly follows the fact that Jesus made satisfaction for it

for us. Forgiveness of sin, under the law, followed upon typical atonement for it. See Lev. 4 where this is mentioned four times. Just as surely as Jesus “finished” the work (upon the cross) that His Father gave Him to do, He must say to His people “Come now, and let us reason together” to convey to them the pardon of sin. This reasoning may convey a feeling of forgiveness, a feeling of our sins being covered, a blotting out of our sins, a remembering of them no more, not imputing our sins unto us or of being washed and made whiter than snow.

Peace of mind, cheerfulness of soul, comfort, boldness, and confidence in Him, love toward Him and toward His people, thankfulness for all of His mercies follow when the burden of sin has been lifted.

Peter had to be taught that what God had cleansed he must not call common or unclean. God’s work is a perfect work. David said in Ps. 8:1, “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens”. We often feel blessed to see the wonders of God in nature. We, who travel among believers, are privileged to see the excellency of our Lord in the earth, that is in the hearts of men. We believe His name is just as excellent in all those with whom He reasons regardless of their nation or tongue. The Lord’s people are privileged to feel the Lord’s goodness; they are especially favoured to see His work upon the souls of men. His work is excellent in all the earth, that is, in His people. As His people have born the image of the earthy so they and they only shall bear the image of the heavenly.

We pray that the Lord will continue to reason with us as long as we stay here. May we hear His lovely voice say “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” when He comes again, to take His ransomed people home.

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Belton, Bell Co., Texas

Dear Brother Beebe; - Enclosed I send you the christian experience of Elder T. W. Stallings, which was written to Elder W. M. Mitchell of Alabama.

Sarah E. Davis

June 9, 1875

Elder W. M. Mitchell - Dear Brother in Christ: - After a long time, I undertake to comply with my promise in trying to write you a few things. I have thought, ever since we were together, that I would at some time let you know more fully the reason of the hope that I have in Jesus; and since it is your request, I cannot feel satisfied without telling you more than I have already, although I feel unworthy to address one I so highly esteem; for this reason I have been putting it off. But with the desire that God may direct me, I will commence, and try to let you know how I was, as I hope, brought into manifestation.

I first felt interested about my soul's welfare in January, 1863, while in the army in the state of Virginia. I never had, up to that time, felt any uneasiness about the salvation of my soul. My thoughts had been, prior to this, that when I got older I would turn from my ways and serve the Lord. I had no doubt but what I could get into favor with God at any time. I used to go to the Methodist meetings in our neighborhood, to see and be seen as many young folks do, and heard them tell the people that they could turn to the Lord if they would; and I fully believed their doctrine.

One morning, while in the army, I was detailed and sent off with seven other men to work, (I do not now remember what day) and while at work that day I became uneasy. I cannot remember any thing that I had done, heard or thought of, that caused the uneasiness to arise in

my mind; but it now seems to me that in less than a half hour I had a clear view of everything that I ever did. I had been a fiddler, horse-racer, and gambler, and many other vile practices, from a boy, up to that time, and I delighted in those things even up to that day. Now they all came up before me as plain as though it were yesterday that I had passed through those things. I have, since then, thought of the Man that told me all things that ever I did, and if I am not deceived, that Man was the Christ. At the same time, I think I had a view of the holy God, Who cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance. I was compelled to leave the men I was with, and hunt some secret place where I could bow down before God, for the first time in my life, and try to implore His mercy; but it seemed like my efforts were all useless. I returned to my companions, as I thought I dared not stay from them and my duty; and when I did return, I felt so bad that I could not work. It appeared to me that such a wicked sinner as I was could not be allowed to live long upon the earth. I know not how to describe my feelings better than to compare myself to a man lost in a desert. I could not find the way home. I then and there felt that I was lost. But the trouble of my soul would not allow me to stop. I could not read for myself a single word of the Bible, though it was now my great desire to hear it read. Yet I was afraid to ask any one to read it for me, knowing as I did that my companions knew so much about my past life. I did not want them to know that I ever had a serious thought. But finally I met with the opportunity of hearing Mr. McMurry (one of my regiment) read in the book of Ezekiel. He read but a short time before he came to these words, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If he had been reading a letter from my home, and had read that my home was burned, and that my wife and children were all dead, I could not have felt any worse. I

immediately left the camp, went where no one could see me, and laid down upon the ground, and felt like I knew that the sentence of death was passed against me. I felt that I would surely be the next man that would die or get killed in General Lee's army; but I had to confess that it would be just in God if He should take me from time to eternity, even where the fire is not quenched. There were some Primitive Baptists in our company, and I heard them talk of their hopes and fears. Their talk, as well as the Bible, seemed to condemn me. I have since thought, my Brother, that I was arraigned at the bar of God, to be judged according to the law, and my whole life in a waste howling wilderness was brought to judgment. And if I could have seen you then, Brother Mitchell, and you had been enabled to preach to me all the comforts of the gospel, I do not think it would have done me any good; for I could not see a Mediator between me and the offended God. As such, I viewed my case a hopeless one. I can say to you that I was like a man sick unto death. I grew worse and weaker every day. I was then moved in my feelings to try some of the "Doctors of Divinity". They told me that all I had to do was to pray, and exercise faith, and God would certainly smile upon me. I have since thought, my Brother, that I could as easily have made the sun rise at the hour of midnight, and make darkness flee away, as I could have done either. Time and space will not allow me to make mention of everything that I witnessed in this great struggle; I must only hint at them and pass on.

I will now come to that memorable day when our army had been engaged in battle several days, and I was hourly looking for the summons of death. On Sunday evening, (said to be the 4th of May, 1863) I saw our men in front of me forming a line of battle, and as they formed they commenced firing. It now came forcibly to my mind that this would be my last day upon earth. I then

thought of brethren Ansel Parish and E. J. Williams, two dear old Primitive Baptist preachers of our country, who are, in the providence of God, yet spared and permitted to stand upon the walls of Zion, and cry aloud, and whom I now, unworthy as I feel to be, can claim as my yoke-fellows, who preached for our regiment while stationed at Savannah, Georgia, at the commencement of the war. O how I now lamented my carelessness and hardness of heart; for at that time I cared not for them, nor for their preaching, but could look upon them as being good men. My mind was directed back to Georgia, with a view of all the good men that I had ever known. I would have given all the wealth of this globe, had it been mine, to have been with and like one of those men that I once took such delight in persecuting, and looked upon as being such fools. O, language is too weak; I never can employ language sufficient to express my feelings at that time. I fully believed that I should be the first man that would fall. I felt now that I was forbidden to ask God for His mercies. I engaged in that bloody conflict about two and a half hours, with twenty-seven other men of my own company. At dark the battle ended with us. Only myself and four other men came out unhurt, out of twenty-seven. When I came out, I went down to a ravine and drank some water, when it was suggested to my mind, Why is it that I have escaped unhurt, while so many of my dear comrades, many of them far better men, in my estimation, than I, are gone, some lying cold and lifeless on the battle-field, and some wounded and weltering in their own blood? And the answer came to my mind, that God had heard my prayers. Instantly the heavy chains of trouble fell off me, and I was permitted to look up and see Jesus, Who had suffered the just for the unjust, and satisfied God's violated law for me; and I do believe, my Brother, that my joy at that moment would be as hard to describe, as would my troubles that I

had felt only a few hours previously. Aye, my joy was unspeakable and full of glory. But this undisturbed peace did not last long. In a little while I became fearful that I was not delivered, though the heavy weight of my trouble was gone; yet it seemed that my evidence of being pardoned was not sufficient. At the time of my great joy I would have been willing to tell every man in the army my feelings; but at this time I did not think that I ever should attempt to tell them to any one, though in the course of eight or nine days I was moved in my feelings to tell the Chaplain of our regiment some things I hoped I had witnessed. He asked me if I desired to be baptized. I told him I did, and he baptized me. I did not then know the difference, as I hope I now do, between the different denominations. I never had read a word in the Bible up to that time. In the evening after I was formally baptized, I began to desire to read the Bible more than ever, for I greatly desired to know what the Lord would have me to do, though I knew I could not read, neither did I ever expect to; for confinement to study was one thing I never could bear. I will here state that I never had advanced in a spelling-book as far as words of two syllables. But in justice to my parents I will here state that it was not their fault, for they tried hard to educate their children, and succeeded in giving them all a liberal education, except me; but, as before stated, the confinement to the study of books was the greatest punishment I ever had to endure; in fact, it seemed like more than I could bear; and when my parents would send me to school with my brothers and sisters, I would run away from them, and lie in the swamp all day, until they returned, when I would rejoin their company and go home. Sometimes my parents would punish me, and continue to send me off to school, but I persisted in my wicked course, and thereby failed to get my share of that

great temporal blessing, an education, though numbers of people have said, since that time, that I had a good education; but what I here state I know to be true, and I know that God knows it. I would not, my Brother, make this statement, for this world, were it not true.

Seven days after the man baptized me, I dreamed that I could read, and well recollect the words that I read in my dream, which I have since found in the scriptures - the fourth chapter of Isaiah. I dreamed three nights in succession that I could read the scriptures, and in the morning after the third night I asked one of my fellow-soldiers (who is yet living, and not more than thirty miles from my house) for his Testament. I opened it, and the first that my eyes fastened upon was the eighth chapter of Romans. I read it as easily as I ever had since, and I never have found any difficulty since then in reading, though I had read but few words before I became fearful that I was asleep, and that it was a dream, and I went out to see whether or not I could see the sun. When I saw the sun shining, and knew that I was awake, and could read, the joy of my soul was more than I can express; and I have since thought that if I had never read any scripture besides the eighth chapter of Romans, I had found enough to give me a clear description of the character of God and His people, embodied in Christ; and inasmuch as the law holds nothing against Him, it holds nothing against His people. So I consider that witness, to wit, the apostle Paul, one of the princes that rule in judgment, rightly deciding in my case what I hope I was prepared in my heart to believe, enough of the scriptures to make me wise unto salvation, if a living child of God. I think, Brother Mitchell, I received great instruction from the chapter above mentioned. I continued to read the scriptures almost every hour that I was awake, and had the time to do

so; but as I was in the army, I was nearly always watching, or on some other duty, and as such I had but little time to read.

On the 19th of October, 1864, I was wounded, being shot through the elbow, and the joint slivered. This was in the valley of Virginia, seventy-four miles above Staunton. I was captured, and carried four miles, and made my escape. I then walked two days and one night, and reached Staunton, I had no assistance till I got there, neither had any thing been done for my wound, which was by this time in an awful condition, and my sufferings great. The doctor made an effort to amputate my arm, but I was so weak from fasting and loss of blood that I could not bear the operation; therefore my arm was spared, and to all human appearance it was impossible for me to recover, my sufferings were so great. Notwithstanding my sufferings were so great, my soul rejoiced. Though my body was racked with distressing pain, and I had but little to eat, yet I felt that my Saviour was with me. After a long time of intense suffering, both of body and mind, I started for home, and by the kind providence of God I was permitted to reach there. Right here could be written a volume, but I must pass on. I only make mention of these things to try to give you some idea of the trouble I had to pass through. Up to this time I had not heard an Old School Baptist preach, since I hope I had an ear to hear. All that I had heard were the preachers we had in the army, and they preached altogether about what men could do, and what they ought to do; for I am certain I never heard them declare the Lord's doings. I did my best to eat and live on what they furnished, but it was no food for me, and I did not know at that time but what that was the best I ever would get. But at length it was pleasing to my heavenly Master for me to reach my home, in Brooks County, Georgia. I was yet suffering intense pain with my arm. I was then moved to the house of my

wife's mother, who was an Old School Baptist. Now I greatly desired to hear preaching. The meeting time came, but I was not able to go. I asked my mother-in-law to invite the preacher home with her. So he appointed preaching at her house that night, which was Saturday. The preacher was Elder H. C. Tucker, an old, consistent minister of the Primitive Baptist order, one that I had in youth, and even up to the time of my going into the army, looked upon as the most awkward and ignorant man of all God's creation. I had spared no pains in persecuting, mocking, and ridiculing him. I thought that he preached the most foolishness of any body I ever heard. But when he began preaching that night, it seemed to me that there was the most music in his voice of anything I ever heard, and every word was to my soul as apples of gold in pictures of silver. He did not preach Jesus as a co-worker with man, but as He is described in the 17th chapter of John, as having power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as His Father has given Him. O what a feast it was to my poor soul! He told me what I had felt. O, the joy of my soul at that time was more than I shall ever be able to describe. My Brother, I do believe tonight that every child of God who is in a strange land, or in other words, who may be in Babylon, could they hear what I did upon that occasion, must come to the same conclusion that I did; for before Brother Tucker got through his sermon, I could adopt the language of Ruth, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Nearly all the church (Bethel) was assembled at my mother-in-law's house, on that occasion. When Brother Tucker got through, and had sat down, he said he thought I had something to tell the church, if I would. I was so moved in my feelings that I could not refrain. I commenced talking, and directly forgot myself. I tried to tell them how I was found in a desert, and a waste howling wilderness, and at the same time expressed my

desire to be with, and live with the Old Baptists. Brother Tucker arose and said that he wanted to give me his hand; and as the church was nearly all present, he said to the brethren that if they felt like he did they would manifest their fellowship for me by giving me their hand. They came forward, everyone of them, and joyfully received me into the fellowship of the church; and as a sister had also been received, I was to be baptized with her the next morning. I went with them to the water, where we met the balance of the church, and they all seemed to rejoice at my reception, and gave me the right hand of fellowship. I was baptized by Brother Tucker, and went up to the meeting house and took my seat among the brethren. I felt like I had come through great tribulation and much distress, but felt like I had got home to my friends. The words of David were continually in my mind. "Bless the Lord, O my soul." I believed then, and do yet, that if I was a proper gospel subject, I was then, and not until then, admitted into Christ's kingdom. No minister can be a lawful administrator, except his qualifications are of God. After it was my privilege to hear an Old Baptist preach, it was an easy matter for me to decide that I had been in the wrong place. If the baptism of the Missionary Baptists is valid, so is their doctrine; and if God does not direct their preaching, He does not direct their baptism. "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." The declaration of non-fellowship declared years ago by the Primitive Baptists cannot be in the way of any who are as hungry as I was. For I must believe that those who come through the fire are refined as silver is refined, and tried as gold is tried, and are driven in their distress to call upon the Lord; and after they are refined, He evidences to them that He has heard them. The children of our heavenly Father must all come through one process; they are then every way prepared to understand the difference between the trumpet that is blown

in Zion, and the many uncertain sounds that are blown to imitate the true gospel trumpet.

Dear Brother Mitchell, I have been fully reconciled, ever since the year 1865, to believe that I am among the children of the Most High God, and my trouble is my fear of not being a fit subject to have a name among that peculiar people. At times the trouble of my mind is so great that it seems like I cannot march on any further; still I have a desire to say, "Let thy mercies come unto me, even thy salvation."

Dear Brother Mitchell, I shall have to close, for I fear I have written enough to weary your patience; yet the half is not told. I would like to say something to you about why it is that I have to preach; but as I cannot write myself, it would be taxing my wife heavier than I am willing to do; therefore I desist.

My dear Brother, I am sorry to hear that you are suffering so much, yet I hope that you may be spared a long time to comfort the children of our God. I would be glad if you could visit our country again. I desire to see you more than ever. I think, if I live long, and you do also, I will visit your state and spend some time with you and the brethren of your churches. May the Lord bless you in your afflictions.

I remain your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life.

Timothy W. Stallings

January 1, 1876

O B I T U A R I E S

BERTHA ROEBUCK STALLS

We, the members of Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who called from our midst a very dear sister, Bertha R. Stalls. She was born May 13, 1893, to the late William Edgar and Effie James Barnhill and died December 27, 1977, in the Oak Hill Convalescent Home in Chesapeake, Virginia, where she had been a

patient for several months.

In January, 1910, she was married to Herman I. Roebuck. He died March 9, 1927. In March, 1928, she married Mayo Stalls, who survives.

She was a true and faithful member for many years. For the last few years she was afflicted and not able to attend her church but bore it with patience always trusting in the Lord to do His Will, not hers.

She leaves to mourn her passing besides her husband, four sons, four daughters, 20 grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren and other relatives.

Her funeral was conducted on Thursday, December 29, 1977, in Hill's Funeral Home in Suffolk, Virginia, by Elder I. S. Conner. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Scotland Neck, North Carolina, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of her Lord.

We of Flat Swamp Church extend our deepest sympathy and love to her husband and family and pray that God's richest blessings may rest on them.

Done by order of Conference Saturday before first Sunday in January, 1978.

Elder N. L. Ambrose, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Louise Everett
Mary Jenkins, Committee

ODELL JONES WILSON

Sister Odell Jones Wilson, widow of the late Brother Tom P. Wilson, departed this life on March 2, 1978, at the age of 87 years. She was a faithful member of Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church near Farmerville, La. Sister Wilson had great pleasure in entertaining company and the brethren loved to visit in her home. She was a pleasure to be around because of her pleasing personality.

Sister Wilson is survived by: Two sons, Mr. Ezra Wilson, Downsville, La. and Elder Walter B. Wilson, West Covina, Calif. and six daughters, Mrs. Estelle McDonald, Vidalia, La., Mrs. Earline Cox, El Monte Calif., Mrs. Evelene Kelley, Downsville La., Mrs. Loretta Greer, West Monroe, La., Mrs. Lela Peterson, Mira Loma, Calif., and Mrs. Nora Viola, Monroe, La. Surviving also are 19 grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Kilpatrick

Funeral Home in Farmerville, La. by the writer, and her body was laid to rest in Mt. Nebo Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

MAMIE B. HORNE

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst, Sister Mamie Horne, on Dec. 25, 1977, after a long illness. She was born Oct. 21, 1900, making her stay on earth 77 years.

She is survived by her husband, Brother Dunn Horne, a son, Neil, of Richlands. Three daughters, Mrs. Velma Jenkins of Wallace, Mrs. Margeret Roberts of Lumberton, and Mrs. Madeline Slater of Fort Wayne, Ind. Two brothers and six sisters, ten grandchildren and a host of nieces and nephews.

She united with Cypress Creek church in May 1938, and was faithful to attend as long as her health permitted. In her younger days she often walked to church. She was a meek and humble woman and was blessed with patience to bear her afflictions.

Her funeral was preached at Cypress Creek church by Elder Harmon Brown and Elder D. B. Stokes. She was buried in the family cemetery to await the Resurrection.

She will be missed by her family and the brethren, but we trust our loss is her eternal gain.

This is written by order of conference of February meeting, which stated that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy given to the family, and one kept in the church records.

Elder Harmon Brown Mod.
Velma H. Horne, Clerk

CARRIE MINTY CAMPBELL

Carrie Minty Campbell was born January 23, 1896, and God called her longing spirit unto Himself on February 27, 1977, making her earthly pilgrimage 81 years. She was married to Luther C. Campbell on November 11, 1917, and to this union was born 9 children, of whom 7 survive her.

She united with the Mud Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Hickman, Ky., in her late teens and remained a faithful believer until her death. She had a beautiful

experience as a young girl which she loved to tell of how the majesty and glory of God was made known unto her in the beauty of nature around her.

"Where there is much given, much is required". She was given a great measure of faith and was blessed with patience, love, meekness, and longsuffering which enabled her to bear her heavy burdens in raising a large family with meager means. She bore it without complaining or losing sight of what she believed - that God is sovereign in all His work and knows what is best for His children and supplies all their needs.

Her home was always open to the brethren and many will remember the pleasant visits there and the fellowship and love that abounded. She enjoyed visiting the brethren in Tennessee, Ky., Alabama, Illinois, and La., and was loved by all who knew her for her quiet unassuming manner and concern for the welfare of the brethren.

She enjoyed her correspondence with brethren and sisters across the country and her letters appeared in the *Signs of the Times* for many years. She is greatly missed by the members and friends of the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis. Her membership has been there since 1943 and she was a faithful member attending regularly until her health prevented her the last year of her life.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. D. Griffin and C. S. Young.

Submitted by Mrs. Lucille Young at the request of her family. I was her sister in the flesh and in the Spirit.

GERTRUDE JONES

Our beloved Sister in Christ passed from the walks of this life February 16, 1978 after a lingering illness. She was born July 2, 1915 to William G. and Alice L. Coe. She united in marriage to Ed Jones in 1962. Sister Jones joined Good Hope Primitive Baptist Church October 6, 1939 and served as church clerk for many years. She was very faithful in attendance not only with the church of her membership but also with the other churches of her faith and order. She was blessed with a beautiful singing voice and took part in singing at many funerals. She had a great love for the doctrine and enjoyed

discussing scriptures. Sister Jones was loved and respected by her church, her family, and the community. Though her illness was trying and over a long period, she was resigned to God's will and was given to continue in the faith of God's elect to the very end of her course. May God bless us all who miss her so much, to be reconciled to His will, and to press on toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

Sister Jones is survived by her husband, three step sons, one step daughter, six sisters, and one brother. Funeral services held in the Winnsboro Funeral Home were conducted by the writer and Dalton Graves. She was laid to rest at Good Hope Cemetery, Winnsboro, Texas.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records. Done by order of conference at Good Hope Church, February 25, 1978.

Elder E. J. Lambert (Mod.)

Sister Ivy Elledge (Clerk)

Written by Elder Joe Hamrick

J. W. EVERETT

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to write a few words in memory of our dear Brother, J. W. Everett, whom we highly esteemed. May we bow in humble submission to God's will to call our dear brother in Christ from this world of suffering; to await that great and glorious day when our Saviour will return to call His precious saints to meet Him in the air and be with Him forever more.

Brother Everett was born September 23, 1906, the son of John Daniel and Lizzie Lester Everett. He passed away February 25, 1978, making his stay here seventy-one years, five month, and two days. He is survived by his wife, Mary Smothers Everett; two daughters, Mrs. David Paschal and Mrs. Robert Morton, of Route 2, Greensboro, North Carolina; five grandchildren, three great grandchildren, and a sister, Mrs. Viola Moore Medley, Route 4, Reidsville, North Carolina.

Brother Everett united with Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1966. He loved the fellowship of his brothers and sisters and the doctrine of predestination and salvation by the grace of God, as he was

so wonderfully blessed to manifest by his dedication to his church. It pleased the God of all grace to enable him to attend his meetings even to the end. "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." As Paul admonished his son, Timothy, in words and by example, so Brother Everett, by his unerring wisdom and dedication to faith, left his light among the brethren. We would give honor and glory to no other than God for the manifest fruits he bore. To know him was to love him and he was precious to his wife and family, as they were precious to him. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." So we sincerely believe our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Dennis Hutchens, Clyde Kaiser, and Paul Morton, on Monday, February 27, 1978. Internment was in the church cemetery.

Written by request of the church in conference on Saturday, March 11, 1978.

Eugene T. Shreve, Deacon

LAURA EMMA FANNING

It is with sadness of heart that I attempt to write the obituary of our dearly beloved sister, Laura Emma Fanning. She was born October 14, 1887, and died October 9, 1977 at the age of eighty-nine years, eleven months, and twenty-five days.

She is survived by one son, George Fanning; four daughters, Miss Janie Fanning, Mrs. Edith Phillips, Mrs. Cleona Piper, and Mrs. Nara Fowler; two brothers, James B. Fanning and Santford Fanning; four sisters, Mrs. Kate Hodges, Mrs. Evelyn Sanders, Mrs. Ethel Dodson, and Mrs. Bonnie Reed; ten grandchildren, fifteen great grandchildren, and three great, great grandchildren.

On December 15, 1904, she was united in marriage to Milton B. Fanning who preceded her in death in the year 1945 and since that time, she lived with, and under the tender care of her loving daughter, Janie, and indeed, the love, care, and respect shown

to her by all her family and friends was a tribute to the kind of woman she was.

She was the daughter of the late Elder James M. and Sarah E. Fanning. Her father was an Elder and pastor of the Old School Baptist Church of Christ at Mountain Fork, Madison County, Alabama, and from all accounts an eminent saint among the flock of God everywhere for many years.

One needed only to converse with Sister Fanning for a short while to know that her earliest recollections were associated with the House of God, the Family Bible, the sacred songs, and the fervent prayers. I feel sure that in very infancy the name of Jesus "that sweet sound" was as familiar to her ears as the hush of a lullaby. And, like young Samuel of old, she was put to rest by the lamps of the sanctuary and was awakened by the sound of the morning hymns. She heard her father's prayers and her mother's earnest amens - these were happy portions and goodly heritages - she never forgot them. But, she readily confessed that these heavenly privileges did not of themselves avail to give her the love of Jesus and the pardon of her sins by his blood. She would witness to the fact of innate depravity, the birth plague of man; and could testify to the doctrine that grace and grace alone can change the heart.

In the year 1925 she was baptized by Elder J. M. Towry and received into the fellowship of the Mint Springs assembly, originally called Jones Fork, the third oldest church in the state of Alabama. She remained true to the cause of Christ and to her convictions for fifty-two years. We feel that she departed in the faith and that her spirit is now in the presence of her Lord and God, and her body now awaits in her sepulcher for that great day to hear the sound of the trumpet and voice of the archangel to summons her to come forth and to be forever with Him.

Elder R. O. Simmons and myself were privileged to speak to the family, to her brothers and sisters in Christ, and a large gathering of friends at Spry Funeral Home in Huntsville, Alabama, after which we laid her to rest in the Taylor Cemetery, there to await the coming of the Lord. We all feel a great loss by her passing - she's gone no more to be seen or heard this side the shores of eternity, but may our loss be her eternal gain.

Elder R. H. Hale

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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BANK OF FAITH

(Continued from July)

I am firmly of opinion that the hand-basket portion is the best, both for soul and body; because it keeps us to prayer, exercises our faith, engages our watchfulness, and excites to gratitude. It does not appear that the prodigal son added much to his fortune when he desired the portion of goods that fell to him; that is, he desired to be an Arminian, to have an independent stock of his own, and to be left to improve it by himself; wherefore he did not choose to live near his father, lest he should interfere; but went into a far country, that his father might see how he flourished in the world when once he became independent. But self-will, free-agency, self-sufficiency, and independency of God, seldom gain much by trading; for we all know that this independent merchant would have been starved, and damned too, if free-grace had not undertaken to feed him, and to save him. Poor soul! I warrant you he flourished away at first, but he soon brought himself down upon a level with the swine. Free Agency, with her boasted dignity, made but a poor figure while she sat banqueting at the hog-trough! And one would imagine that, if anything would have excluded boasting, this certainly would. He could not boast of the entertainment, because it was nothing but husks; nor could he boast much of the company, they being only swine. I believe the prodigal left all boasting behind when he forsook the pigs' pound. If my reader, therefore, is an unbeliever, and has got a stock in

hand, he may murmur against his portion, and view it as a snare or trap. Indeed it is a trap to many who set their hearts upon it. This was the case with Israel; their table "became a trap, a stumbling block; and a recompense unto them; yea, that which should have been for their welfare, became a trap." But, if my reader be a believer in a dear Redeemer, his stock is a blessing while he is thankful to God for it, and does not place his affections on it; and, if he is liberal of the stock God has given him, his liberality daily sanctifies it. "Give alms," says the Saviour, "of such things as ye have, and behold all things are clean unto you." Paul declares that the lively faith of a believing husband would sanctify an unbelieving wife, and make her a temporal blessing. The first sheaf under the law, being given to God, sanctified the harvest; therefore I refer my reader, if he be one that has a stock in hand, to God's promised blessing. "Blessed shall be thy store." (Deut. 28:5)

I once preached on the Lord's Day at Woking, in Surrey; and the week before that time I and my family had been sorely tried for want of the common necessaries of life. I was very fond of feeding my little ones when I had wherewithal to feed them, because I know how much I had suffered when young through my parents' poverty. That week the little ones had lived chiefly on bread, which grieved me much, as the appetite of young growing children is so craving after food. When I used to shut the cupboard door, and give them nothing but bread, my eldest daughter would look me full in the face, with much earnestness and solemnity, and ask me this important question, "Is the boo all boppee, daddy?" which gibberish, by interpretation, signified, "Is the butter all gone, father?" She would at such times lean her head on one shoulder, look me full in the face, and lay a particular emphasis on the particle all, which she would draw out

with a very long tone. Then she would use some of her logic, and reason the point with me, asking me many strange questions, which I partly understood, as they amounted chiefly to the inquiry when the butter would come, or whether there was any ground to hope for any; but at that time I could give her no promise as a ground for her hope, every door being apparently shut.

We had at that season but little fuel, though there was a very severe frost, and the snow lay on the ground. As I was returning from Woking on the Monday morning, before I came to Cobham (having left Woking very early without breakfast) I was exceedingly hungry and weary, and had but little to expect when I arrived at home; for I knew I had nothing but bread, and perhaps not that. When I came on the Common, which is called Fair Mile, lying between Cobham and Esher, I fretted and wept bitterly at my hard fate, and yet trembled for fear of offending God by my complaining, as He had given me so full a persuasion of my eternal salvation through Christ. I often feared that He would hear my murmurings as He did the murmuring of Israel in the wilderness, when He answered them by terrible things, namely, "He gave them meat for their lusts, but sent leanness into their souls." And I thought, if God should take away the happy enjoyment of His love from me, and lay me in a stock of temporal things instead thereof, I should have cause, like Job, to curse the day wherein the change was made; therefore I often prayed against that, and the blessed Spirit greatly helped my infirmities in those prayers.

Now when I got half over the common, it came suddenly into my mind to go out of the horse-road into a little narrow track which leads over the hills, between the hand-post and the bath-house. I could gain but very little ground by this, nor do I remember that I had ever gone

that way before; but I soon found what this impression meant; for there was to be a battle fought between a stoat, or weasel, and a large rabbit. The stoat, or weasel, was to fight the battle and to win the field, and I was to take the prey. So I took up my rabbit, and gladly carried him home; and it proved as fine a one as I ever saw, being quite in season, in every sense of the word, for we had nothing but bread in the house.

This occurrence happened before I received the horse. But I cannot recollect every circumstance so as to range it in its proper place, my memory being naturally bad. I lived in this manner for seven or eight years together, and every day afforded some providence or trial.

My dame about this time was pregnant, and not far from her lying-in. She gave me a large catalogue of the necessaries that she would want against that time. I told her I had no money, nor were there any signs of my having any; and we could not get them without. She went on in suspense this way, till she expected her time every day, and began at last to fret amazingly. I told her I thought that God tried her thus because she was remiss in the blessed privilege of private prayer. I also remarked to her that God would be enquired of by us, that He might do those things for us, and that if she did not pray for them, she was not likely to have them. I believe this drove my dame to prayer; for soon after this there was a parcel sent from Lambeth, another from Kingston, another from Richmond, and a few things from some neighbours nearer home. I now asked the old woman if she thought she had got enough? She replied, "Yes, and more than enough." God had exceeded all her desires; for she had feared that she should not get money enough to buy the stuff to make up her little things; and that, if she did get it, it would have been so late that she should not have had time to make them. "But God, said she, "has sent them

ready made." So Mary was very well pleased, and richly supplied. Thus the universal Provider of all in heaven and earth richly provides not only for them that are in the world, but for them also that are coming into it. This providence appeared rather strange to me, as I had not made known the case to any person, to the best of my knowledge; but God, who knew our straits, and heard and answered our prayers, did by some means or other, inform some friends of our wants, and then touch their hearts with a spirit of sympathy and liberality. And I think, for three or four births successively, the almighty raised up one Dorcas here, and another there, to provide for my dame against her lying-in. Thus the ever-blessed God, who inflicted the judgment of sorrow on women in bringing forth children, as a punishment to their sex for being first in the transgression, richly supplies their wants against the hour in which His own decreed and predicted sorrow comes on; so likewise the just sentence denounced in His just displeasure against the female sex for their disobedience, only makes more work for sovereign mercy, in supplying their wants, supporting them in their troubles, and bringing them through their sorrows.

Oh, how sweetly does a covenant of grace (confirmed by the Saviour's death) engage the sweet mercy and love of the Almighty! For whatever justice, holiness, or truth demanded of us, they brought in all their bills to sovereign mercy in the bowels of Christ Jesus; so that one perfection of the Deity became, through rich grace, a debtor to the other. If Justice will not abate a mite of the sinner's debt, Everlasting Love is determined to have a goal delivery, if the Creditor Himself appears in the character of the Debtor, and then of the Surety. Thus the whole bill of Justice falls on the score of Love, and a goal delivery is proclaimed to us; and, though

we contracted the whole debt, yet we go free, with only acknowledging ourselves debtors to grace! A sweet way of paying debts, truly! My very soul has often rejoiced and wept to see how Loving-kindness and Tender Mercy have been put to their shifts to pay off the unlimited demands of vindictive Justice - and that such poor debtors and rebels as we are, who contracted so great a debt as that of eternal suffering, which we never could pay, though we suffered to all eternity - that we should have a Surety provided to pay both the preceptive and penal sum for us! for God's eternal Spirit to be sent to proclaim a full and clear discharge from the whole, and a receipt in full of all demands, written by the finger of the Creditor, sealed by the Holy Ghost, and witnessed by the Father, Son, and Spirit, confirmed by the blood of the Surety, supported by all the laws of God, and for ever settled in heaven! - and for Justice to stand bound with a thousand ties never to come upon the debtor to grace again! O the sweet mystery that makes our souls tremble, and yet stand so fast! - that makes us rejoice with joy unspeakable, and yet weep till our bowels yearn!

My dame having recovered from her lying-in, came with another complaint; which was, that she had cut up almost all her old gowns for the children, and that she stood in great need of a new one. I told her that I could not buy her one, for I had no money, and there was no likelihood of getting any. As I often heard this complaint, I at last told her she must beg it of God, if she would have it, as I did my clothes; for God had promised us these things, and His Word informed me that "the gold and silver, the corn, the wine, the oil, the wool, and the flax" were His own; and that, if she had faith in Him, she would have her request granted in answer to her prayer. I had now a great desire to see whether she would have any success at a throne of grace or not. It passed on, however,

for a long time before a gown appeared; but at length it came, in this manner. After preaching at Margaret Street Chapel one evening, a person delivered a parcel into my hands, which I received; and, when I opened it, there was a note, with these words, "This is a present for Mrs. Huntington." It contained twelve yards of cotton to make a gown. Who the person was that gave it I never knew from that hour to this, though I believe some of my friends did. I carried it home to Ditton, where it gave great satisfaction; and Mary was not a little delighted to find that God had granted the request of her lips.

I endeavoured as much as possible to get my dame to live by faith, and often encouraged her to prayer, by telling her that she had a right to expect her support from God as well as myself, seeing the Almighty had taken me from my daily labour to work in His vineyard; and I supported my argument from this consideration, that the whole Levitical tribe lived of old on the offerings of the Lord, both women and children, as well as those men who waited at the altar.

Soon after this, Providence sent me three guineas, with which I was determined to furnish my dame with some other apparel. I accordingly bought her another gown; and soon after a friend gave her a third. At this she seemed highly pleased. Her unbelief was confounded, her murmurings stopped and all was well. However, I took care not to break through the bounds of Paul's assertion, "But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife; but I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord." (I Cor. 7:32) We must endeavour to please our Master, if we cannot always please our mistress.

After this, the bountiful hand of my Lord seemed to be closed again for a long time; until I got five guineas in debt, and began to want even

provisions. Now I began to fret, and unbelief crept in apace; but, just as the spirit of murmuring and complaining began to operate, there came a letter to me from a gentleman at Gainsborough, in Lincolnshire. I opened it, and found the following contents:

“Dear Friend, - I have sent you a hamper by one of my ships, which will be at London by such a time, if God permit; and I have ordered it to be left at Hungerford Stairs for you. The first present is for your wife, which is two ends. The other is for your children; being a cow, and her milkmaid attending her; a cow being very useful where there is a family. The last article, according to my judgment, is a very useful thing for you, and for every gospel minister. Tender my best respects to your wife and little ones, and accept the same from Your humble Servant, J.D.”

Here is the riddle, and I had seven days to find it out. My dame asked me if my present was a Bible. I said no, I believed not. I told her that Paul called a gospel minister an ox: “Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen, or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written.” Thus, said I, God compares a preacher to an ox. Treading out the corn is unfolding and explaining God’s Word. Muzzling the ox is not giving him food to eat for his labour, as Paul explains it: “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” (I Cor. 9:14) I further added that the same apostle, who compares the preacher to an ox, tells us, in his epistle to the church at Colosse, to “let our speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that we may know how we ought to answer every man.” (Col. 4:6) Therefore I conjectured that my present was a bullock’s tongue well salted; and that my wife’s which the letter expressed to be two ends, must be a flich of bacon cut in two

pieces; but as for the cow I could not conjecture what that could be. When the hamper came all got around it, to see what was the substance of the riddle in the carcass of the lion; and when it was opened, I found that my present was a bullock’s tongue dried; my dame’s was two large pieces of bacon; and the children’s present was a cheese, with the print of a cow and milkmaid milking her on it. Such was the present, and this was the explanation of the riddle.

About this time I went once a fortnight to preach at a place in Middlesex, about ten miles from London (where I lived), and they gave me three shillings a time for preaching to them. There was a single gentleman, who was a member of the church, a man of great property, supposed to be worth twenty or thirty thousand pounds. He once saw me pass by his door, as I had been that way to visit a sick woman. He called me into his house, and expressed much love to my Master Jesus, and a great satisfaction in hearing my discourses on the doctrines of grace; and desired me the next time I came to deliver a discourse from this passage of Scripture: “But the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” (Deut. 11:11, 12) So I promised to offer my thoughts on the text when I came again to preach. At my departure he gave me the right hand of fellowship, blessed me in the name of the Lord, and putting his hand into his pocket, very generously made me a present of a whole shilling!! I took it, and thanked him kindly; for I thought it was the first fruits of liberality that ever grew upon that tree, and perhaps the last, and I mention it now to the honour of his compassionate bowels. I afterwards found that he had made many enquires concerning me; and had been informed that I was a poor man,

and had a large family, that I walked ten miles out and ten miles back again, and was from home all night when I preached at that place, for which I received only three shillings. These things reaching his ears, conveyed that sympathetic touch to his feelings, and finally dragged that whole shilling out of his pericardium. "How hardly shall those that have riches enter the Kingdom of God!"

I believe that every man has a god of some sort or other. Self is the god of the Pharisee; the belly is the god of the epicurean; Mammon the god of the miser; and Jehovah the God of the Christian. And all these have their representatives. Hagar is the mother of the Pharisees; Nabal the head of the gluttons; Judas of the Mammonites; and Simon Magus is the figurative sire of every person who is labouring hard to purchase the grace of God and the gifts of the Holy Ghost by their own supposed merit.

Having been one night to preach at Richmond, I was invited home by my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, at Petersham, near Richmond, to sleep. In the morning, Mrs. Chapman, smiling, told me she had twelve yards of stuff damask by her, which she intended to make me a present of, for a morning gown. I laughed and told them that I thought a coalheaver would cut a strange figure in a morning gown. I should appear like a beggar in dignity; but that was better than dignity in ruins. However, they saw that God had begun to lift up my head, and were determined their pastor should make a more respectable figure; wherefore they insisted on my having it; to which I objected, because a gown has such a cottish appearance on a labourer in the vineyard. I therefore turned it into a banyan, or coat; and after it was made up I hid it for two or three months before I could reconcile myself to appear in it.

I had now received a letter from a friend in the country, who was in great

distress, and stood much in need of a little relief; but at that time I myself was four or five pounds in debt, and I had been a long time in expectation that my God would enable me to discharge it. However, I found that God now began much to try my patience; and that I ought to importune and watch, and wait upon the Lord, and to keep my eye fixed on Him, as a servant's eye is on the hand of his master, until I obtained an answer. And I never waited on His blessed Majesty in vain, for it was sure to come at length. After putting up many petitions, and being long in suspense, I one night called on Mr. and Mrs. Smith, in Chandler Street, Oxford Road, who were great friends to me. Before I departed they generously made me a present of three guineas. I humbly beg their pardon for mentioning their names, and exposing their secret alms; but as I prayed to my Father which seeth in secret, and He in mercy rewarded me openly, I therefore must proclaim it upon the house-top to encourage the weak faith of others, that they may make God their Guardian and their Bank. The liberality of Job's friends is left upon record to their honour, when "every man gave him a piece of money, and everyone a ear-ring of gold." (Job 42:11)

I now took encouragement to hope that my gracious Master would add to this blessing a sufficiency for the purpose of discharging my debt and also relieving my friend; which, in answer to prayer, He was graciously pleased to do. The next morning a person knocked at my door, desiring to see me. When he came into my study I looked at him, and perceived him to be a gentleman that I had never seen before. He told me that he once heard me preach at Dr. Gifford's meeting house, and once or twice in Margaret Street Chapel, and that he had heard me greatly to his satisfaction; and the reason of his coming to see me now was that he had been exercised the last night with a dream - he dreamed

that the Word of God came to him saying, "If thy brother be waxen poor, thou shalt open thy hand to thy poor brother," etc. He asked me if there was such a portion of Scripture? I answered the words were these, "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thy eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." (Deut. 15:7-11) He told me many of these words came to him in his sleep; and in the morning when he awoke he felt the power of them. In wondering who this poor brother could be, he informed me it was impressed on his mind that I was the poor brother about whom he had dreamed; and asked me concerning my circumstances. I then told him of the trial I was in; and as he was fully satisfied it was of God, he wondered much at it. At his departure he gave me a new pair of doeskin gloves, two new white handkerchiefs very good, and a guinea. He then blessed me and left me; and I do not remember ever seeing him before that time, nor but once since. Thus God, who commanded a widow to sustain Elijah, commanded this man to relieve me.

The next day a friend told me that a person had left a guinea with him for me; and while at Mr. Byrchmore's in Margaret Street, a lady came to his door in a coach, inquiring for me. When I went to the door, she put her hand out and gave me a guinea, and then ordered the coachman to drive away, having done all the business God set her to do.

(Continued next month)

POLICY

Several inquiries have been made regarding the position of the *Signs of the Times* concerning recent articles in other periodicals attacking editorials written by our Associate Editors and other contributors. Our policy is very simple. We shall let them alone. Others are entitled to print what they wish. The Truth will stand. Error and slander will fall.

The *Signs* has capable and honest editors and accusations from friend or enemy will not affect their writing or preaching. We do not believe one deliberate unsound sentiment has yet been put forth by our Editors and the contrary opinion from other papers will not alter the course of the *Signs* now or in the future.

Our feelings on this matter can be summed up in the following Scriptures: Prov. 17:14, Matt. 7:5, James 3:16.

April 16, 1978

Ordination of Bro. Eli (Pete) Smith, Jr. as Deacon of Aycock Primitive Baptist Church.

A Presbytery was called composed of Elder D. B. Stokes; Elder Curtis Rains, and the following Deacons from Sister Churches; Bro. James Pope; Bro. Thelbert Hocutt; Bro. George Pearson; Bro. Preston Gay; Bro. John Houston; and Bro. Roland Evans.

Conference was opened with Praise and Prayer by Elder Curtis Rains.

Elder D. B. Stokes was chosen moderator. Sister Nina Pearson was called as clerk.

The candidate was presented to the Presbytery by the Deacons of Aycock Church, Bro. Eli Smith, Sr. and Bro. Gordon Smith. Elder Stokes asked if the Church was unanimous in agreeing to the Ordination of Bro. Eli Smith. The Deacons said it was unanimous.

To the Deacons of the Presbytery, he asked if there is any advice or experience you would like to share with Bro. Smith. He also gave them the opportunity to question the candidate; they had no questions and were satisfied.

Elder Rains said he was well satisfied and had no questions. In charging the candidate he said; this is an office, instigated by God. Be prayerful and mindful of the affairs of the Church. You will have many responsibilities; Serve the Church and be at the hand of your Pastor. Go with him. Be not hasty. As you journey in a different manner, be an inspiration in serving the church. Pray that you might walk in the way of Jesus Christ, through prayer and meditation. Stand for sound Doctrine; May God Bless you in your duties.

Elder Stokes in charging the candidate; spoke from Acts - of the Apostles setting aside some for the duties of Deacon. You will feel many times that this should not have been done. You are to serve Aycock Church; Your duty is to this Church and membership. Always give a "Thus Sayth the Lord". If you can not, leave it alone. Use the Bible for your guidelines in serving the Church. Be not afraid. Before you give a decision hear both sides; be prayerful and slow to speak.

There are three things that has to be unanimous; choosing of an office; Choosing a Pastor; receiving a member. All others, the majority shall rule. Be blameless, have a good report without and within. Be prayerful, read your Bible, study the rules of this Church.

Elder Stokes in advising the candidates wife, spoke of the many times she will be alone. Have understanding and patience with him. There will be times you will feel his burdens. Be prayful and be his helpmeet. Bro. Smith move slowly; be wise in the wisdom of Christ. Serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Ask yourself; what would Jesus do if he were asked a question. You will find a good answer in prayer and your Bible. You will never go away empty.

The Elders laid hands on the candidate in

prayer.

Moved and agreed to read the minutes.

Moved and agreed minutes be received.

Moved and agreed to have three copies made of the minutes; One to Aycocks Church; one for *The Signs of the Times*; and one for the Black Creek Association.

The candidate was returned to Aycocks Primitive Baptist Church as a Deacon.

Moved and agreed to adjourn.

Elder D. B. Stokes - Moderator

Nina Pearson - Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Old Beulah Church, a presbytery met March 19, 1978, for the examination of Brother Herman Creech, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, to be ordained to the full work of the office of deacon.

The ordination was begun with prayer by Elder Curtis Rains. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were: Elder Harvey Holland, Elder William Barnes, and Elder Curtis Rains. The deacons of like faith and order were called forward.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Curtis Rains as moderator and Harold Pittman as clerk. Deacons J. P. Pittman and H. W. Phillips delivered Brother Creech to the Presbytery. Examination was made by the Elders of the Presbytery and they administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by the three Elders of the Presbytery. Elder William Barnes delivered the charge to the candidate.

The right hand of fellowship was given and Brother Creech was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of Old Beulah Primitive Baptist Church.

The minutes of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Curtis Rains.

Elder Curtis Rains, Moderator

Harold Pittman, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1978 session of the Pigg River Association convenes, the Lord willing, with the Pigg River church, Franklin County,

Va., the 1st Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before. (August 4, 5, 6)

To get to the Pigg River Meeting House, those coming from the north on U.S. 220 turn right on to State Route 919 (which is three-quarters of a mile south of Boones Mill, Va.) follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn right on 641 to Callaway, Va. Then turn left in Callaway on State Route 602, and follow signs to Meeting House.

Those coming from the south take State Route 919 to the left just north of Rocky Mount, Va., and turn left on State Route 641 to Callaway, Va., then turn left on Route 602 and follow signs to the Meeting House.

A cordial welcome is extended to our correspondents and all lovers of the truth.

John D. Wood, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
SIGNS OF THE TIMES
TO APRIL, 1978

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Eugene Patterson, La. | \$1.00 |
| Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, La. | 6.00 |
| C. S. Parson, Ohio | 1.00 |
| Mrs. Zeb G. Dillon, Va. | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Alice Johnson, Tx. | 3.00 |
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THE RICHLI BLESSED OF GOD

For some reason unknown to me, there seems to be a strong unction to write upon the above subject. In my feeble manner I direct it to all those blessed of God everywhere, of every tongue, color, or race, in every condition or state of being who believe in the Holy Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

When the Apostle Paul was given to

write in his letter to the Church at Galatia, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith;" he must surely have had some understanding that God would, in His own time, make these words known unto His chosen people by the same revelation He had made it known unto Paul. The Apostle Paul was only able to write the words after much personal suffering; experiences, if you please. All you Bible readers will recall that God had appeared to Ananias commanding him to go to a certain house to see Paul (blinded at the time) who had seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming unto him that he (Paul) might receive his sight; but, God also told Ananias something else, namely, "For I will shew him how (not what) great things he must suffer for my names sake". (Acts 9:16) It takes no highly educated person to clearly see that Paul was as much under the leadership of God when he held the coats of them that stoned Stephen or when he (Paul) was rushing fiendishly about imprisoning and persecuting those whom he found calling upon the name of Christ Jesus. It just takes the same Almighty power of God and the same revelation with which God revealed these things to Paul. That same power and revelation enabled Paul to declare to those at Athens on Mars Hill, "Him whom ye ignorantly worship, declare I unto you."

Like Paul, God's chosen people are a suffering people and yet they would not exchange places with anyone, for they, like Paul, also hope they are a chosen vessel - which God also advised Ananias when speaking to him. God's people are made to grieve over their many sins and this very grief and sorrow and knowledge of their sins brings Godly repentance. They realize their undone and very sinful condition and are given a "contrite spirit" which God has declared He will not despise. If we be

His, we are taught along our way through this world that these trials, sorrows, and tribulations are for our good and God's glory. We would not have it this way had we the power to prevent it; but "There is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God". We seek from time to time to deceive ourselves that we have hidden something from God and we are then so foolish that we think we will escape the chastisement that is certain to come. If we could be in the Spirit of Christ we would at that very moment fall on our knees and give thanks to God that He was chastising us for we would then know that we were sons and not bastards. For whatever reason God had, we are made to live in hope that we are among His chosen and must walk the most of our days wondering and doubting - yet even this is good for us as Paul declares that "Hope is the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast". Paul further says that "Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, what doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.....". That was not all Paul said about hope, for he said, "For we are saved by hope....". Paul suffered much anguish of soul and on one occasion was so low that he said he was not meet to be an apostle for he had persecuted the Church of God, but he also said, perhaps in the same breath, "But by the grace of God I am what I am." Paul was acquainted with the schoolmaster of whom he spoke and knew of the necessity of confessing that it was that which brought him also unto Christ.

Yes, life on this earth holds little joy for the God-fearing chosen child of God and yet God in His infinite wisdom, mercy, and grace has already looked down through the anals of eternity and has seen just exactly how much suffering, temptations, trials, and sorrow each child can take. He has purposed to feed them at and on the

appropriate occasion with His faith - just enough to keep them hungering and thirsting for His righteousness. The Apostle Paul asked on one occasion that a thorn be removed from him. God's answer was, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for, in thy weekness is my strength made perfect".

This is certainly signifying that man has no more or no less power than that which God is pleased to supply him with. It is saying that if we were not so weak we would not need God - and God has determined all of the times and places as well as the conditions under which we are made to worship Him willingly for He has stated in unequivocal terms that "My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power". In Paul's letter to the Philippians he tells all that he used to be - circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, etc. He goes on to say in the 7th and 8th verse of chapter 3, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and 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." In the 9th verse he goes on, "And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:". Those of you who can fellowship the words of Paul, of Peter, and the other inspired writers must surely by grace be blessed of God. If peradventure you are like me, you cannot see the forest for the trees a great deal of the time, and wonder deep within your souls if you have ever believed and understood any of what you at one time joyed in greatly. If I know anything at all of what I'm attempting to write, it just is not in man's power to accept or reject these truths. Man must be led of God to the place where he has no other source to look to. When man is stripped of all his strength and supposed

possessions then and only then is he a fit and willing subject to pray unto God for mercy. Even then God must prepare man's heart and put the words into his tongue for him to pray the acceptable prayer. It is recorded that "The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord."

In what we call the Beatitudes Christ did not say blessed are they who are righteous for they shall be filled, but He did say, "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Had we our way we would take our fill of sin without even a twitch of conscience until we thought we were about to die and then we would become the very finest example of a righteous man and very confidently expect eternal bliss with our maker. This appears to be the philosophy of those who maintain the theory of universal salvation. You will note that I did not call it the doctrine of universal salvation, for it is not worthy of such connotation. God's people continue to sin in this present world; but they are made to lie awake many nights, walk wondering many days and spend many of their waking moments weeping over their own deeds. Man (the creature) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but, by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Man's race is set before him and I'm fully persuaded (right now) he will certainly run it, whether patiently or no. We are persuaded that God's elect have been chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.

Some maintain that they are blessed for what they do. I hope to believe that if I am blessed of God at all I am blessed in what I do believing that it is God in me working both to will and to do according to His good pleasure. I am not qualified to know if this treatise is worthy of publication and must depend on more ones than myself. Should the Editors find it unsound or unfit to put into print I pray they will be blessed to ignore it. To the

ones of you to whom it is directed I pray that you may be edified and God be glorified with no credit to this unworthy and sinful creature. May God be with you in a most manifest sense to bless and keep you in the way.

Your poor servant,
(Elder) Swayne Young
6537 Saginaw Road
Memphis, Tennessee 38134

EXTRACT FROM WARBURTON

"I fell upon my knees under the hedge and cried out to the Lord, 'Am I deceived, Lord? Am I too secure? Is it wild-fire, Lord?' And the dear Lord broke in upon my soul with such divine glory, and such a succession of promises, that the Bible appeared to me to be nothing but promises from beginning to end, and all mine. I had such a view, too, of the faithfulness and glory of God in His fulfillment of them from first to last to my poor soul, that I was completely overwhelmed with transports of heavenly joy, and for a time scarcely knew whether I was in the body, or out of the body. Upon arising from the ground it struck me that it was the very place in which the devil has often tempted me to put an end to my life. And, oh! how I did dance and sing, and banter the lying devil, and dare him to come out of his den! I challenged him to his face, and told him if he did not come out he durst not. I called him everything but a gentleman. I was so happy and comfortable, that I felt as if I could walk through troops of devils, shouting, 'In the name of the Lord I will destroy them!' Oh! how I wondered at the goodness of the Lord to one so unworthy of the least of His mercies! 'If this,' cried I, 'be wild-fire, let me have more of it! If this is being too secure, let me live and die in it. My God and my Saviour, thou art my Portion, my Rock, my Hiding-place, my Friend, my dear Redeemer! Oh! my dear, dear, dear Jesus, Thou art the chief of ten thousand, the altogether lovely!' How I

got home, I know not; what with shouting, praising, thanking and blessing the Lord, it was morning before I arrived there”.

John Warburton,
Mercies of a Covenant God

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116

OBSERVATIONS ON MARK 10:42-45
AND THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF A
LOCAL CHURCH

In answer to a question and a personal request, the following is a summary of my major views on Mark 10:42-45 in particular and the church's internal government and discipline more generally:

First, regarding the text in Mark, where Christ forbade the exercise of lordship or authority by or among His disciples, as all lordship and authority are His: the minister is service-oriented, not to be considered as a commander by himself or others. The word “minister” is related to the Latin word “minor,” which means smaller, inferior, or less; a fact conveniently overlooked and even reversed by the modern religious machinery of this present evil age. As used in the New Testament, the word minister means to give aid or to serve; but modern useage would imply much the opposite--see Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary on “minister,” where pompous words such as, “the superior. . .” and, “a high officer” are used.

Christ specifically forbids the disciples' exercise of lordship and authority among themselves, which generally applies to each local church and its ministry. However, it must be pointed out that when a minister is blessed by the Lord he can lead a congregation, as Moses led, although he was among the meekest of men (Num. 12:3), as was Christ Himself; he need not act as if he is or thinks he is superior to the

people of the congregation, nor think of himself as being “high,” thinking of himself more highly than he ought to think (Rom. 12:3); in a word, he can officiate without being officious, and ought to do so. When blessed with a right spirit he will do so.

Since the ministry is in a position of service, the church body herself, collectively, is in a ruling position relative to the truly God-called minister. He is primarily the servant of God and secondarily the servant of the church. One part of his service to them is to administer (note: ad-MINISTER!) the rules and disciplines set within that local church from one of two sources:

1. All of the rules and practices set forth in the Bible, more particularly in the New Testament scriptures; and,
2. Those rules and disciplines adopted by the local church under the leadership of God's Holy Spirit in His divine providence, to assure that in the ADMINISTRATION of the church's affairs all things shall be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40).

The ADMINISTRATION of these rules is to be done in an attitude of service, with God's glory and honor uppermost in importance, and the congregation's welfare continually in mind. If a minister ceases to function thusly, and begins to lord it over God's heritage, ruling for his personal benefit by dictating what, how, when, and where the congregation must do whatever he demands, his attitude will become increasingly apparent to those with any discernment, and he (no less than others with such overbearing attitudes) should be dealt with according to the disciplinary lines given by Jesus Christ Himself in Matthew 18:15-18.

However, when blessed with the proper spirit a minister can, must and will, under God, ADMINISTER the church's secular and spiritual affairs

lovingly and impartially, and as firmly as necessary to maintain decency and order. Again, it is emphasized: this firmness in leadership is done in the spirit of service, not in a spirit of lordship. To understand this, one must understand that the ADMINISTRATION of rules can and may be done as a genuine service, even as good law-enforcement officers and agencies are "public servants" in the secular realm. Thus, service does not imply a passive and silent role.

Further, even as a soldier may fight bravely, fiercely and savagely, even "fighting and dying in the service of his country," even so a minister can and should firmly and courageously withstand all enemies of the Lord, His gospel, His doctrine and His church, fighting men and devils as necessary, showing no quarter, fighting the good fight of faith even unto death should he be called upon to do so; and all this is done in service to Christ and the church (I can understand why and how one who is attempting to introduce error, discord and confusion into a church would cry that such a fearless servant of God was only fighting "to maintain his own lordship and authority within that church"; but wisdom is justified of her children--Matt. 11:19).

Now, more particularly, may we look at the subject of church government: the church, throughout the scriptures is spoken of as the body of Christ, of which He is the head. Under Him, the local church is a sovereign body as to the disposition of her own internal affairs, ultimately responsible only to her God for her policies and actions. I say, "ultimately," as her individual members or her sister churches of course may and can object to and disagree with her actions, even to the point of declaring non-fellowship for a church which they feel has departed from the principles of Christ; they may indeed attempt to reason with her and to persuade her to change her course of

action; but the sister churches cannot actually control or change the decisions of a local church body as to her internal affairs! She, under Christ her head, sits a queen and is the ultimate judge of her own doings.

That a church does have business to see after is evident from reason and from scripture:

(1) From reason: common sense would say that mortgages and utility bills do not pay themselves. Buildings are not built and maintained without an element of business. There are many other aspects of secular business, such as maintaining insurance policies on church property and collecting insurance if damages are sustained; the disposition of wills and inheritances of which the church is the designated recipient; maintaining checking and/or savings accounts when such is necessary; paying city paving assessments, obtaining building permits, hiring contractors, signing contracts, and such like, as well as business matters of a more spiritual nature--i.e., more directly related to the affairs of Christ; as, determining the dates and times of regular and special meetings, inviting specific ministers to visit, authorizing by ordination the ministerial travels of home ministers (Acts 13:3f), sometimes specifically sending them (Acts 13:3, 15:22) and receiving their reports when they return (Acts 14:26f); receiving and excluding members; ordaining deacons; and such like. None of these actions occur spontaneously without an element of "business;" nor should these business items be decided by the minister alone, or only a few members, but rather, they should be decided by the congregation of the people affected, themselves, the church body as a whole. If this is not done, not only is the very basic principle of congregational government violated, but the very situation to be avoided (the exercise of lordship, the abuse of authority and trust, and the dictatorship of a

few or of a single person) can promptly develop.

We now proceed to the evidence (2) from the scripture: in Acts 6:2-5, it is evident the church has business, or else the deacons were chosen and ordained for nothing, as they were specifically "appointed over this business."

The general pattern of conducting business is everywhere evident in the affairs of the church as recorded in the New Testament: the Holy Spirit of God enlightens the church regarding Christ's will, leading them to certain actions. Thus, in that scriptural precedent for a church making public pronouncements regarding doctrine and matters of practice (recorded in Acts 15:4-29), it is stated: "It seemed good (1) to the Holy Ghost, and (2) to us," in that order; and that could be said only after a lengthy and healthy public debate (verses 4-21) and a unanimous vote ("it pleases. . .the whole church," verse 22; "assembled with one accord," verse 25)!

Thus, the conducting of business, in general and in particular, has been touched upon briefly. Ample more evidence is readily available to substantiate what has been set forth so far, but I do not believe anyone familiar with New Testament principles will question or disagree with these basic truths historically held by our forefathers in all preceding ages.

Now, addressing that branch of internal policy and government relating to discipline (precisely, the disciplining of unruly members), consider this: the one who spoke the words in Mark 10:42-45 forbidding the exercise of lordship and authority among the disciples also spoke the words in Matthew 18:3-35 where He pointedly told His disciples how to deal with the situation when one brother trespasses against another (v. 15). If a place of reconciliation is not reached by these brethren following the two plain steps set forth in verses 15 and 16, the disputed point is to be told to the church, verse 17. The church then is to

speak to the trespassing brother; or else how can he hear, or neglect to hear her if she does not speak? And, how else can she speak to him, other than by being convened together in a decent, orderly, businesslike fashion? Surely no one would seriously say that the church members speak to him as individuals! For, as a practical matter, the transgressor would go to each member telling only his side of the story, adding, leaving out, or changing details as would best suit his attempts to gain a sympathetic following. No, the assembly (for this is what "church" literally means) is told (v. 17) as a body and speaks as a body. The transgressor either hears or neglects to hear what the assembly says to him. This "hearing" implies far more than merely listening to words; it is here used metonymically, the part being taken for the whole, and means to abide by their decision, as "hearing" elsewhere implies in the scriptures.

Now, if that brother neglects to hear what the church says, he is to be counted as a heathen man and a publican; i.e., turned out of the church body and considered to be the same as any other gentile non-member of that body. This is supported by the other statements Christ made on the same occasion:

1. "The man by whom the offence cometh" (v. 7) is likened unto
 - a. an offender having a millstone-typical of the law--tied about his neck and being drowned in the depth of the sea, v. 6: the sea and floods of water generally are a type of the gentile nations at large: Isaiah 57:20f and 59:19; Revelation 12:15 and 13:1.
 - b. an offensive hand, foot, or eye, as valuable as those members are, to nevertheless be surgically removed, or amputated, that the body itself might continue to live (v. 8-9).
2. An unforgiving, unrelenting fellowservant whom the Lord delivers to the tormentors until his debt is paid. This is not a personal

paying for sins, per se; for, if a man could pay for his sins by suffering torments, why must Christ have died to pay for sins? What folly, then, to suggest that Matthew 18:34 speaks of an acceptable alternative to the blood sacrifice and atonement of Christ! Away with such a blasphemous thought! What is under consideration, then? The debt being paid (Matt. 18:34) is the transgressor's being brought by the bitterness, loneliness, sorrow and grief of his sad experience to the place of repentance and restoration to fellowship with the body.

A concrete example of the last point above is the Corinthian fornicator spoken of in I Cor. 5:1-13. Paul himself had judged this man, concerning his deed, v. 3; he advised the church that the fornicator should be "TAKEN AWAY FROM AMONG YOU," v. 2, by the authority and power of our Lord Jesus Christ (who had explained the procedure to be used, in Matthew 18); when they were "gathered together" (for only when they are convened as a church can they speak and act in concert) "to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh," and equivalent of drowning him in the sea of the gentiles; "that the spirit may be saved" shows that

1. A child of God may become involved in sin and be excluded for it;
2. Paul had hopes that this brother was indeed one of God's children and therefore would be saved; and, therefore,
3. Exclusion has nothing to do with a church's pronouncing whether the excluded member is or is not a child of God; indeed, Paul advised the Thessalonians to keep no company with (i.e., exclude) those who did not obey his epistle, and that for the express purpose of shaming them into proper behavior; yet counting him (them) not as an enemy, but admonishing him as a "brother" (2

Thess. 3:14). Thus, a "brother" might be excluded, and an excluded person might be a brother.

Paul continued by telling them to "purge out" the old leaven and "not to keep company with fornicators, covetous, idolaters, railers, drunkards, or extortioners" in a brotherly capacity, verses 9 and 11. They are to be considered as being "without" or outside of the church membership, and Paul assures us that God will judge such; further, they are told to "put away from among yourselves that wicked person," verse 13. Much plainer language scarcely can be conceived regarding the exclusion of transgressing members. Paul continues in chapter six, indicating that the saints are to judge from the least to the greatest of temporal and spiritual matters, as the least esteemed saint is far superior to the unbelieving judges of this earth.

That the Corinthians did as Paul directed, and that Paul's judgment about the fornicator's salvation was correct, and that the desired results of sorrow, repentance and restoration were brought about, is evident from Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth: see 2 Cor. 2:5-7, where Paul refers to the "punishment, which was inflicted of many (i.e., the church body)," the punishment being "sufficient" in that the punished or excluded one bordered upon being "swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." It was at this point that Paul bade the church to "confirm your love toward him" and "forgive him and comfort him."

Now may I touch on these additional seven related points in closing:

1. First, for emphasis and clarity, I Cor. 5:13--"them that are without, God judgeth"--plainly implies that Paul's instruction to "put away" which immediately follows, means for them to put the offender without, or out of the local church body.

2. While there is to be no lordship or authority exercised within the church,

the saints are exhorted to submit themselves to one another in the fear of God, Eph. 5:21; in particular, to "them that have the rule over you," and to "obey them," Heb. 13:17. This ruling is primarily referring to a submission to the ministry, for who watches over your soul as they that must give account, as that text says, more than the ministry, by the providence of God? See also I Tim. 5:17--Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

3. Likewise, the frequent use of the word "unruly" in the scriptures speaks of those within the church which are not readily ruled or disciplined (Webster); hence, the apostle's injunction to "warn them that are unruly," I Thess. 5:14. For what purpose would a warning be given, if there were no authority placed within the church to follow through, enforcing its warning against unruliness? If the answer is made that the warning is about God's punishment alone, I reply: this is only part of the warning; the rest of the warning entails the disciplinary measures Christ has set within the church.

Also in this connection, as God has set governments within the church, I Cor. 12:28, Peter condemns those who despise government, 2 Peter 2:10. Whether Peter is speaking there of those within the church or without is relatively unimportant to our discussion here, as it is the attitude which is condemned and which is certainly unbecoming in one who professes a hope in Christ! Therefore, with such words as unruly, despising government, and similar terms, with frequent warnings and exhortations against such in ourselves or in other members of the body, what are we to understand from such language if there is no effective tool within the church to maintain a semblance of peace and order?

4. It should be noted that neither the pastor nor any individual or group of

individuals excludes the unruly one, but the church body itself does it, if it is to be done. In all churches of our faith and order, to the best of my knowledge, this requires a unanimous vote, which is the acting "in one accord" which we trust is by the leadership of the Holy Spirit in such matters.

5. Objections regarding Christ's forbidding the seeking of vengeance or revenge are irrelevant objections, because church discipline is not to be maintained by a spirit of vengeance. No fines are levied, no imprisonments, no confiscation of goods, no harassing of the individual or his loved ones, no destruction of property, no threats or intimidation; no, nothing of a malicious nature or intent is done. Rather, loving labor is conducted in an attempt to persuade the transgressor to forsake his sinful or willful ways; then, when it becomes apparent that further labor is useless and unfruitful, the transgressor is freed from all further obligations to the body, to behave as he pleases under the providence of God, coming and going, even in continued attendance with the church body which excluded him, should he so desire.

6. The objection that Paul said, "They who seemed to be somewhat in 'conference' added nothing to me (Gal. 2:6)," is also irrelevant, because:

a. Paul was not here speaking of the business sessions of a local church, which are currently referred to as "conferences," but was using the exact same term he use in Gal. 1:16 when he said he conferred not with flesh and blood;

b. On the positive side, in this text he was here saying that he had received the gospel of Jesus Christ by direct, divine revelation. Nothing was added to this revelation by his later communicating, discussing, or "conferring" with the other apostles and disciples; nothing was added to either his gospel or his apostleship by his conferring or comparing views with them.

c. I call your attention to that same chapter, where Paul speaks of his public rebuke of Peter (Gal. 2:14), indicating Paul's readiness to maintain the purity of the gospel in dealing with a transgressor, even another apostle, if necessary, in a disciplinary way.

7. Finally, I call your attention to the fact that when Christ spoke in Matthew 16:19 to Peter and later said essentially the same thing to the other apostles (the collective nucleus of the New Testament church) in Matthew 18:18, saying, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," Christ used the participle, perfect passive tense, indicating a previously completed heavenly action--completed in heaven prior to the action of the church conference which deals with the transgressor. A more literal translation would be, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall have already been bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall have already been loosed in heaven," from which it can only be understood that God's determinate council, or predestination, governs and predetermines the outcome of any church conference action, which is the practical outworking of God's providential working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

This, then, is an admittedly brief presentation of some of the major points of church polity and discipline as I see them. I might be wrong, but it is my understanding that these principles are in accord with those recorded in the sacred scriptures and are in general harmony with the principles and practices of the most orderly followers of Christ on this earth, those dear children of the most High God, known generally as the Absolute Predestinarian Primitive Baptists, whose kindness is nowhere more in evidence than in their allowing me to call them my brethren.

Unworthily,
Elder C. C. Morris

When the rays of the sun fall on the surface of a material object, part of those rays are absorbed, part of them are reflected back in strait lines, and part of them refracted, this way and that, in various directions. When the Holy Ghost shines upon our souls, part of the grace He inspires is absorbed to our own particular comfort, part of it reflected back in acts of love and joy and prayer and praise, and part of it refracted every way, in acts of benevolence, beneficence, and all moral and social duty.

Toplady

EDITORIAL.

In place of our monthly Editorial we are printing several extra articles as Voices of the Past. We hope the readers find them useful. We will have our regular Editorial next month, the Lord willing.

Editor

Look where you will, and you will generally find that free-willers are very free-livers.

Toplady

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MARK XVI. 17, 18

"And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

In the early ministry of the apostles of the Lamb, and of the primitive disciples of our risen Lord, all these signs did literally follow them that believed, for it

is added in the closing verse of the same chapter, "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Many instances are recorded of miracles performed by them in the name of the Lord Jesus, such as healing the sick, casting out devils; and we have an instance of the deadly viper which lit on Paul's hand, and which he shook off into the fire, to the utter astonishment of the heathen with whom his lot was providentially cast, and all these signs were performed in confirmation of the word of the Lord. To prove by ocular demonstration the reality of the exaltation of the Son of God, and His divine omnipotence, external evidence was thus given, and such as confounded and stopped the mouths of infidel philosophers, but having thus by the most supernatural testimonies established the certainty of the resurrection and exaltation of our Divine Redeemer, ocular demonstrations were to cease, and the saints in all subsequent ages were to live by faith upon the Son of God, and not to walk by sight. If these ocular demonstrations were to be continued, the natural judgments of men might be convinced without any radical change of heart, as many were in those days of miracles. But our knowledge of God, of spiritual and divine things, is not by informing or convincing our natural or carnal minds through the natural senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, &c., but by special revelation of the Spirit to the faith of the children of God. The carnal Jews, whose religion was the service of a worldly sanctuary, and whose ordinances were carnal, relied on signs, desired signs, required signs, and the learned Greeks who sought after wisdom, were in their carnal state, incapable of appreciating any other evidence, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. But the children of

God shall all be taught by the Lord. The Spirit, the Holy Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, is the teacher of the saints. He, said Jesus, shall take of the things of mine, and shall shew them unto you. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them even unto the greatest, saith the Lord.

Miraculous displays of the divine power are not now made to the natural understanding of natural men, as in the apostles' day; but we do not hold that the day of miracles is passed. The work of salvation by grace is as miraculous now as it ever was. The work is superhuman, supernatural, and in it the naked arm of God is as visible to the faith of God's children at one time as another. The ministry of the gospel, in a spiritual sense, is as healing to the sick, and quickening to the dead now, as formerly. Not that preaching in itself ever quickened or healed any one, but these signs follow in all those whom God has quickened by his Spirit. It is the power and wisdom of God. In His name devils are now displaced, cast out, and believers in Christ are secured from the rage of wicked men and devils. The old serpent, and all his brood of vipers, are in this day, in a spiritual sense, trodden upon by the saints, and all their venom is rendered harmless to God's people by and through the matchless name of our ascended Lord.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., May 15, 1859

Lexington, Ky.

Dear Editors and Publishers:

Inclosed please find check for the three annual subscriptions, also I am submitting a letter from a dear sister in Canada, without her consent, but which will be read with interest by many. I would state also that my first visit to Canada was at the Lobo meeting, in October 1886, and I do not think there is a member living now who was a member

then. I believe sister McColl, of Tilbury, and sister Williams were the last. I think I have made more than forty visits there, and they were always enjoyable to me.

Regarding the *Signs*, I feel as the years go by it becomes dearer to me, as in my blind condition I can seldom go to meeting, and it advocates the truth today upon which it was founded. It has been my privilege to meet all the editors and hear them preach, from dear old Elder Beebe down to the present ones, excepting Elder Dodson, but I was quite intimate with him before he began preaching. I think he will remember the trip we made together from New York to the Warwick Association.

The January number of the *Signs* has been read to me and I certainly enjoyed the resurrection doctrine advocated in it. I cannot understand how any one can read the Scriptures and not believe in the resurrection. If there be no resurrection of the dead, what did Jesus, the blessed Son of God, accomplish when he became identified with us in the body of this flesh and suffered the awful death on the cross, and was laid in the tomb, and afterward arose and was identified by his wounds, and was seen to ascend into heaven? The Scriptures says, "In like manner he shall descend." Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. That is, when the end shall come there will be those alive upon the earth, as we are to-day. Then again, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." In looking back over the record, it would seem that true believers and followers of Christ had greater affliction and trials than others. According to revealed truth, they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, afflicted and tormented, yet they all died in the faith, believing in the coming of Jesus. (Read

the whole chapter.) Then Paul said, "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witness, 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, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," etc. Now, brethren, beloved in the Lord, let us ever remember the blessed words of Jesus: Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my little ones, ye did it unto me. If it be a kind word, or a kind act, or an unkind word, or an unkind act, it applies just the same.

Now I wish to ask my beloved brethren in the ministry everywhere, Do not debate your differences of doctrine in the pulpit, but preach the gospel of peace and feed the church. Paul set the example, when he came to the church at Corinth there were differences, but he determined not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Dear Elder Lefferts, you spoke of Elder Wilson Thompson in the last *Signs*. I was personally acquainted with him, and heard him preach several times, and I must say he was one of the most powerful preachers I ever heard, and was recognized as such. Two of my brothers and myself attended an association some forty miles away. On Sunday morning two Elders who differed with Elder Thompson on the effect of the new birth on the Adam man, preached, and tried in rather a bitter spirit to make him see it as they did. Elder Thompson, who followed, got up as a little child, and, to the surprise of all, read a text and preached the gospel of peace, making no reference to what had been said before. *If he had preached in the spirit of the other two Elders he probably would have divided the association.* That night he preached at Zionsville, in the Methodist meeting-house and we heard him again, but he made no reference to what had been said

at the association, and that was an example I never forgot. Brethren, talk your differences privately, not in the pulpit. "Come, let us reason together."

The many letters I have received from the dear kindred in Christ have been of much comfort to me, and I would reply to each one if I could see to write. I do hope to hear from you again. Now may grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, and may he guide us in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours with a blessed hope, though the least of all,

Jan. 11, 1935

P. W. Sawin

THE COMMON SALVATION

An inquirer living at El Dorado, Arkansas, has asked us to explain the expression "common salvation," in Jude 3. We have seen these words interpreted to indicate a time salvation conditional on the obedience of the believer, but we have failed to see anything in either these words or their connection to warrant such an opinion. The passage reads, "Beloved, when I give all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

The meaning is that Jude intended to write to the brethren upon the subject of their common salvation, but that the Holy Spirit ruled otherwise and led him instead to call attention to the faith once delivered to the saints, which was the more needful for them, especially as certain men had crept in unawares among them denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. It frequently occurs with the servants of God that they may have it in mind to preach or to write on a certain subject, and their thoughts will be caught away from that subject and fastened on another subject more needful to the brethren than the premeditated subject would have been.

Paul, at a certain time in his ministry, would have gone into Asia, but was forbidden of the Holy Spirit; he then endeavored to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit allowed him not to do so. Instead he was shown in a vision that it was the mind of the Spirit for him to go into Macedonia, and thither he went. (Acts xvi. 6-10.) Paul's mind in the matter was changed, and it is often so in writing, as in this instance of Jude 3.

"Common salvation" relates not any more to time salvation than to eternal salvation. Indeed, the terms "time" and "eternal" as divisive of salvation are without basis in Scripture. Salvation is the saving power of God's grace revealed unto and within the children of God by the Holy Spirit on behalf of the perfect satisfaction rendered by the Lord Jesus Christ to divine justice in complete atonement for all the sins of the elect of God. This salvation is made experimentally known to the children of God here in time, and is efficacious throughout the ages of time and unto all eternity. This salvation is without conditions to be performed by man either before or after regeneration. The believer's obedience to the precepts of the gospel is always the effect of grace and salvation, and is not the cause thereof. The working out of our salvation, which is showing it forth to others, is invariably the effect of God's working in us by his Spirit enabling us to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. ii. 12, 13.)

The word "common" means that which belongs alike to two or more individuals, and not to one person only. Under the legal covenant pertaining to the old testament sanctuary, the atonement money of the children of Israel was a silver half shekel for each individual, regardless of whether they were poor or rich. The poor could give no less, the rich could give no more. (Exodus xxx. 12-15.) The same amount was common to all. The atonement for the sins of the people of God, which Jesus made in the

shedding of his blood, is the one and only sure salvation for all the children of God throughout all ages, regardless of their position or condition in nature. Hence, the salvation secured through Christ for his people is common to all alike.

Being God's gift by grace to each and all of them, it is their "common salvation." Paul to Titus says, "Mine own son after the common faith."—Titus i. 4. Here again "common" means the faith which is alike the fruit of the Spirit in each and every subject of grace, not that which is the blessing or privilege of one only. "Common salvation" is from God to his people without respect of persons, except as the salvation itself distinguishes the elect from the rest of mankind.

July, 1935

H.H. Lefferts

FATALISM AND PREDESTINATION

A Brother inquires, What is the difference between fatalism and predestination?

There is a difference it is sure, but before replying directly to this question, we will call attention to one thought especially, and that is, If there be no difference between these two words, then if any one act is predestinated, that act comes under the head of fatalism, as it is called. It is claimed by some that the predestination of all things which come to pass would be fatalism. If this be so of all things, it would follow that it would be true of any one thing which was predestinated as well. So if men fear the reproach of fatalism, they must not contend for the predestination of anything.

But they are not the same, they are as opposite in meaning as light and darkness. In this one thing their difference is at once to be seen, fatalism puts God out of the universe altogether; it does not allow that there is any God, or at least any God who concerns himself with the affairs of men. On the other hand, predestination brings God in everywhere. It declares that a self-living, self-

conscious Creator has made all things that are made, and that he has declared the end from the beginning; it declares that nothing happens by chance, but that an all-wise and beneficent being has appointed all things that come to pass. This was the faith of Job in his trials, a faith which gave him hope and comfort. He said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." He said, "Shall a man receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall he not receive evil" (at his hand). He said, "He performeth the thing which he hath appointed for me, and many such things are with him." And we know that Job spake truth, for the Lord so testified of him at the end of the book of Job. He said, The friends of Job had not spoken the thing that was right concerning him, as had his servant Job.

Was it fatalism when Jesus was betrayed according to the predestination of God and crucified? Was it fatalism when Joseph was sold into Egypt to save much people alive? Was it fatalism when God hardened the heart of Pharaoh, that the purpose for which God had raised him up might be fulfilled? Was it fatalism when the people of God were predestinated to eternal life? If there be no difference in the words, then it was fatalism, and then fatalism would be the sweetest word in the English language. In short, predestination acknowledges God in all things; fatalism acknowledges him in nothing; predestination tells us of a God who sees all things, knows all things, and who controls and appoints all in wisdom; fatalism sees nothing, knows nothing, and manifests no wisdom in its control, if indeed it may be said to control anything; fatalism is own brother to chance; predestination has nothing to do with chance, and is its most bitter enemy. Let no one again say that they are the same.

Elder F. A. Chick

March 15, 1902

As the sails of a ship carry it into the harbour, so prayer carries us to the Throne and bosom of God. But as the sails cannot of themselves speed the progress of a vessel, unless filled with a favourable breeze, so the Holy Spirit must breathe upon our hearts, or our prayers will be motionless and lifeless.

Toplady

OBITUARIES

ELDER DAVID ARCHIE O'BRYANT

We acknowledge receipt of an Obituary for Elder O'Bryant from Snow Creek Primitive Baptist Church. A previous obituary was published in the June, 1978, *Signs of the Times*.

Editor

SISTER BRIDGET A. TURNER

The writer is her earthly husband. Our Heavenly Father was pleased to call this dear sister, Bridget A. Turner, from this earthly kingdom into that upper and glorious kingdom on September 30, 1977, at the age of 82 years. She was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage on the 29th of September and passed away the following day.

She was born April 2, 1895, at Moyock, Currituck County, North Carolina. Her parents were the late Samuel Flora Aydlett, and the late Mollie Fulford Aydlett. She resided with her uncle and his wife in South Norfolk, Virginia, from the age of 11 years to finish her schooling and to prepare to teach. She taught for some years until her marriage on October 29, 1918, to Elder C. D. Turner, who survives her. Other survivors are 1 daughter, Grace Turner Garner, of Greenville, N.C.; 4 sons, Dr. Royce Turner, of Houston, Texas; Merwin, and Claxton, of Dunn, N.C.; and Walton, of Garner, N.C.; 13 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren; 2 sisters, Sister Grace Aydlett Bundy, of Moyock, N.C.; and Eunice Aydlett McFarland, of Norfolk, Va.

My wife, a dear sister, received a precious hope in Christ and united with the Primitive Baptist Church, on Saturday, August 5,

1950, and was baptized Sunday following. She was a firm believer in the Primitive Doctrine and a good leader in singing the sweet hymns of Zion. My wife commented on the comfort she received from hearing the preaching of the gospel from the different ministers of the Old Baptist Faith.

She also enjoyed reading the sweet experiences of different ones, written in the *Signs of the Times*, who have a precious hope in the Lord. Her mind desired to know what the interpretation of certain scriptures was that she had read or even had heard preached when it wasn't brought out clear to her from the minister speaking.

My wife was very faithful to her Church, always ready to help in the expenses or lend a helping hand to keep the meetinghouse clean, when her health permitted. She was a very humble person, and had many friends and all loved her. She loved all of her children very much and labored to rear them up to walk a clean life.

We are very thankful to our Heavenly Father to feel the assurance that He has been our strength and Helper in the many years we have labored together to make a livelihood for our lovely family of children, who the dear Lord has so wonderfully blessed us with.

In many ways my wife expressed her love for the Church. After she became acquainted with the doctrine and the sweet fellowship and the manifestation of God's wonderful love in the midst, she told me she had found a place of rest, just a little kingdom here below where you can receive a little foretaste of things above.

My wife was faithful to every duty of life. We miss her so very much here in the home she loved. Her flowers around this home was her garden spot. She labored so much to keep them worked, watered, and growing, so they would bring forth their beauty in the early spring.

Again I will say this precious and dear sister is greatly missed when we all meet at our little church, when we find the place she so faithfully occupied is vacant. Though the Lord knows best, we hope to be submissive to His will. She is now resting in the everlasting arms of her blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Her funeral was conducted at Black River Church, by Elder W. D. Godwin, and Elder

Curtis Rains. Her body was laid to rest in the Turner Family Cemetery with a beautiful mound of flowers from those who loved her.

Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator
Sister Nettie Turlington, Church Clerk

BROTHER LEROY LOFTIS

Brother Roy Loftis was born April 10, 1903, in Surry County, but spent most of his life in Caswell County, and was a retired farmer.

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call Brother Loftis home on December 31, 1977, making his stay on earth 74 years.

Brother Loftis was married to Rena Smith of Caswell County on November 26, 1927. To this union nine children were born; 5 girls, Mrs. Allen Teague, Mrs. Bonny Rumley, Mrs. David King, Mrs. Guy Handy, and Mrs. Pete Harrelson; 4 boys, Bobby, Donald, Gene, and Roger. He also had 4 brothers, 5 sisters, 21 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren.

Brother Loftis united with Pleasant Grove Church on August 13, 1977, but was never able to be baptized due to his illness. I was blessed to visit Brother Loftis several times and he always put his arms around me and cried, and continually asked our Pastor, Elder Donald Smith, to pray for him. God works in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform. May it please God to reconcile his family and all who knew him that what is their loss is his gain.

Funeral service was held at Pleasant Grove Church by Elder Donald Smith and Elder Wallis Smith.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church.

Written by Nellie Reid
Deacon Robert F. Walker, Clerk
Elder Donald E. Smith, Moderator

BROTHER JOHN DEWEY LEE

God in His infinite mercy saw fit to call our beloved brother, John Dewey Lee, from our midst on January 11, 1978. Brother Lee was born to Jim and Patsy Lovelace Lee on February 5, 1898, making his stay here 79 years. Left to mourn his passing is his wife, Sister Willie Windsor Lee; two daughters, Mrs. Robert Rash, of Kokomo, Indiana, and Mrs. Leonard Hudson, of Reidsville, N.C.

Brother Lee united with Lickfork Church the first Sunday in April, 1963. He was set apart as deacon in June of 1964. He served the Church faithfully and loyally until his death. Brother Lee was steadfast in the doctrine and attended the meetings when he was physically unable to go. He was a meek and humble man, which are the marks of grace. He suffered long in his sickness and with no complaint, but only a spirit of submission to God's will. Brother Lee will be greatly missed by us all. May we all be as reconciled to the will of God, as this dear brother was blessed to be.

Brother Lee's walk was witness that he had a wonderful hope. With this hope he awaits the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when on the morning of the resurrection he will awake to hear the summons, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world."

This was written by the order of Lickfork Church. May it be resolved that this be recorded on the church records, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy sent to the family.

Submitted in love,
David Underwood, Clerk
Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator

ADAM EUGENE BAILEY

According to the will of all wise and everlasting God, our precious brother, Adam Eugene Bailey was called from our midst on January 28, 1978. He was born April 29, 1900 in Kanawha County, W. Va. He was the son of James H. and Idilla Goff Bailey.

Brother Bailey received a precious hope in God our Saviour early in life and could receive no satisfaction or rest for his soul outside of the finished work of Christ. In June 1966, he was moved to ask for a home with the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church. He was baptized July 3, 1966, by Elder V. B. Linn, along with his wife Gladys, on the same day following the burial of his son Roy Clyde Bailey.

On June 9, 1923 Adam Bailey was married to Gladys Tucker, who along with her children patiently cared for him during his lingering illness. The marriage ceremony was performed by the late Elder George McClanahan.

He leaves to mourn his wife, two sons, five daughters, 31 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, one sister and a host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder V. B. Linn, at the Gatens Funeral Home, at Poca, W. Va. on January 31, 1978. He was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Poca to await the call of his Heavenly Father at that glorious resurrection.

V. B. Linn

HENRY FRANK TRIPLETT

After a linger illness, it was the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from this life our beloved brother, Deacon Henry Frank Triplett, on January 23, 1978. He was born June 1, 1904 in Elkins, W. Va. He lived there until a few months prior to his death, when he went to live with his son in Indiana. Surviving are his wife, and one son John E. Triplett, Sellersburg, Ind.; two daughters, Mrs. Morris Chenowith, Elyria, Ohio, and Mrs. William E. Knox, Ridgeville, Ohio; and ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Brother Triplett was a faithful member of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Va. He was baptized in July, 1963. The church felt that he had a gift and he was ordained deacon in 1969. He proved to be a well beloved and faithful deacon, he loved his brethren and his church, and though he lived a long way from his church, he was always ready to come and help with anything that needed to be done. He loved the truth and was sound in the faith, and delighted to talk concerning the Scriptures. It was always a pleasure to have him and his companion to spend the weekend with us in our home each meeting time - we miss their visits very much.

His body was returned to Elkins, and due to the illness of his pastor, the funeral service was conducted by Elder Velden B. Linn. Interment was in the Montrose Baptist Cemetery, near Elkins, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the coming of his Lord.

The sad relatives, brethren and friends and the beautiful flowers, gave evidence of the high esteem in which he was held.

Virginia C. and John D. Wood

JACK L. SMITH

Jack L. Smith was born on June 7, 1918, and God saw fit to take him from us on Feb. 23, 1977. He had a heart attack, and two weeks later he had a stroke. He could not speak to us the last 11 days of his life.

Only God knows how we all miss him. Our daughters, Mrs. Linda Liles, Mrs. Dean Wollett, and Mrs. Jackie Warren, and 9 sweet grandchildren all miss him more than anything on this earth. We try in our feeble way to realize God knows best. We pray to be reconciled. Pray for us.

Sister Morehead Smith

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We the church at Lickfork bow in humble submission to the will of God to take from our midst, our dear Brother William T. Smith. He was born and reared in a family who believed in the doctrine of election.

Brother Smith was born October 19, 1912, being the second son of the late Elder John R. Smith and Alice Perkins Smith of Rockingham County, North Carolina. He united with Lickfork Primitive Baptist Church on December 5, 1971.

He departed this life March 19, 1978. His funeral was conducted at Wilkerson Funeral Home Chapel in Reidsville, N.C. by his pastor, Elder Wallis A. Smith, assisted by Elder Haywood Wray and was buried in the Reidlawn Cemetery, Reidsville, N.C.

His wife preceded him in death February, 1969.

Therefore we the church at Lickfork resolve that three copies of this resolution be made; one sent to the family, one to the *Signs of The Times* for publication, and one kept for our church records.

The church at Lickfork feels that our loss is his eternal gain and he is resting with our saviour awaiting for the day of the Resurrection when our Heavenly Father will call his children home to be at rest.

This written by request of Lickfork Primitive Baptist Church in their conference meeting.

Written by:

Elwood Hall

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator

Brother David Underwood, 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.

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Burlington, N.C. 27215

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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BANK OF FAITH

(Continued from August)

Thus our most bountiful Benefactor answered these my poor petitions also, after He had been pleased for a time to exercise my faith and patience, in order to encourage me to a stronger confidence in His grace and providence. And I now make it known to the honour of His veracity, and to the encouragement of the poor of His flock, who are obliged to live, both spiritually and temporally, "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And, as God has been pleased to reveal Himself as a God that will hear and answer prayer, has appeared so to me, one of the worst and least of all His creatures, I choose therefore to subscribe with my hands, (Isa. 44:5) set to my seal; and proclaim, to all that fear His Name, that God is true. (John 3:33)

Oh, how sweet have these words often been to my soul! and as applicable to my case as possible, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no. And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doeth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." (Deut. 8:2, 3) When these precious answers to prayer appeared, they always came attended with humbling

grace, and were sweetened to my soul with a blessed sense of unmerited love; and, though at certain times, when unbelief was prevalent, I have found it hard work to keep from murmuring; especially when I have seen the basest of mortals rolling in wealth and pleasure, and spending it to support the shattered interest of the devil; while I could appeal to God that I loved Him, and sought His glory, and the good of His chosen, yea, even laboured beyond my strength in His cause and interest, and yet suffered for want of common necessaries. But these two scriptures generally silenced my murmuring: "The wicked have their portion in this life, whose belly God fills with His hid treasure;" and "The righteous are God's witnesses against the wicked." These words likewise would sometimes occur to my mind, "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed." And again, "To one it is given to gather together and heap up, but never an heart given to do good therewith; this is a sore travail." And that in Job, "Though the wicked prepare raiment as the sand, yet the righteous shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver." Better is gospel contentment with poverty than the sacrifices of many wicked; and I have often found the most comfort in my soul, when my outward matters have appeared to wear the most gloomy aspect - internal consolations have more than once counterbalanced all my external afflictions.

These daily crosses attending me in circumstances, I found were made very useful to those whom God had called by me, as the means to establish them in the faith of Christ, who is the Saviour of the body as well as the soul, and in whom the invaluable promise is Yea and Amen to every soul that is interested in His finished salvation. God hath given us all things in Christ, whether life or death, yea, we have the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; which promise

even includes "all things pertaining to life and godliness." Happy is that soul that credits God's promise, places his confidence in Him for the fulfilment of it, makes use of the means God has appointed, daily pleads His promise in the humble prayer of faith, patiently waits His time, daily watches His hand, lives in a holy expectation of a daily supply of spiritual and temporal mercies from the God of his salvation, and who is humbly thankful to God for every favour that flows through the atoning blood and prevalent intercession of a dear Redeemer! I say, let not such envy the crowned head or sceptred hand, for, if there be any virtue, or if there be any praise, if there be any serenity of mind, if any peace of conscience, if any honour of God, if any fruit brought forth to the glory of the Most High, it is to be found in such a soul; and he, with the greatest propriety, may be said to think on these things.

At another time, when Providence had been exercising my faith and patience till the cupboard was quite empty, in answer to simple prayer He sent one of the largest hams that I ever saw. Indeed, I saw clearly that I had nothing to do but to pray, to study, and to preach; for God took care for me, and my family also, agreeably to His own promise, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." And I have often thought, the reason why our dear Lord and Master gave no inheritance to the Levitical tribe, who performed the sanctuary service, was, that they might learn to live by faith, and likewise to exercise and try the liberality of the worshipping tribes. And this appears to be the reason why the apostles were sent out to preach without purse or scrip. Certainly God could have sent them out as rich as the Sanhedrim, had He thought proper; but no, He left the blind priests to live on the offerings and tithes of the blind followers, as their portion; and it is to be feared that that

was the only portion some of them ever had from God. But the poor apostles were to go out with only a portion of grace in their hearts; and where they sowed those spiritual things, God opened the hearts of the converts to bring forth temporal things to them. And it often appeared that as soon as the grace of God had taken the government of a young convert's heart, his temporal riches appeared at the apostles' feet. Thus the gospel defrayed the expenses of the dispensers of it. And this, I believe, was intended to try the sincerity of the grace of those who were enabled to believe the gospel; as Paul put some of his followers upon a like trial, and made liberality one of the touchstones, "See that ye come not behind in this grace also." Yea, and even our dear Lord and Master lived on the alms of His followers; for as soon as He was born, the eastern sages opened their treasures, and presented unto Him, gold, frankincense, and myrrh; and even until His crucifixion He lived on the liberality of His poor disciples, who were said to minister to Him of their substance. It is true, Satan offered Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, upon certain conditions; but He refused, choosing to suffer hunger rather than turn stones into bread to prove His Sonship, and please an accusing devil.

Providence was pleased again to try me, till I ran five guineas in debt. After I had prayed and waited some time, a gentleman belonging to the stamp office (a faithful friend to me for many years together, during my state of extreme poverty) called upon me, and generously made me a present of five guineas, which paid off that debt. Oh, the goodness of God to those that fear His name and hope in His mercy! He even sent a raven to feed the prophet Elijah, when he dwelt by the brook Cherith; an angel, too, was sent from heaven to bake him a cake on a fire, and bring him a cruse of water, when, being weary, he slept

under the juniper-tree, in his road to Horeb. "Arise and eat," said the celestial guest, "because the journey is too great for thee. (I Kings 19:7)

I now began to get quite weary of living at Thames Ditton, as I did not see that God had anything more for me to do there. His word had appeared a savour of life unto life to some few, and a savour of death unto death to many who were indefatigable in opposing it. In short, I secretly longed to leave it, but was determined not to do so until I saw the Lord Himself open the door; for, "when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them." I was fully persuaded that I should end my ministry in London, and had long told a friend in town of it. Another reason for my wanting to quit Ditton was, the bad state of health that I felt myself to be in, which rendered me incapable of such long journeys and so much labour. But I have generally found God to kindle a desire in my heart after that which He intended to bring to pass. Thus, when the time came for Israel to leave Egypt, the spirit of supplication was sent to make intercession in many of their hearts, for their deliverance from bondage; and God told Moses He had heard the groanings of His people Israel, by reason of their taskmasters; and "I am come down," said God, "to deliver them." And so it will appear in this matter, when I have related it.

After preaching at Woking one evening, I returned home about twelve o'clock at night; and before I could shift for myself, and take care of my horse, it was between one and two. Having an infant very ill, I told my dame that I would lie alone that night, as the child was so very restless I was apprehensive I should get no rest myself, being very weary; and, having another journey to go the next day, I was fearful I should not be able to perform it, unless I had some rest. Accordingly I went into another bed, and fell into a very sound sleep; when I dreamed, and, behold! in

my dream I thought I heard the Lord call to me in a very shrill, distinct voice, saying, "Son of man, son of man, prophesy! son of man, prophesy!" I answered, "Lord, what shall I prophesy?" The voice came again, saying, "Prophesy upon the thick boughs." I immediately awoke, and felt a comfortable power on my heart, and thought the voice seemed fresh in my ears. I knew not what it meant, nor did I remember ever seeing any such words as "thick boughs" in the Bible. However, I got up immediately, and searched my Bible, to see if I could find those words there; thinking that, if I could I should conclude the dream to be from God. I soon found the words, and perceived the thick boughs to be men. (Ezek. 31:3, 17:23) But what the command could mean, I could not then tell, because I was employed in prophesying on the boughs almost every day. I went into my dame's room, and told her of it; but observed at the same time that I could not think what it meant, though I certainly should know hereafter. The next day I came to London, and told it to Mr. Byrchmore; adding, that I knew there was mystery in it, and that as it was from God, it would shortly be revealed to me. "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." (Job 33:14-16)

However, some days passed on, the meaning being entirely hidden from me. But I knew the vision would speak in time; and though it tarried for days, yet I waited for it. (Hab. 2:3) I likewise told Mr. Butler, another friend, of it; but he did not seem to like it, as he wished me to stay at Ditton.

It so happened that shortly after this I was taken ill, and was obliged to be shut up in my room for two or three days; during which time I was ruminating in my mind the conduct of the people at

Ditton; how long I had preached among them, and how unwearied they had been in persecuting the gospel of Christ; and that, though God had cut off so many of them in their rebellion, yet they were still blind both to His mercies and to His judgments. As I had appeared in that place in the mean capacity of a coal heaver, they would not allow themselves to think that God had sent such a one as me to preach to them. I then thought on my infirm state of body, and of the many weaknesses I laboured under, which were brought on me by living abstemiously, and by hard labour, and that I was bringing my years "to an end like a tale that is told." And such is the policy of the devil, that I believe he would counterfeit holiness, and tempt souls even to extreme abstinence, if he could by such means rid the world of an experienced believer, who he knows is a brazen wall and an iron pillar against his interest; for such have weathered out his besiegers ever since the unjustifiable war was proclaimed by the devil against God. In short, I secretly wished that God would remove me from that place.

While musing in this manner, it was suddenly impressed on my mind to leave Thames Ditton, and to take a house in London; that I should leave these little places in the country, and preach in the great metropolis, where hearers were more numerous; and that this was the meaning of the words that came to me in the vision, "Prophesy, son of man; prophesy on the thick boughs." Under this impulse I found myself very happy, and was thankful to God for my intended removal; it seemed to me so clearly to be of Him. I then told the Lord that they hated me because of my poverty and mean appearance, when these words came to my mind with power, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country and in his own house." It was further suggested to my mind, that God had permitted them lately to persecute me

more than usual, that they might wholly drive the gospel from them. And I much question if ever God will send His word there again, for I think they are left almost as inexcusable as Chorazin and Capernaum; for no less than ten awful judgments had been conspicuously executed on them in their rebellion against the word, as is related in my "Naked Bow of God." And I believe, in less than two years after I left that place, there were not less than ten who were awfully destroyed by themselves or others. But to return. I then sent for a friend of mine, one Mr. Felton, and informed him of it; who said, he thought me justifiable in leaving the place, observing also that a prophet has no honour in his own country. I then took my horse, rode to London, and informed some friends of it; every one of whom approved of my resolution. I accordingly took a house, and soon after ordered two carts from London to bring my household furniture from Ditton. Carts, I say, for I had no need of Joseph's wagons, as I had got but little in that inhospitable Canaan.

Five years of the term being unexpired of the lease of the house I was leaving, I pondered in my own mind the propriety of quitting it before it was let, being fearful it would lie on my hands, and that I should want the money I had paid for the fixtures to carry with me, besides that I had expended in planting the garden.

But my most blessed Banker provided against this trial also; for it came to pass, just as I had loaded my goods, that a person came and asked me if I had let my house. I told him, "No." Upon which he replied, "I will take it off you; and buy your fixtures, your trees, and the garden crop also." In short, my landlord accepted him for his tenant, the lease was assigned over to him, the fixtures and plants appraised, the money paid down, the keys delivered up, and all was settled to my wish, and beyond all expectations. "Therefore, thou son of man,

prepare thee stuff for removing, and remove by day in their sight; and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their sight; it may be they will consider, though they be a rebellious house." (Ezek. 12:3)

Thus far my vision appeared true. The next thing I had to observe was whether the boughs were thick or not; because the voice in the vision was, "Son of man, prophesy among the thick boughs." I then believed that the other part of the vision would be fulfilled, though all the world should oppose; and having opened a larger chapel than that I had preached in at first, seemed to confirm it more and more. I have now lived to see the boughs too thick for the chapel to contain them; and in this, as well as in everything else, I set to my seal, "that God is true."

When I first began to open my mouth for the Lord, the master for whom I carried coal was rather displeased, at which I do not wonder, as he was an Arminian of the Arminians, or a Pharisee of the Pharisees. I told him, however, that I should prophesy to thousands before I died; and soon after the doors began to be opened to receive my message. When this appeared, and I had left the slavish employment of coal-carrying, others objected to my master against such a fellow as me taking up the office of a minister. His answer was, "Let him along, I once heard him say that he should prophesy to thousands before he died; let us see whether this prophecy comes to pass or not." He had, I suppose, that passage in view mentioned by Moses, "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall I know the word which the Lord hath spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of Him."

However, they very shortly saw that it came to pass, and in a very

extraordinary manner too; for God opened four doors to me presently; and in very little time brought me to preach out of doors.

At my first beginning to speak in public, many professors and possessors of grace opposed me, as well as the world; some from a principle of jealousy; others from a principle of love, fearing that I should run before I was sent; but they knew not, the impulse that I was under. Of their oppositions to me, however, I often complained to God in prayer, telling Him that I expected some degree of support and encouragement from His own children; instead of which I had nothing but opposition and a weakening of my hands. Indeed, some have kept themselves at a distance from me, and have contradicted me at times, behaving quite insolently. In answer to my petitions the Lord applied these words to my heart, and gave me a strong faith in them, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." (Prov. 18:16) At length I was led to see that I must be weaned from the church as well as from the world; and these words confirmed me in it, "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom." (Mic. 7:5) "The best of them is as a brier; the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge." (ver. 4)

God took an effectual method to convince many of His people of His having called me to the work of the ministry; for it so happened that a certain professor had engaged a minister to come from London, and preach out of doors, at Moulsey, on the Lord's day morning. This was published at our meetings; and, as I had never heard a sermon out of doors, I was determined to go. As he was to preach at six o'clock in the morning, I could hear him without encroaching upon those hours in which our little church met. About three o'clock on the Lord's day morning I arose; but, as soon as I was out of bed

(pleasing myself at the thought of hearing a sermon, and having an opportunity of trying my doctrine by the standard of a London preacher) there came a voice to me with power, which I both heard and felt, saying, "You must preach out of doors today, and you must preach from this text: 'Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find bid to the marriage'." (Matt. 22:9) I was much amazed at this sudden impulse; yet I thought it was from God. If, however, I happened to mention anything of this sort to some people, they would call it a delusion; but, notwithstanding this, God generally showed me afterwards that they themselves had but little, if any, experimental knowledge of God.

I shall now relate every circumstance of this extra-ordinary affair, and leave the unprejudiced to judge whether it was from God or from Satan. I sat down to look out the text, but could not find it. I then got up, and went to a friend about two miles off, who I knew had a little concordance. I called him up, and asked him to look me out such a text, which he accordingly did. I turned it down, put my Bible in my pocket, and went with him to hear the gentleman that was to come from London. When we came to the place, I saw a great many people gathered together, and the table was set for the preacher to stand on; but, behold, he never came! So we waited till seven o'clock, when every one of those who had formerly opposed me, begged me to get up and preach. I could not but admire the divine conduct in this matter, that those who had opposed me (some because my language was coarse, others because they thought they had more understanding in the Word than I had, others because I was but a babe in grace, and they of longer standing) were the very people who now invited me to preach. But the cause of God was at stake, and there was now no answer in the mouth of any of those who had opposed me; therefore they forced that

person up whom they before had tried, by their conduct, to pull down. I complied with their request, and went trembling up to my station. As soon, however, as my heart began to get warm in the cause, all my fears left me. I now delivered my message from the text God gave me, and He was with me in the work. Then it was that some were ready to cry, "Hosanna!" However, they had so battered me about that neither their applause nor their disapprobation had any weight with me. I often thought of those words spoken by Eliphaz to Job, "Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?" (Job 5:1) Turn? turn to none but God; for if the most upright among men is but a brier, and sharper than a thorn hedge; we have no reason to hang our horns, like Abraham's ram, in a bush, lest we fall a sacrifice. "Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils," says the Almighty, "for wherein is he to be accounted of?" But there was a young widow who came to hear me preach that first sermon; and Providence opened her heart, so that she attended to the things spoken by the coalheaver, and heard the gospel constantly afterward. At last she was seized with most violent convictions, being obliged to leave her place, and go into Esher Workhouse, where a doctor was sent for to lay a blister on her head; which is not a very proper remedy to draw out the bane of guilt, when the sting of death has so fatally envenomed the conscience. At times they found her quite delirious, and then she called earnestly on the Lord Jesus Christ. They shook her, abused her for praying, and declared her mad; and finding she had been among the Methodists, it was easily accounted for; therefore they handled her accordingly. But when she got a little better, she sent for me to come and pray by her, which I accordingly did; and then she told me of their cruel usage to her. I spoke to my wife about it; and we borrowed a bed, and took her

home to our house. My dame nursed her body, and I tried to nurse her soul; soon after which she got well in body, and happy in mind. Then she obtained a lodging, worked for her bread, and continued to sit under my ministry for about six years. At last she fell into a deep decline, and had to take to her bed; and for two or three days before her death she was violently tempted and distressed, even beyond measure. After this she came forth from that dark cloud, shining like the rising sun; and continued in these blessed rays of glory till she closed her eyes in death, launching forth into eternity in all the triumph of a gospel conqueror. And here is the end of that mystery. The woman's name was Simmons. One of the men who forced me up to deliver that sermon was Mr. Butler, now one of the pew-openers at Providence Chapel. During her first sickness I promised to pay for her board, and for physic; but, alas! God kept me so poor that I could not, so I sent to a lady to do it for me, and told her my receipt should be her discharge. She readily complied, and paid the whole bill.

(Continued next month)

Carbon Hill, Alabama

Dear Editors,

We are so sorry to be so long overdue in sending in our subscription to the *Signs* for another year, but it is because of serious sickness. I fell and broke my hip last July and have just gotten home from the hospital and found we were so long past due for our subscription. My husband is 82 years old and it just slipped his mind, but we enjoy our *Signs* so much we would be lost without it.

Please pray for us and we hope all of you are well, and the Good Lord will spare you to continue printing and sending out the wonderful paper to all of us who enjoy it so much.

Love in Christ,
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Scott

EXPERIENCE

Copper Hill, Virginia

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I feel so low this morning I will try to relate some of my thoughts concerning the Truth as I hope I have been taught. I hope the Scriptures will be my guide and the Lord will direct my mind.

First, I would like to tell why I believe what I believe. I have had many dreams and visions but if they do not correspond with the Scriptures I don't have anything. I Peter 3:15, 16, says "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ."

I was once the happiest little boy that ever walked the face of this earth. But when I was about 10 years old, in a vision of the night, I heard a trumpet blow and the heavens lit up and I thought the Lord appeared in the East. I did not see Him but I knew that He was there. From that day until now I have walked in fear of the One Who made everything and controlled everything, and the One Who has all things in His hands. I thought the world had come to an end. I knew that I was a sinner and if I died I would go to Hell. In a short while in another dream I saw myself die and I was sent to Hell and a voice spoke and said, "You will not be here long."

I went in that condition 12 or 13 years. I tried to get rid of those things but could not. All down through my teenage years I tried to have a good time but these words would stop me many times. I would say, "O Lord, help me that I might set this load down and rest." When I did wrong I would know it. I would lie over and over. I wanted to tell the truth but could not. I came to the

place that it seemed I could do nothing but lie. My nature wanted more than was mine. I knew that there was no good in nature. I knew as well as Paul that, "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." So I still was in that state of sin and condemnation but I thought I could get rid of it alone. I would go to Old Baptist preaching and they would tell my feelings better than I could. I would shed tears and wouldn't want them to see me. I would be ashamed and would not go back for a while.

My father and mother joined Salem Church in 1927. I shed lots of tears then, but didn't want anyone to know it. I said to myself that I would never join the Old Primitive Baptist Church. I did not have any hope and felt that I was forever lost. I would take my father and mother once in a while. That was in Elder Sam Moran's lifetime. I thought he was above a normal man, but as I grew older I learned he was just a man. The Apostle Paul wrote in I Cor. 4:13, "Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." So I have learned that we are all the same thing. There is no good in any of us. Paul said, "By the Grace of God I am what I am."

Now I would like to tell a little more of my early life. I am the oldest of eleven children; 4 boys and 7 girls, of which 10 are still living. I did not get to go to school much, and until I was 21 years of age I could hardly write my name. I worked for my father until I was 22 years old, for which I have never been sorry. I married Margie Martin, and the Lord blessed us with 2 wonderful sons. They have been so much better than I was. They never gave us any trouble. They are both married and have lovely wives and each has 2 children. I lost my first wife and am now married to Stefana Gearhart. The Lord has blessed me with 2 wonderful wives and they have both treated me better than I could

ever treat them.

I can truly say that the Lord has been good to this old sinner. The Lord has blessed me in many ways. No matter when I thought there was no way He made the way.

I was given a mind to go to Old Baptist meetings. Margie did not want to go, so I would go by myself, or I would take my father and mother. Yet it all was not for me. I was still carrying that load of sin and condemnation. I would read the Bible but it was a sealed book. Then one day I was reading the 8th chapter of Romans, verse 31, where it says, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" I took the Bible in my hand and went to the dining room where my wife was and I told her, "This is what Old Baptist preach and this is what the Bible teaches." I saw that I was in such a condition that I had better get out of the house. As I walked to the door I saw all the things that the Devil had with which to destroy a man. Then as I walked out I saw a Hand that had power over everything that Satan had. As I turned I heard a voice speak within me, "If God be for you who can be against you." I had a feeling I had never had before. I felt that the Lord would be with me in this world, and the world to come. I didn't have any fear. I began to shout so loud that I thought I would wake up the neighborhood. Then the Heavens lit up with the same light that I had seen in the night vision I had 13 years before. I thought that the world had come to an end, and it had for me. I thought, "I must pray", so I went as far as I could go and fell upon the ground and all that I could say was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." When I arose from that place there was a weight lifted off my back. I said then that it would be a wonderful thing to be anything for God.

From that day I have not had the fear

of hell. I feel like I have been delivered from that place. But I yet had no mind to unite with the church. I said that was one thing I would never do. But I was given a mind to read the Bible more and more and it was sweet to me. I thought everybody ought to see and believe like I did. That was all I wanted to talk about and I got into many arguments. I thought I could teach somebody what I saw. But Christ said, "Neither cast ye your pearls before the swine lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you." You know you can throw a handful of pearls at a bunch of hogs and they will come back for something else. Though they are valuable, hogs do not know it. I suffered so much until I felt like I was a bigger fool than they were.

So I had to learn to keep my mouth shut unless I was asked something. I still had no mind to unite with the church until 1952. I went for about 4 months begging the Lord to spare my life one more week and I will ask for a home. I lied over and over. It seemed like someone was following me all day. At night somebody stood by my bed.

I would have thoughts of standing before the people and I would say, "I am not a member and I am not going to join and I know I will not have to stand before the people." So this went on for about 4 months and then on the second Sunday in March, 1953, I asked my wife to go with me to Salem Church. She wanted to go to her mother's and we had several words. I went into the bathroom and I broke down with tears and a feeling came over me to ask for a home with the church. I said, "O Lord, if thou will bless me, I will," and that stayed with me all the way to the church. When they sang the last Hymn Elder Moran did not publish an open door, but I still had a mind to ask for a home with these people, and I was received. I talked a lot but I don't remember much that I said. I remember I did say, "I hope I never cause you any trouble." I left something

there that day that I have never carried since - a desire to "go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for thee and how He has had compassion on thee."

Before I got out of the house I had the thought that I had deceived the church. The Devil said, "They all know you", and I cried all the way home. I did not tell my wife I had joined the church. I was baptized the second Sunday in April, 1953. My wife went with me that day, but most of the other times I went by myself.

I can not tell everything but these are some of the ways the Lord has led me along. As Paul said, "He who delivered will yet deliver." There is no case too big for Him, so today the Lord is all of my salvation, and all of my desire. He is the One who has led me thus far.

Now if the Lord would bless me I would love to talk a little of a calling to the ministry. Though I have never felt like I was a preacher, and I cannot say that I know I have ever preached the Gospel, Proverbs 18:16 says, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." Now the gift makes the room, not the man, but the gift that God has given him. The church will know when the Lord has given them a gift whether it be a preacher or a deacon. I feel like it is a serious thing to put a man into the stand. The church is the judge of a man's gift and if they feel like the Lord has given him a gift they have a perfect right to put him into the stand and no one else. I have heard it said that the Lord had called a man to preach and the church would not let him, and he would go somewhere else; that is to make room for his gift. "They have gone, but I have not sent them." I fear sometimes I have gone without being sent. Brethren, I believe if the Lord has called one He will bless him to preach Jesus once in a while.

I had spoken four times before my wife knew about it, and she was very much upset. She told me, "This thing you call

preaching has to stop", but I had to keep going. Then Elder Moran passed away on Feb. 22, 1961, leaving Laurel Creek without a pastor. I continued to go there although I was just licensed. They wanted to call for my ordination a year before and I begged off. Then Salem Church called for my ordination, and I was ordained the second Saturday in September, 1961. I still wonder if I am sent by the God of Heaven or have I gone without being sent? I still have that burning desire shut up in me to preach the Word, and Jesus Christ is that Word of Life.

Now getting back to my first wife; after I had tried to preach for a year and a half, one night in my sleep I was made to get down on my knees in a muddy place and I prayed to the God of Heaven. I said, "O Lord, if it be Thy will that my wife might be made to believe the things that I believe and to see the things I see," and I prayed so loud that I woke myself up. I laid my hand on my wife and if ever I loved her it was then, but I did not think the answer to that prayer ever could be. Then in a short while we were at Valley View Church and we were singing, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul", and Margie broke down and cried. I turned to Elder Thompson and said, "I saw something here today I did not think I would ever live to see", and from that day on she went with me everywhere I went, when she was able. She looked forward to the meetings and she loved the singing. She would start singing on the way to church. She was given a love for the Lord's people. She knew where the Church was, and she knew who her Saviour was. Her favorite hymn was "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood". Though she did not unite with the church we are not uneasy about her resting place.

Now I would like to say to all of you brethren who have good wives though they do not go with you, "Be good and kind as you can to them. The Lord works wonders." Those of us who have wives

who go with us don't always realize what a blessing it is. I know what it is to have a good wife who doesn't have a mind to go with me.

A few more words and I will close. I would like all of the brethren everywhere to know that I am one who believes the Scriptures say what they mean and mean what they say. The God that I have been made to believe in has the power to make us go when He says "Go", and when He says "Come", we come. I will agree that there is a lot I do not understand. Christ came in the fulness of the Spirit and it is measured out to us. I realize I don't understand but a little here and a little there.

In Bonds of Love,
(Elder) James Agee

Rocky Mount, Va. 24151

Dear Brother Donald Smith,

It was a pleasure to be in your company the first Sunday at Roanoke Church. I hope if it is the Lord's will, you can visit in my home church, Old Republican, sometime in the future.

I desire to write you of some of my experiences; of the great things the Lord has done for me, if it be His will to direct my mind and my thoughts to pen this letter.

I united with the Old Republican Church at the age of 17. I am a firm believer that God is all Sovereign, and He will do His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I believe He deals with the young as well as the old. As a child of 8, I had a desire to read the Bible and to gain comfort from the words written within. I was born with a nerve deafness and as a child I could not understand a lot that was said. But my God has blessed me to hear and to understand His wonderful teachings. I believe even though I am deaf He had a will and a purpose for my afflictions. When I am clothed and in my right mind I view my deafness as a blessing.

Yes, I believe He revealed Himself in His wonderful love and mercy to such a mortal as I, and that I am made to say, "Praise the Lord" along with David. I am still able to hear every sermon He intends me to hear, and I have been blessed to come and ask a home with some of the most wonderful people in all the world. We all may have different experiences and all have been made to know God in many ways. Yes, from far and near we know one another and speak the same language; because I believe we are all taught of the Lord.

In the August meeting when I was 17 years old the church doors were opened and I was fighting as hard as anyone to stay away. My burden got so heavy and my eyes looked up to beg God for mercy and I saw a light shining around about those dear brethren, and Oh, how beautiful it was. I was drawn to that light and felt an inner peace fill my soul. I went before the Church of Chestnut, and asked for a home with them. All the testimony I could give was I could not go away satisfied and I wanted a home with those people.

I am so glad the Lord has fixed it that way. I am confident He will supply all my needs. He has been a very present help in my times of need.

I have had many trials and tribulations in my life since I united with the Church, but I am made to be thankful my God has been so merciful unto me. He has been the Anchor of my hope most sure and steadfast. I believe He that begins a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I believe every good and perfect gift comes down from above.

I have been made reconciled to my lot in life. I am made to realize I can do nothing of myself. Even though I walk alone, I am not alone, for I can look back to the times in my life and say, "Surely God is so rich in love and mercy". I believe He has written His laws in my heart and mind. I am made willing to bear my yoke and my eyes look unto the

hills from which cometh all my help.

As a child growing up in the home of Old Baptist parents I could not understand why they were weeping and rejoicing in the church, or why they all would say they longed to lay their garments by and dwell with Christ at home. But each day I live I am made to understand with the Saints of old what a precious thing it will be to go home and see our Maker face to face, in a beautiful world that no human could ever describe.

I beg God to continue to bless me with His tender mercies that I may run with patience the race that is set before me; that I may be blessed to remain at my brethren's feet and be humble and walk softly while in this present world. I also beg that I may hear the voice call me "Come and inherit the kingdom prepared for you"; that I may see my Maker and be with Him in that beautiful home where tears, sorrows, and afflictions never come. Oh, that I might hear the trumpet sound. Oh what a joy it will be to be caught up and fashioned like His own glorious Body and be happy.

In bonds,
Julia Myers

Baker, Oregon

Dear Elder Smith,

I notice that my subscription to the *Signs* expired in January, 1978, so I am sending you a check to cover two more years.

This old paper has been in my home since I was born, which was 75 years ago, and I don't know how long before that. My mother used to tell me of folding and cutting apart the old paper when she was a girl, and that was close to 100 years ago.

I enjoy reading the paper very much and believe that the writers know "whereof they speak".

In June of 1975, I had a stroke which did many things to both my mind and body. Elder W. A. Winfrey wrote of his

troubles after I wrote to the *Signs* and told of my afflictions, so I know that I am not an unusual case. I have recovered most of the use of my left hand, and leg, and my face has about stabilized with part damage. And my mind is almost getting back to where it was before the stroke hit. The stroke cut me loose from everything that I had ever thought or seen. My faith was removed until I could no longer speak of God and the Scriptures, but I still believe that "God rules the inhabitants of the earth, and the armies of heaven, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him 'what doest Thou'". And I believe that He can heal me instantly, and there will be no scars, or misused muscles, but to the present time, He has not seen fit to do this. So He must know what He is doing, whether I understand it or not.

Use the balance over the subscription price as you see fit.

Give my regards to Elder Woods, and Elder Spangler, who I visited with when I was in Virginia and North Carolina in 1969.

In Hope,
Charles W. Bond

Roxbury, New York

Dear Editors,

I am enclosing a check for \$7.00. Please send the *Signs of the Times* to my address for one year. Use the rest as you like in any help.

The *Signs of the Times* is so much comfort to me and gives me a hope that God does love us lonely ones.

There is no meetings near me, and I do not want to miss a copy of the paper.

Ora A. Sherwood

Loganville, Georgia

Dear Elder Smith,

Enclosed is a check for \$14.00. Please use \$9.00 for a two year subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Use the other \$5.00 for the distribution to those unable

to pay. I'm sure, like me, they look forward to getting each copy!

I am in my 89th year and I hope to keep it coming as long as I can read.

Thank you dear Editors and good writers for "such good news from a far country". May God bless you all.

Unworthy, yet in a Precious Hope,
Mrs. Ela Watson

Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Editors,

The *Signs*, I believe, was started the year my father was born. We had all the bound back numbers in our home. I could not imagine a household without them. The *Signs* was always on the corner of my father's desk, like a dear faithful friend. And now that I am far away from any of the brothers and sisters it is a great comfort to me, too.

I am so different from what I want to be, so far from what a Christian should be, that I almost lose all hope, and then I wonder if I could enjoy reading the experiences of the dear ones so much if I had no part or lot in the matter. And so I go on day after day with this hope that sometimes seems almost gone, yet which I would not exchange for anything in the world.

I am sending \$10.00 to renew my subscription and the rest for someone who cannot pay for it.

I love the dear ones who love the *Signs*.

Your least sister, if one at all,
Mildred Durand Gordy

(Ed. note: Sister Gordy is the daughter of Elder Silas Durand, who was a frequent contributor to the *Signs of the Times*, and the author of several books.)

Highland Home, Alabama

Dear Sirs;

I have been a subscriber for the *Signs of the Times* for a number of years, and wouldn't miss a copy for anything.

Enclosed is a Money Order for \$10.00.

Please renew my subscription for one year. Also pay for the subscription on paper that is passed due. Use the remaining money as you see fit.

I am now entering into my 90th year and enjoy every line of the *Signs of the Times*. I am also a member of this Faith and Order.

Yours in Christ, I hope,
Mrs. Georgia Pollard

Littleton, N.C.

Dear Editors,

I know my subscription is due in April, so I will try to write a few lines. I have been so broken hearted by the loss of my precious companion, Jack L. Smith, I just haven't had the strength to write before now. He wasn't a member of the Primitive Baptist, but there has never been a more faithful one. I am lost without him, but God has been far better to me than I deserve. He has given me strength to keep pressing on.

Everyone is so good to me and I would thank them all if I knew how. I would appreciate it so much if you could find space in your wonderful paper to put these few lines in memory of my companion.

With love to everyone,
A sinner saved by grace, I hope,
Morehead Smith

(See Obituary in Aug. issue)

Meadow Grove, Neb.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

I am enclosing money for my subscription for two years and a little besides to help someone who is unable to pay. The Lord has been so good to me, and I would like to help out a little.

Have thoroughly enjoyed the last issue, as I do all the issues. The paper is not new to me, as my folks took it for years. I have a big box full of old *Signs*. Now the issues are bigger and clearer print. However, the paper hasn't changed. It reads the same, and these are such changing times, otherwise. It is

good that some important things are steadfast and we can count on them.

Just hope you can continue indefinitely. We need you.

In love of the Truth,
Myrtle L. Black

Warwick, New York

Dear Elder Smith,

I see our subscription to the paper expires 2/78, so please find enclosed \$9.00 to extend the subscription for two more years.

This paper has come to four generations of the Vail family.

Love to all for the Truth's sake.

Sincerely,
Albert R. Vail, Sr.

To a true believer, death is but going to Church: from the Church below to the Church above.

Toplady

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Union Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va., a presbytery met April 29, 1978, at 10:30 A.M. for the examination of Brother Jack Willard Cox, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, and at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, to ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Brother Willard Cox. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Roy Agee, J.R. Hollandsworth, Raymond Goad, Lane Carter, Cecil Turner, Rufus Brown, Leonard Brammer, Leonard Key, Larry Hollandsworth, Hale Terry, Donald E. Smith, O.K. Tench, Noel Conner, and William Holland.

Deacons present were: Nelson Reed, H. Clay Brown, A.L. Hudson, Brammer Nichols, W. R. Bernard, and L. W. Nichols.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as Moderator and Elder Donald E. Smith as Clerk. Elder Cecil

Turner and Elder Raymond Goad were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Elder Larry Hollandsworth, having been duly appointed by Union Primitive Baptist church in conference March 25, 1978, spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Jack Willard Cox to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Cecil Turner and Elder Raymond Goad using scripture reference I Peter, 5th Chapter.

The presbytery, being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder O.K. Tench. Elder Roy Agee and Elder J. R. Hollandsworth delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference, II Tim. 4:1-4.

The Moderator asked Elder Larry Hollandsworth if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Elder Jack Willard Cox and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained minister was delivered back to the church as an ordained Elder of the Old School, Primitive Baptist at Union Church, Floyd County, Va.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Leonard J. Brammer.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

SEVEN MILE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, at Liberty Meeting House in Harnett County, N.C. The meeting house is located 3 miles north of Dunn, N.C., at the junction of State Roads #1822 and 1705. The meeting is the third Sunday, Friday and Saturday before, in September, 1978. (September 15, 16, 17) Services are to begin at 11:00 A.M. Friday, 9:30 A.M. Saturday, and 10:00 A.M. Sunday.

We invite the Elders, brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

Black River Church is the host church.

Elder W. D. Godwin, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE
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| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Miss Frances Wrinn, Canada | \$6.00 |
| Dean G. Connell, Tx..... | 1.00 |
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| Joe Kee, Texas..... | 7.00 |
| Mrs. Cecil R. Massey, N.C. | 6.00 |

SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with County Line Church, the first Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before, which is September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.

County Line Church is located in Floyd County, Virginia, on State Route 635, just south of the Blueridge Parkway.

We invite all our brothers, sisters, and friends to meet with us then.

Elder Amos Hash

ADDRESS CHANGE

Laurence and Ethel Holloway
Former Address: 803 West Main Street
Fruitland, Md. 21826
Present Address: Box 12A, Route 1
Parsonsburg, Md. 21849

EDITORIAL

JOHN 1:14, 16

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

I do hope that I have been called and qualified and sent to preach the gospel of the grace of God. I try in my weak and imperfect manner to maintain and uphold the doctrine of God’s sovereign grace in the salvation of sinners. Believing, as I hope to do, that the written testimony is in harmony and in consistency with each of the Testaments and with each other in such a perfect manner that no discord nor contradictory statements can be found therein. Therefore it would not make any difference what portion of Holy Writ was used to teach this glorious doctrine. But since there are gods many, and lords many, each of whom is loudly proclaiming that they have the truth, it behooves me and you to seek, as did the Preacher, acceptable words. (Eccl. 12:10)

Preaching the gospel is preaching or bringing good news or good tidings. However, we must remember that it is far from good news to the man or woman who is unsaved. It is the most frightening thing ever heard to them who have not been saved. To them that perish (not that will perish, but that are perishing) it is a stumbling block, and it is foolishness. (I Cor. 1:23) Preach a falsehood and it is gulped down as the truth in Christ Jesus.

Preaching and writing the gospel is the way that the sheep are fed. The commandment to His servants and His ministers is, “Feed my sheep”. The determination of each called minister of God is that all reprobate or goat food be removed from them before they start on a gospel journey. Each of them is restricted as to where they go and to whom they deliver the message with which they are impressed. I feel sure that no God-called minister has ever gone into this warfare save he that is called and

anointed, as was Aaron. Too, I feel sure that God has not called any to go except those that have been sworn into service, and that each and every one of them have been restricted as to whom they will go. They to whom they are sent are now scattered throughout the land of the kingdom of heaven, but the sent have nothing to do with any that they come in contact with save the people of God, the kindred of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The territory is restricted, and the message is restrictive. There is only one message in every sermon delivered. This does not vary in clime or in earthly nationality. It is a constant theme. It consists entirely of good news. There is no inducement or side effects for the citizenship of the world. The message belongs exclusively to the heirs of promise. It is the most beautiful expounding of any theme that has ever been heard on these timely shores. The commission (let us change that to commandment) is to "feed My sheep". It does not disturb me when I feel an unction to go at His command into the by-ways and the hedges to look for those because I have an assurance that someone will meet me with a pitcher of water. I feel that I will find some of my Master's family. If I am thus called and sent (remember that the call qualifies) I will be satisfied and contented that I am in a sense the feed basket, and that in another sense I am the sower or the feeder (for both sowers and feeders are feeders and sowers). (Isa. 55:10, 11)

After the absolute lesson (which is good, sure, certain) that Peter received from the Lord's hand, he then preached the preaching or he completely fed the sheep as he was bid. It was not always so with the apostle. At times he was like I am; inclined to be unstable. Before the principles of the gospel had been instilled in him, he did not have any stability; he did not have any constancy of purpose; he did not have any steadfastness about him except as he was made steadfast from time to time from his falling.

There is no preaching of smooth things to be tolerated, (Isa. 30:10) and

yet I feel a degree of sympathy for poor old Peter. He did not do anything that I would not have done, but for the grace of God, and I am such a poor weakling that he did not do anything that I would not still do, if I were not kept from it by the restraining (or, as I prefer, the keeping) grace of God. Peter's conception of his ability is not any different than conditionalism is, wherever we meet it, in his day, or in this day. Peter is as full of promise to do as we all are today, and his failure to do is just like our failure today. The fulness of Christ was essential to Peter's obedience, and His fulness is as essential to us today.

Obedience to the myriad listings of commandments in the Bible is not found among us in any one man or woman. Obedience to the commands of Christ, when brought to us, and presented to us, and in us by the Holy Ghost, is instantaneous - immediately - at once. When the apostle was called by the grace of God to follow Christ, he found Him a full, sufficient, complete Saviour. (Gal. 1:16) Luke declared emphatically, clearly, and very much to the point, that all we, all the brethren, all the apostles, all the children of God, all the household of faith, have received of that fulness. This fulness that is in Christ (or has this fulness in Him become depleted?) is received by us all, (all of us for whom He came as our fulness) and it causes us to always triumph in Christ. This is all the salvation that any poor sinner will ever need in time or eternity. Paul said, "Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ (in fulness,) and maketh manifest the saviour of his knowledge by us in every place....." Oh, that I might be girded and girdled with the armour of faith, the fulness of armour, to the end that I always triumph.

What is the description of a man? Is he stable? Is he trustworthy? Is he full of trustworthiness? Is he full of grace and truth? No, none of these characteristics are to be found in him. This I know for

myself, that is, in my flesh, I do not have any of it about me. I am entirely minus of that which Christ came full of - to wit, truth and grace. I am full in Adam, alright. If I am to ever be saved, it must be by this Man that came full of that which saves - truth and grace. My soul is made glad that He was full of it -- full of that which I must have to be made ready for the meeting at the wedding supper with the attendants. My case is made so much clearer when I view it solved by Him Who came full of both truth and grace, and my poor heart is made to leap forward with joy that not only I, but all of the recipients of mercy have received of that fulness.

“Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.....” (Isa. 1:4, 6) No one of this family has a room for the fulness of Christ. They are at all times at home in the fulness of their own body. They know not the fulness of Christ; they need not His fulness; nor will they ever change their mind about Him or ever be able to empty themselves of their fulness so as to make room for His fulness in them.

In our relationship with the earth, that is, with our father, Adam, we do not have any knowledge of God. We know the flesh, but only as flesh. Definitely, we do not know it apart from God. We do not know flesh and Spirit. In every phase of life, natural or spiritual, we will not hurt the life that we are in. No man ever hated his own flesh, but he does nourish it (feeds it, pampers it, goes all out to serve it, and he does it as the Lord feeds His body), and he does not remove some of the fulness of his flesh to make room for a stranger, an usurper, a trespasser. The flesh, with its fulness, will never cooperate with the Spirit to

make room for the fulness of another.

If we ever receive of the fulness of Christ it will be when God, as our Lawgiver, gets hold of us and pitches us headlong down Sinai, beginning the work of emptying us, and preparing us for the day when we shall be brought before Him lacking in what He is full of. There is not to be a mixing of new and old in the Kingdom of Heaven. Retaining something of the flesh can not be. Serving under both the fulness of the fat eyes of law worshippers, and the emptiness of the empty vessels of those destitute of anything acceptable in serving God in the newness of letter just can not be. Such a combination will stand no longer than did the kingdoms that fell in Daniel's time.

What a sad day is coming to those that are full and that are rich. (Luke 6:24, 25) What a delusion they are resting in, and what a sad hour when their fulness is discovered to them as being a belly full of wind. Hunger and poverty is going to be felt. This condition never gets better, but rather it becomes more aggravated until our soul and heart fails within us. Sometimes some of my listeners tell me that I deal in fantasies in my preaching. They have a right to their feelings, and I accord them that right, but at the same time I remember that the day will come when it will be the gospel truth to them, for a lean time will be sure to come.

It is a divine arrangement for these full souls to be well nourished for this long while. It does not give us pain to be told that we preach fantasies, for those who are to be emptied will be emptied of all of the self-righteousness with which they have been filled. When it begins they will wonder what is happening to them. They will think that they are losing their minds. They will walk up and down the earth in solitude, and yet, at times, they will mourn like the dove, and at other times they will chatter like a crane. Be glad and rejoice O child; let thy mourning cease, for the Lord is emptying you of what you did not

believe that you had - - putrefying sores, and pollutions. He is getting you ready for the being filled with truth and grace.

The apostle determined not to know anything save Christ and Him crucified. Why be so determined about that seeing that the fulness of Christ saves us into the bringing of us into the kingdom. Some will say these Corinthians were already saved. That is, they were already inside the kingdom's door, and staying in the kingdom, and our welfare in the kingdom is to be produced by us and in us. In short, the fulness of Christ is instrumental in getting us in, but we are our own keeper as to how close to the precepts and examples we are, as to how much we love the brethren, as to how much we get out of being in the kingdom, and even as to how tender our relationship is with the brethren and even with Christ.

That is one of the prettiest pictures the fulness of man has ever etched on the heartwalls of a sinner, but it does not bear the fulness of Christ. It is in keeping with the fulness of the flesh, but not of the Spirit. These two fulnesses do not mix. The fulness of Christ has never had the co-operation of the residue of the fulness of man in the accomplishing of the things of the Spirit. God does not in His fulness, as Jesus Christ in us, work in the will of God, and then the fulness of man work it out. That is the most uncommon joint salvation that I ever have heard of or about. God works it in us, and we work it out. As we muse upon it, it becomes more strange, because God's part is sure, and our part is never sure. How much better is the gospel. Christ is our salvation. He is everything that we need. He is our fulness. He came to save us and to fill us with His fulness. Our relationship with Him is in fulness. He is full of truth and grace, morning by morning, teaching us by His tongue, which is full of strength and counsel, and is learned for our sake. That which He came full of is, like the love of God, shed or sent abroad into us overflow-

ing, running over, well shaken, well pressed down, and good measure. We are thus enabled to run and not be weary, to mount up as on eagle's wings. (See Isa. 50:4; Mat. 6:38)

No fuller dispensation has ever been than is our gospel dispensation. No sweeter message has ever been uttered than the message of this grace or gospel age. Christ has been our Pilot all of the way. He has first gone before, and has led us forth more than conquerors over all opposition. He comes our Head and our Saviour, and He is full of that which we stand begging for, to wit, truth and grace, and each minister and hearer in this economy is filled with the same kind of fulness as is their Benefactor.

This is their governor; this is the only overseer in this whole dispensation. All are under the directing love of Him Who is full of these important factors and attributes. They are all busy according to the merits in the measure of His fulness as given to them. One of the early disciples in this glorious dispensation gave simple directions for our welfare while we live in this reign of grace. It is good; it comes from divine wisdom. It is suitable for one and all. It saves them all. They do not comply with it in order to be saved, but salvation is in the deed, in the work. It has never been improved on; and it never will be.

What it is? It is work. It reads, "Wherefore, as you are used to obedience, continue it whether any apostles are around or not. Work out your salvation." If this eminent apostle had told them in his early ministry to work for your salvation after He had paid our indebtedness, we would have been sunk, lost, and ruined. But He won for us the salvation, gave it to us to work out, we who were filled with truth and grace, and then accompanied us in the accomplishment of the working it out, even working in us the will (the desire) and to will. I desire that you notice me, yea, notice what the writer said. God works in you to will (working in you to

will that which you have not previously willed). But this fulness in Christ does not stop by working in them to will, but by working in them to do.

He before whom one and all is to bow the knee, and before whom one and all is to confess with the tongue, will surely be found walking in the fulness of Christ when the will is wrought within, and the to do is likewise wrought. He who is partly full may haphazardly work within the desire and the desire to do, but He who is full of the riches of God without measure will effectually bring about the willingness and the doing of that which has been determined for them to do by the One who declared the end from the beginning.

May God bless us all to drink deeply from the exhaustible fountain that is ever full of life-giving water.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

Providence, Ky.

Dear Sirs,

I noticed I am past due on my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Enclosed is a check for \$10.00 for two years, and use the dollar as you wish. We enjoy the *Signs* very much.

We are a Primitive Baptist family and love the doctrine. We feel there is no other that satisfies. Thank the Lord for the faith He has given us.

My father, Wright Clayton, was a Primitive Baptist preacher until his death in 1954.

Your brother in faith,
Wallace Clayton

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Massey, Va., Jan. 28, 1902

Dear Brethren Editors: — Something has seemed to prompt me to pen 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 every since. I experienced a hope in God through his abounding grace, in August, 1851; was united in marriage with my present companion, January 21st, 1852; was received, and baptized by Elder Thomas Waters, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Messongo, Accomac Co., Va., March, 1852. So you see that I have very few more mile post 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 lead along until I was prevailed upon to talk a little in the meetings, and I think some time 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 Snowhill, 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, traveling 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 of the five churches at present but eighteen persons. During the thirty-five years there has not been an "ism or 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 angle 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 will 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 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," "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 burden, 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. I 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 continue 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 Saviour. Farewell.

T. M. Poulson

OBITUARIES

BROTHER ASA WELLS

Our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom called home on March 23, 1978, our

brother and Deacon of Valley View Church, Asa E. Wells, of Riner, Virginia. He is survived by his wife, Beulah Altizer Wells; one daughter, Naomi Agee; two grandchildren, Angela and Caroline Agee; and two sisters, Anna Wade, and Ruth Slusher, of Riner, Virginia.

On June 3, 1933 he was married to the former Beulah Altizer. He and his daughter joined the church in August, 1960, and were baptized. The Church, seeing a gift of deacon in him, set him apart to that office at Valley View in May, 1967. He loved and served his church, never missing a service until he was too ill to attend.

He loved the beautiful old hymn, "Amazing Grace", which our Pastor, Elder Raymond Goad, together with sisters and brothers, sang so comforting to him shortly before he passed away, and he said, "Thy will be done". He will be greatly missed by his family and church.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor along with Elder Roy Agee at Devilbiss Funeral Home, Radford, Va., with interment in Rose Lawn Gardens of Blacksburg.

Written by his daughter,
Naomi Wells Agee

MAE JARMAN QUINN

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take from us a precious Mother in Israel, Sister Mae Jarman Quinn. She was born September 21, 1905 and entered into that peaceful rest on January 4, 1978. She was married to the late Brother Ralph Quinn, and is survived by seven children - three sons, and four daughters; 14 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

Sister Quinn united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on June 12, 1947. She was one on the most faithful in attendance and always there to help in any way that was needed. Her love for her family, friends, church, and her blessed Lord was made known in the life she lived. We feel that our loss is Sister Quinn's eternal gain. So may we comfort one another with the thought that she has gone from the sorrows of this life, to rest with our blessed Saviour, forevermore.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder Curtis R. Rains, and Elder D. B. Stokes, at Sand Hill Primitive Baptist

Church. She was laid beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in the church cemetery, there to await the second coming of her Lord.

Written by order of conference by:

Brantley Kennedy, Clerk
Lois H. Kennedy

BROTHER JAMES SILAS HURLOCKER

On September 25, 1977, Brother James Silas Hurlocker passed from this life at the age of 62 years. He died on the Sunday of communion services at his home church.

Brother Hurlocker expressed a hope in Christ and was baptized into the fellowship of Gilliams Church the fourth Sunday in June, 1970. He loved the church and his love was manifested in many ways. He supported it through his regular attendance, helping maintain the building and grounds, and assisting with the necessary expenses. We will remember him for his meek, humble manner and his love for the brethren.

Brother Hurlocker is survived by his wife, Mrs. Annie Lee Garrett Hurlocker; daughters, Mrs. Edward L. Taylor and Miss Kay Hurlocker of Burlington; sister, Mrs. Charlie Pickard of Burlington; brother, W.S. Hurlocker of High Point; nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted in Thompson Mortuary by Elder Wallis Smith and Mr. Clarence Vaughn. His body was laid to rest in the Pine Hill Cemetery to await the glorious morning of the resurrection.

Written by Cleo Robertson by order of the church in conference on February 25, 1978.

Read and approved in conference on May 27, 1978.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Cleo D. Robertson, Clerk

FANNIE M. SAWYER

March 12, 1887 - January 21, 1978

The Apostle Paul stated that "whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord", yet those that are blessed with that divine hope are willing to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. This seemed to be Sister Fannie's convictions.

She joined North Creek Church the 3rd Saturday in September, 1915 and was

baptized the following day. The writer has known her all his life and not only was she a faithful church member and mother, but a very good neighbor. Her love for the brethren was an inspiration to all of us.

Her husband, Brother Fred T. Sawyer, preceded her in death in 1962. Seven children survive: three sons, Alfred of Greenville, N.C.; Thad and T.R. of Belhaven; four daughters, Mrs. Edrie Shaw, Mrs. Edward Russ and Mrs. David Smith all of Belhaven and Mrs. Freddie Leftwich of Roanoke, Virginia.

Sister Fannie was a member of North Creek Church for more than 62 years and when she missed a meeting, it was always unavoidable.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, and she was laid to rest in the Church cemetery beside her husband under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of her Lord and Master to claim the jewels of His mercy - there to ever be with the Lord.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor
Reeves Smith, Committee

CARLTON W. MARSLENDER

Brother Carlton W. Marslender, 68, died March 23, 1978. He was born February 17, 1910, the son of Charlie J. Marslender and Mary C. Marslender Smith.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Hallie T. Marslender; sons, William L. of Portsmouth, Va., Melvin of Belhaven, and Carroll of Washington, N.C.; daughters, Mrs. Viola Roscoe of Washington, Mrs. Ella Nixon of Fairfield, and Mrs. Helen King of Dunkirk, Md.; brothers, Earna Marslender, Cecil O. Smith and Fred W. Smith, Jr., of Belhaven, Forrest L. Smith of Biloxi, Miss.; sisters, Mrs. Dallas Paul, Mrs. Sherwood Sawyer and Mrs. Lee J. Bond of Belhaven and Mrs. Harold L. Carter of Norfolk, Va. 11 grand children.

Brother Marslender joined North Creek Primitive Baptist church, Rt. 2, Belhaven, N.C. in April 1967. He was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine of salvation by grace and manifested his love for the church by his faithful attendance and concern for its welfare. For many years he was church treasurer.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor,

Elder J. T. Prescott. His body was laid to rest in Pamlico Memorial Gardens, Washington, N.C., to await the coming of our Lord and Savior.

The church, Friends and family will greatly miss this dear brother, husband and father.

Written by request of the church.

Alton F. Rowe

ADA JENKINS

We at New Bay Primitive Baptist Church, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, as it has pleased Him to remove from our midst, Sister Ada Jenkins.

Sister Jenkins was born January 14, 1896 and departed this life June 19, 1977, making her stay here on earth 81 years and five months.

Sister Jenkins was married to David Jenkins on January 23, 1915. They made their home in the South West Community where she lived until her death. This union was blessed with ten children. Surviving her death are four sons and five daughters, 33 Grandchildren, 34 Great Grandchildren, and two Great Great Grandchildren.

She united with New Bay Church August 27, 1972. Though she was not blessed to ask for a home with the church until her late years in life; she said she had always loved the church and her walk in life was a manifestation of her love for the church and it seemed for everyone she knew. In spite of her serious heart condition for many years she was always faithful to attend church and visit the sick. She always seemed to receive a blessing in church as long as she could hear the name of Jesus preached. Her source of strength surely had to come from Him as she was blessed to go when many of us would have given up had we been in her condition of life. She was indeed a lovely sister and she was loved by many.

May it please our Heavenly Father, to bless all those who mourn the loss of this dear one, to feel their loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral Services were conducted in Johnson Funeral Home Chapel in Jacksonville by Elder D. B. Stokes and Mr. Wessel Brown. Her body was laid to rest in Onslow Memorial Park, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the promise of the

coming of our Lord, to take His Jewels home.

Written by order of conference at New Bay Church, held March 4, 1978.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Brother Norman Jenkins, Clerk

SISTER

LIZZIE JEFFERSON WOOTEN LEWIS

By request of Autry Creek Primitive Baptist Church I have been asked to write the memorial of our dear Sister Lizzie Lewis. She was a devoted member, mother, and friend. I can never fully express the wonderful person she was, nor how much she will be missed by each of us. She shared her flowers from her garden and yard, which brought cheer to our church and many sick bedside patients. In her life time she was loved by all who knew her. But our Heavenly Father gives us all our blessings and takes them away according to His will. Let us bless His Holy Name daily.

Sister Lizzie was the daughter of the late Robert Jefferson and Caroline Owens Jefferson. She was born October 2, 1893, and died November 13, 1977, making her stay here on earth 84 years, 1 month, and 11 days.

She was married in September, 1912 to Joseph Samuel Wooten by Elder A. M. Crisp. To their union was born 4 daughters and one son; Mrs. Ruby Lee Wooten, Harrell, Mrs. Ellen Wooten Owens, Hazel Wooten Bolton, Edna Wooten Swife and Joseph Samuel Wooten, Jr., better known as "Bill". Brother Samuel died in April 1924. They only had twelve years together.

Sister Lizzie united with Autry Creek Church the first Sunday in July 1924, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder A.M. Crisp.

Later she married Kitchen Lewis of the Crisp area. They were blessed with three sons, Jefferson Clark Lewis, known as "J.C.", who lost his life in a hunting accident as a young man. Then the blessed event of twins - Billy and Bobby Lewis. She leaves 8 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren as survivors. She loved her in-laws and often rendered praise of her wonderful family which she loved so much. How good each were to her, especially Ellen, who was with her 24 hours a day when she needed her most.

Funeral services were held November 15, 1977, at Autry Creek Church by her Pastor,

Elder Joseph Sawyer. She was laid to rest in the Wooten Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers. May God bless her family and all her loved ones near and dear to her by love is my sincere prayer.

A Sister who loved her,
Leona W. Manning
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Joe B. Coker, Clerk

GRACE MORAN SOWERS

It is, indeed with a sad heart I attempt to write a memoir of a dear Sister in Christ in hope. Grace Ola Moran was born November 8, 1901, to the late Samuel Lee and the late Lillie Poage Moran. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call her from our midst December 1, 1977. She had been in declining health for some time, having been afflicted of arteriosclerotic and angina pectoris heart disease approximately five years prior to her death. According to medical authority the immediate cause of death was coronary occlusion. She bore her suffering patiently, and made the remark many times to the writer, "It is alright". She had many illnesses of different nature down through the years prior to the coronary trouble.

Sister Grace had deep religious convictions, and by the grace and mercy of God was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace and the sovereignty and immutability of an all wise and gracious God.

She was united in marriage to V. T. Sowers on February 29, 1920 with Elder H. V. Cole officiating. To this union three sons and one daughter were born.

Surviving are her devoted husband; sons, Marvin, Arnold, and Norman, Copper Hill, Va.; daughter, Mrs. Charles (Lucille) Coates, Bumpass, Va.; 14 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Her mother died when she was about 3 years of age. Her father married the late Ethel Clower two years later. I have heard her say many times, "Had my Mother lived I could not have loved her better than my Stepmother." No doubt many of you readers will recall having met her, in as much as she attended many churches and Associations with her parents and her husband down through the years. She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother; ever ready to

make sacrifices for the comfort of her family.

Words are inadequate to express how her husband, children, and their companions contributed to her comfort in every way they could during her illness. She could say, "He has blessed me with those good gifts, such as a kind and loving husband and family, also faith, hope, and love which can come only from above. She was a dedicated member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Copper Hill, Va., for many years. She attended church regularly when her health permitted. She, to express herself, could witness with the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:10, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

She requested a hymn be sung at her funeral that was sung at her father's funeral, and was among his favorite hymns:

"Death is no more a frightful foe,
Since I with Christ shall reign,
With joy I leave this world of woe,
For me to die is gain." etc.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Roy Agee, and Elder Lane Carter, at Wood Funeral Home. Her body was laid to rest in Salem Church Cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the second coming of our Lord.

She will be greatly missed by her family, church, and many friends. However we grieve not for her as for one who has no hope. He is our Hope, and our All in All.

Duet. 33:27 says, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." O what a blessed people are God's people!

May God's richest blessings rest upon the family, and all who mourn and may He enable them to say, "Gracious Father, Thy will be done."

Submitted by request of Brother Sowers, by one who loved her dearly.

Gaye A. Thompson

TUCKER Z. MILLS EVA EDWARDS MILLS

This obituary is written in memory of my precious Mother and Daddy, Eva Edwards Mills, and Tucker Z. Mills.

Eva Mills was born in Pitt County, on April 19, 1904, and died Jan. 16, 1978. She was the youngest daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Bryant Edwards of Pitt County.

Tucker Z. Mills was born in Beaufort

County, and was the oldest son of Mr. & Mrs. Henry Robert Mills. He was born August 23, 1897, and died Jan. 14, 1978.

He moved to Pitt County where he met Eva Edwards, whom he married March 14, 1920. To this union was born four children, Mr. Howard Mills, Mrs. Claude Forros, Mrs. J. H. Gurkins, all of Greenville, N.C., and Mr. Norman Mills, of New Bern, N.C. Tucker was survived by three half-sisters, Mrs. Rebecca Mills, of Greenville, Mrs. Nell Hall of Chicago, Ill., Mrs. Bernice Bowling of Florence, S.C., and Mrs. Lottie Hardie of Greenville, N.C. was his whole sister.

Surviving Eva were two brothers, Joe S. Edwards, of Washington, N.C., and Bruce G. Edwards of New Bern, N.C.; one sister, Mrs. Emma Harris of Greenville, N.C. Surviving them both were 14 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren.

They moved to Craven County in 1948 and while living there they united with the Goldsboro Primitive Church. They were baptized by their pastor, Gerald Pate. Later they moved back to Pitt County in 1971, and came to Red Banks Church by profession of faith on September 11, 1971.

They were both believers in salvation by the grace of God, and many times I have heard them quote the scripture written by Paul to the Ephesians in Chapter 2, Verse 8 and 9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." They were both, I believe, children of God, and were loved by all who knew them. They suffered many trials and tribulations during this life on earth and seemed ready to go to rest. They were called home one day apart. Spiritually it was beautiful! Mama had been critically ill for two and a half months. Daddy was in failing health and did not want to live without her, so God called him first.

The funeral was preached at Wilkerson's Funeral Home, Greenville, N.C., by their pastor, Elder Joseph Sawyer, assisted by Pastor Led Reynolds. There was a host of friends and relatives attending. They were buried in Pinewood Memorial Park on January 18, 1978, side by side, with a beautiful array of flowers.

Written by request of the Church by their daughter who loved them dearly,
Jean M. Gurkins

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“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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BANK OF FAITH

(Continued from September)

I will now give my reader an account of another providence. A person came from Richmond to hear me preach at Ditton; and, when he returned, informed several persons he had approved of my ministry. They accordingly sent me an invitation to come over to Richmond and help them, but I refused to go. However, they sent for me a second time, when I again refused. At last they went to the shoemaker I then worked for, who persuaded me to go; but not to preach in the chapel, but in a house that was licensed. I went very reluctantly indeed; but, when I came there, I found the Lord's presence sweetly with me; and, at their request, I went again on the Tuesday following. Soon after, I found that I had done wrong in going there, though God had been powerfully with me; for it came to pass that tidings had been carried to London, and had reached the ears of two professing gentlemen, who were the managers of Richmond Chapel. Whereupon they came down to Richmond to make inquisition, whether any coal heaver had ever presumed to preach the gospel to the poor souls at that place. Upon enquiry, the thing was found to be certain, and the tidings were true; so the man and woman, at whose house I had preached, received a sharp reprimand, and were threatened also with the penal sum of fifty pounds, for letting me preach in their house, because I was not at that time properly licensed.

Soon after this a day was appointed for preaching and prayer at Richmond

Chapel, and a dinner ordered at an inn for all the congregation that chose to dine there, and pay for it. Two ministers were appointed to preach on that occasion, after the commandments of men, and not after Christ. An old gentleman took his text out of the Acts, and preached from these words, "And when Barnabas saw the grace of God he was glad," etc. Surely there was nothing in the text against my preaching at Richmond, for I was as glad to see the grace of God as even Barnabas was. But he turned his text into a nose-of-wax, in order to make it fit my face; and told the people they might readily suppose that Barnabas had his credentials, or credential letters, from the elders that were at Jerusalem; and so, out of that supposition, he spun a cat-o'-nine-tails to lash me with, a man whom he had never seen. But where I was to go for credentials, I knew not. Had he required credentials from God, I could have produced them. Had I been there, I think I should have asked him whether that sermon had been from heaven or of men. However, at the long run, it appeared to be of men, because it came to nought. These things wonderfully distressed and puzzled me; first, because the people sent three times after before I would go at all; and secondly, the presence and power of God seemed so visible to my comfort, and the comfort of those that heard me; and yet I was puzzled, that these great men, who were called Christians, should oppose me so much. The people, however, determined to hear me; and I generally found God with me in the work, notwithstanding which I always went reluctantly. In this matter I set off to an arm of flesh for counsel; though the presence of God was counsel sufficient, had I been wise enough to have rested on it. However, I was not as yet weaned from an arm of flesh; therefore I went to ask counsel at Abel, and so hoped to end the matter.

The counsel I received from the good man I consulted (after I had related the

whole circumstance to him) was, that I should stay away from preaching there, as it gave offence to some great men. I took his advice, and came home much eased in my mind, and glad that I could so get my neck out of the yoke. But when the Tuesday following arrived, being the day on which I was appointed to preach at Richmond, I found the broken reed on which my foolish soul had rested began to give way, and I sunk again into all my distresses. Then it came into my mind how that God had comforted me in the work. And if the supporting arm and comforting presence of God are not a sufficient testimony of His approbation, we are not likely to get one from man. I still doubted, however, whether I should not offend God by trusting to this human counsel; thinking, if He had called me to preach at Richmond, and I should stay away when the little flock expected me, I should much offend the righteous Majesty of heaven, and be disobedient to the heavenly call. If it was wrong for me to go, I could appeal to God that I had no desire for it. As to selfish views, I had none; for one night they collected a parcel of money for me (knowing how poor I was, and how much I had suffered in the work), which they thrust into my pocket by force; but I positively refused it, and insisted on having no more than eighteen-pence for my trouble in going from Ditton to Richmond to preach. It now came suddenly into my mind to lay this matter before my blessed Lord and Master, who never disappointed nor deceived me in His counsel. I therefore left my cobbling, went into my chamber, and prayed in the following manner: "O God, my Saviour, and dear Redeemer, Thou knowest I have no desire to go and preach at Richmond; but the people came after me several times. If Thou hast anything to do there by me, incline my heart to go, let who will oppose it; but, if not, let not Thy servant presume, as my heart has no desire to go there. And, as I would not offend Thy Majesty,

either by going or staying, I beseech Thee to convince me by the first scripture that occurs to my mind. O Lord, reveal Thy mind and will to me in this particular, and let me not offend Thee, as I am willing to obey Thy voice, if Thou art pleased to make it known to me. Amen."

As soon as I arose from my knees, these words came with power to my mind, "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not." This gave me some comfort. But, when I sat down to my cobbling again, I began to reason thus: " 'Be not weary in well doing;' true: but if it is displeasing to God for me to go to Richmond, then it would be well doing for me to stay at home; and, if it be displeasing to God for me to stay at home, then it would be well doing for me to go and preach at Richmond." So, like Gideon, I tried the fleece once more, and said to myself that, if God should give me a text and sermon on it, I should think it was from Him, and that I had a just right to carry God's message. I had no sooner made this a criterion, than these words came with power and understanding, "And His brightness was as the light; He had horns coming out of His hand: and there was the hiding of His power." (Hab. 3:3, 4) The 2nd and 3rd verses of the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy I found were a key to this text. I therefore arose and went, being determined to deliver that message there at that time only, and then to inform that I would come no more. But before I began to preach, I earnestly begged of God to comfort the people greatly, if He approved of my preaching to them; and, if not, that He would send them dejected, and shut me up till I had little or nothing to say to them. On that night God blessed us wonderfully; and when I had done, I hesitated whether I should inform them of my intention of not coming again, as it so offended the managers. But these words came to my mind, "And He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles

exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve." (Luke 22:25, 26) Having received these words, I announced myself to preach there again the next Tuesday; being fully convinced that no proprietor of a building had any warrant from God to keep a gospel message from the ears and hearts of God's children, unless they could prove the messenger either erroneous or wicked; which they could not, for they had never either seen or heard me.

After I had preached there a few times, it came to pass one evening, when I had finished my sermon, that a person informed me that a woman (who was lately taken very ill, and was apparently near death), desired to see me. I accordingly went; and when I came to her bedside, asked her if she had sent for me. She replied "Yes." I asked her what she had sent for me to do. She said to pray by her. I asked her what I was to pray for. That she might be raised up again? She replied, "No; pray God to give resignation to His will, and that He may not depart from me." I asked her if she was sure the Lord was with her. She said, "Yes." I asked her how she came by the knowledge of God's comfortable presence. She told me she was a native of Scotland, where she had often heard people speak of their comforts and peace, and used to envy them for it, but at other times thought they spoke nonsense; still she found a secret want of something, which she had long sought; and she told me she had never found that power until I preached the sermon from the text in Habakkuk, "He had horns coming out of His hand, and there was the hiding of His power." "Under that discourse," said she, "the Spirit of Power came to me. My husband is a stonemason, and has gone out to Ireland to be the foreman of a very large building there, and I am, in time, to go

after him, if God spares my life; but, as my good man has meanwhile left me, the Almighty has come in his room."

She now gave me a very sweet account of the operations of the Holy Ghost, and of the precious liberty which He proclaimed by the revelation and application of Christ crucified to her understanding, mind, and conscience. These tidings made my bowels yearn, as I called to remembrance the soul travail I had been exercised with on the day that the text was brought to my mind, and the blessed mystery that was opened to me in it; as also God's goodness in accompanying it with such power to her soul, and now to lay her on a sick bed, that she might send for me to inform me that I had not preached nor travailed in vain. O, the conversion of such souls is greater riches to me than all the treasures of Egypt! God in mercy soon after raised her up again, and she attended my ministry for about two years, appearing a most amiable Christian. She always sat with her head down, and heard me with all the attention imaginable; and, when she had got her portion, like Hannah, she would set off without either looking or speaking to anybody, as if she suspected every one that spoke to her to be a robber of her conscience. Indeed she was no bastard; she was my own daughter; she loved a private religion, that lay between Christ Crucified and her own conscience; and I believe she kept her day-book very strictly. Her name is Stuart. I dearly loved her soul in the bowels of Christ, as I had begotten her, and had sorely travailed for her.

She has now been in Baron's Court in Ireland for several years, a place where no gospel is preached; yet she corresponds with her pious friends at Richmond; still stands fast in the faith of Christ; and is shortly expected in England. May God land her and her spouse safe on the coast of our Israel, and at last on the shore of "that land which is very far off."

The conversion of this woman seemed to me such a testimony from God, that it confirmed me more in my call to preach at Richmond than the testimony of all the divines in Britain would have done; for, "if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." I hope never to despise the former, but choose to stick close by the latter. This conversion appeared still more conspicuous, as her head was well stocked with gospel notions; for I have often found those whose judgments were furnished with evangelical creeds to be the forwardest to laugh at those who insisted on the force, the power, and happy enjoyment, of truth in the souls of God's elect.

I shall now return to my subject of leaving Ditton, and coming to settle in London.

After having seen so much of the vision fulfilled, I began to watch for the development of the words thick boughs. I knew thick boughs in Ezekiel's prophecy meant sinners and the boughs of the palm-tree in the Song of Solomon meant saints; therefore, if I could see my ministry well attended, either with sinners or saints, the whole vision would appear evidently to be from God; for, when the Lord speaks, it is done; and if He commands, it comes to pass.

After I had been some time in London I found the chapel in Margaret was open to every erroneous preacher. This stirred up the hearts of my hearers to look out for another place for me, and very soon it was proposed to build a larger chapel. This appeared to pave the way more and more for the fulfilment of the words brought to my mind, "Prophecy on the thick boughs." The chapel was soon erected; and the good hand of our God was with us, in the work, to our comfort. But when it was opened, I saw the strong opposition it would meet with from every quarter. This at first rather surprised me; but soon after the words returned to my mind, "Prophecy on the thick boughs". I was enabled to rest on them, and gathered much comfort to my

soul from the consideration of its being opposed; for I have ever observed, that, when a work has appeared to be of God, it has generally met with the greatest opposition; and when a cause flourishes in the faces of many opposers, it appears still plainer to be God's work. The fewer human props there are to support the ark, the clearer God's hand is perceived; for then He appears to work, and none can let it, though they try at it. In this way God endears Himself to the instrument He employs, weans the instrument from the creature, and secures all the glory to Himself. I have often thought that if Martin Luther, John Bunyan, or George Whitefield had been alive in my days, they would rather have invited me than shut me out of their pulpits. However, I believe I shall still prophesy on the thick boughs; and according to my faith so it will be unto me. I have found my very soul at times melted down with gratitude at the goodness of God to so unworthy a creature as myself, on hearing that several good people in London had asked great men, employed under God, to let me preach in their pulpits, as Margaret Street Chapel was too small for me; but this favour could not be granted. I thought my case was similar to that of poor sore-eyed Leah, who said, "The Lord saw that I was despised, therefore He gave me this son also." And I have now reason to conclude, with her, that God hath endowed me with a good dowry of spiritual children, though He saw that I was hated, and these spotted sheep shall be for my hire when they shall appear before the Lord; so shall the righteousness which I have preached answer for me in that day when my ministry, and the seals of it, shall appear before God to witness for me.

I will now inform my reader of the kind providence of my God at the time of building the chapel, which I named Providence Chapel; and also mention a few free-will offerings which the people brought.

The name that I gave the chapel has offended many. However, since it was named, I have seen a place called Providence Court; and a chapel called Trinity Chapel, where the Trinity is little known, I believe. This was not the case at the naming of Providence Chapel.

But to return. They first offered about eleven pounds, and laid it on the foundation at the beginning of the building. A good gentleman, with whom I had little acquaintance, and of whom I bought a load of timber, sent it to me with a bill and receipt in full as a present to the Chapel of Providence. Another good man came, with tears in his eyes, and blessed me and desired to paint my pulpit, desk, etc., as a present to the chapel. Another person gave half-a-dozen chairs for the vestry; and my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Lyon, furnished me with a tea-chest well stored, and a set of china. My good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, furnished me with a very handsome bed, bedstead, and all its furniture and necessaries, that I might not be under the necessity of walking home in the cold winter nights. A daughter of mine in the faith gave me a looking-glass for my chapel study. Another friend gave me my pulpit cushion and a bookcase for my study. Another gave me a bookcase for the vestry. And my good friend, Mr. E., seemed to level his displeasure at the devil; for he was in hopes I should be enabled, through the gracious arm of the Lord, to cut Rahab in pieces; therefore he furnished me with a sword of the Spirit - a new Bible, with morocco binding and silver clasps. Perhaps, too, he had his eyes fixed on the rams' horns and silver trumpets that sounded the destruction of Jericho, which some say typified two sorts of ministers, the illiterate and the learned. The illiterate were represented by the rams' horns, and the learned by the silver trumpets; so, according to this, our blessed Lord, who spake as never man spake, and all

His apostles, are jumbled in among the rams' horns. But I think, as a ram's horn has a very rough, unpleasing sound, it rather typified the legal ministry under the law, where so many rams were offered; and the silver trumpets, having a more pleasing sound, held forth the evangelical ministry under the dispensation of the Spirit; which exceeds the old economy in glory as much as the sound of a silver trumpet does that of a ram's horn. The Revelation of St. John holds forth every sound from the death of Christ to the general judgment to be by seven trumpets, not horns. I think we may speak thus without offering any violence to the Scriptures, and without nursing the pride or pedantry of a scholar.

A certain gentleman, some time ago, preached from Pharaoh's vision of the seven fat and seven lean kine. The lean kine he made out to be poor, mean, illiterate people; and as he had a great many rich, dressy hearers, he made out the fat kine and well favoured to hold forth the rich, honourable, and learned of the earth; though God says it is the rich that grind the face of the poor, and eat up His people as they would eat bread; but I have never read in all the Bible that the poor eat up the rich! for I think every poor man in England will hold with me in this particular, that the rich are agreed to keep that person poor who is poor. But I shall return to my subject, and leave these men-pleasers to themselves; as they serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies; and with fair speeches and feigned words make merchandize of souls.

I shall now show that I have yet to speak on the behalf of Providence, which was so conspicuous in furnishing me with money necessary for building the chapel. I never went to any person to borrow money for the building who denied me. God so opened their hearts, that I was amazed at His providence and their kindness towards me. As for

my friend, Mr. Lloyd, by his cheap way of going to work, I believe he saved me two or three hundred pounds at least; which I should not have desired him to have done, had I been a man of property; for I think it is the duty of every man, who is able, to encourage trade, it being the strength of a nation; and it appears to me that those who make it their business to shake that pillar are sure to pull down the house about their own ears. "Seek ye the peace of the city, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."

Some time after these things, God seemed wholly to withdraw His conspicuous providential acts; and I began to lay aside my watchfulness and daily dependence on His bounty, as my stated income began to be tolerable. However, it is the safest and sweetest way to live from hand to mouth, as say those who speak in proverbs; for it is impossible that men should be so grateful to God when they have a stock in hand, as when they receive a daily supply from a never-failing stock in God's hand. After some little time, I was forced to look to Him again for temporals as well as spirituals; for as my income increased my family increased also; so that I was shortly brought into as great straits as ever. Money began to run short, and clothes were wanting. But God, who fainteth not, neither is weary, was pleased to appear in a way of providence again; and after this manner showed He Himself:

I had been doing a little work in my flower garden; and, finding it wanted a few additional roots, I went to a garden a little distance from my house to look over a few things. While I was walking about by myself among the flowers, a well-dressed, motherly-looking woman stepped up to me, and, supposing me to be the gardener (for my appearance was more like the slave than the prelate), she thus addressed me, in a free and jocose manner, "Now Mr. Gardener, if you please I want a root to put in my pot; and

it must be a root that will last." I looked up very seriously at the lady, and replied, "Well, I believe I can tell you where you can get such a root." At this answer she smilingly asked, "Where?" I answered, "In the Book of Job; for he says, 'The root of the matter is found in me'; (Job 19:28) and if you can get that root into your pot, the root and the pot both will last forever." She then asked, "And pray have you got that root in you?" I answered her, "I verily believe I have." Upon which she replied, "It is well with you, and it is very true what you have said." I then told her that I was not the gardener, but that she would find him at the bottom of the garden, attending some ladies and gentlemen. She dropped a curtsey, and departed with a smile. I thought by her pertinent reply, that she was not altogether ignorant of that wisdom which dwells with prudence, and finds out knowledge of witty inventions. (Prov. 8:12) And I secretly wished that the words which I had spoken might dwell on her mind, until the root of gospel love struck an everlasting fibre in her heart.

I believe the lady above mentioned inquired of the gardener who I was, for soon after both she and her spouse came to hear me, and have continued to do so ever since. God grand that the word of His grace may take deep root in their hearts, that they may be "trees of righteousness, the right hand planting of God, that He may be glorified."

Some time after this, there came a person to my house, and left a letter for me, the contents of which were as follows:

"Sir, - I wish you would be at home on such a day, if convenient; as a person will call to measure you for a great coat, which you are desired to accept, and to ask no questions of the person who comes to measure, etc."

I looked upon this letter as sent from some enemy to the gospel of Christ, because it came soon after my "Bank of Faith" had made its appearance in the

world; and I daily heard of some professor or other ridiculing it, because I had therein taken notice of very insignificant things, at least, in their opinion. However had they been exercised with a hungry belly, as the prophet Elijah was, they would have been glad of a cake baked with two sticks, and have thanked God for commanding the widow woman to sustain him with that. (I Kings 17:9) The Holy Ghost thought this kind of providence of God, which appeared in sending the prophet that cake, worthy of being recorded in divine revelation. If so, what kind of spirit must those professors be of who deem the special and minute interference of Providence worthy only of their public scorn and contempt? Such men are rebuked even by the brute creation; for "the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib," but the carnal professor knoweth not the God of his mercies; and although he loves the crib, yet he doth not consider who it is that keeps his crib full.

(Continued next month)

FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE

Through the ages, almost innumerable discourses have been delivered using the beautiful 23rd Psalm as a text. Seldom have I attended a funeral service in which this Psalm was not quoted, read, or at least referred to and it is probable that it has edified the Lord's people to a greater degree than any other portion of the sacred Word.

But in this Psalm there is a verse which I cannot recall ever hearing spoken of or written on specifically - a verse which, in recent months has stood out as the very highlight and focal point of the whole Psalm. It is a part of the 3rd verse which reads, "He leadeth me in paths of righteousness *for His Name's sake*".

It is most comforting to be assured that "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures" when hungry and thirsty for spiritual food and drink; that amid the

noise, confusion, and turmoil of the workaday world He leads us beside "the still waters"; that whether we walk through deep waters that threaten to overwhelm us, the sunlit plains or the barren desert He will deliver us from our distresses and "restore our souls"; that He will be with us as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death; that goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives - and then the crowning glory of it all, that we shall "dwell in the house of the Lord forever".

In all these precious assurances, the Lord's people are the beneficiaries. But in the verse which is the subject of these remarks, the spotlight is on Him who is the benefactor and the source of our supply. Here, in this verse, the very majesty, honor, and glory of our omnipotent God is on the line. This verse reveals, I believe, the underlying purpose for all the paths of righteousness in which He leads, keeps and sustains His people including the rod and the staff. All of them redound to His honor and glory and are "for His Name's sake".

I note the text says "paths", denoting that there may be many. There is the path of peace and joy as we behold our dear Redeemer, now "within the veil" as our great High Priest; there is the path of heartache and loss; there is the path of chastisement; which is every bit as important and even desirable as that of joy and peace, though not as pleasant to the natural man.

There are other paths of righteousness in which God leads us along life's way, but I've thought so much recently about another path which rises high above all others and reaches the very heights of holy communion between Christ and His "elect lady". It is the highest expression of prayer. This is the path of worship. I've been given some very sweet meditation recently on this subject and I've asked myself what constitutes real, true worship. Is it

simply a matter of assembling ourselves together, enjoyable as that is? Singing hymns, lovely as they are? Or listening to preaching, edifying as it is? Or even reading and studying the precious Scriptures, important and vital as this is? Years ago when attending meetings of another denomination, a program was handed me each time which read, among other things, Sunday School at 9:45, Worship at 11:00. But was that eleven o'clock service necessarily worship in the true sense? In my humble opinion, the appointment of that time for worship did not guarantee that it would take place. It is my conviction that many in those assemblies had little or no conception of what true worship means, including myself, though God forbid that I should judge anyone except myself.

It is now my understanding that real worship is experienced only in those rare moments when, with all perishing things, all things of earth, all that is mortal swept from our view, we are blest above measure to "see no man save Jesus only". To envision Him transfigured as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the righteous, the holy, the altogether lovely One, who was both able and willing to be "made sin for us", to go through the very depths of hell that we might be spotless, blameless and forever free from condemnation - it is the most sublime state anyone will ever know in this world.

I have never been blest with really spectacular experiences; I have never had visions; I have never had very much in the way of dreams that I could interpret as spiritual revelation or light; I have never heard my name called with the natural ear and only a few times have I experienced a direct and specific answer to prayer and the times I have were never when I asked for "things". But, Beloved Brethren, unless the Lord has permitted Satan to deceive me in totality, I do believe I have been highly

avored for a few moments on somewhat rare occasions to be engaged with my dear Redeemer in such a state of worship as I have tried to describe above and I believe I have known something of what Moses must have felt when God called to him out of the burning bush: "Put the shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground". Moses, in great awe and wonderment, hid his face because he was afraid to look upon God; but the veil of the temple was rent in twain as our blessed Redeemer poured out His life on Calvary's cross and the way was opened for redeemed sinners to approach the throne of God and we are not afraid because we behold God in the face of Christ Jesus, our dear Redeemer and our Lord. At moments when I humbly believe that God has employed me in true worship I have fallen before Him and cried "Jesus, Lover of my soul, Let me to Thy bosom fly", not because the raging billows were rolling; not because the tempest was nigh; not because I had a request to make of Him or an earthly blessing to seek, no, no, but because of the sheer love and adoration that filled my enraptured soul - because of the overpowering enchantment that held me almost as a spell. These are sacred experiences which we can never, never forget while reason endures.

I would be remiss indeed if I failed to state that the creature is no more able to bring about this worship that he was to create himself in the beginning. Truly, I am appalled when I remember that I once advocated such a shallow, baseless and altogether ridiculous a theory - yes, a theory - I cannot dignify it by calling it a doctrine!

In the past two years when I was unable to read my precious Bible, I was given some sweet meditations on these wonderful things and I am convinced that God's primary purpose in the creation of man was that He would be the object of His creatures' worship. He is a

jealous God (Exodus 20:5) and His glory He will not give to another (Isaiah 42:8). He must be worshipped and He will be worshipped. Whatever it takes to bring about this worship in His people, that very thing He will perform!

Certainly, we do not know just where or exactly what heaven will be and I'm not greatly concerned as to where, but I'm deeply concerned as to what it will be - not that I'm fearful, but because it is my conviction that it will be the grand assembly of the saints of all ages whose robes have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, there to be totally occupied in worship of Him forevermore. I cannot think, as some do, that we will know one another there as we do here, nor will we be concerned as to who is or is not there for our eyes will be fixed on "Him whom our soul loveth" and we shall "see no man save Jesus only". This is my belief, this is my hope in life and I trust it will be my reality and my consolation in death. Furthermore, I do not believe we will reach the state of eternal bliss unless we have known some foretaste of it in this life. What, indeed, is this life anyhow? for the Lord's people it is but God's training ground, His school in which He prepares them for the things He has prepared for them. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." What a precious thought this is! It inspires us with courage to face without dismay whatever our merciful, wise and gracious heavenly Father has placed in the path He has chosen for us in this life, and with hope and anticipation to await with patience "the glory which shall be revealed in us".

May it please our dear Redeemer to engage us in worship of Him more and more "as the day of our redemption draweth nigh" for in the final analysis, it is "for His Name's sake."

Mildred V. Dykes

WHO REALLY HIDES BEHIND PREDESTINATION?

There is a strange breed of animal lurking around the green pastures and the Shepherd's tent these days. He looks and sounds almost like a sheep but gives good evidence of being blood kin to a goat, and he is possibly part wolf!

Now, it seems that this creature can survive for long periods of time on sheep food, but at least three or four times a year he pretty well has to have some conditional, free-will goat fodder, or he simply cannot stand it. He is polite enough about it, however; he does not hog it all to himself but insists on sharing it with the sheep. In fact, he gets downright hurt about it if a sheep will not eat his favorite brand of works-system sawbriars with him.

Most of the time this animal will bleat, eat, and walk like a sheep, but usually he will stay on hard ground so no one can see what kind of tracks he makes.

What really brings out his strangeness, though, is when predestination is mentioned. If a sheep expresses a belief in, or a love for the doctrine of predestination in his presence, he will bellow for all to hear: "I believe in predestination, too, BUTT..." and then he will butt just like a goat. Those who have been around herds of goats and have been butted by them know what I mean.

Yes, this animal will say, "I believe in predestination, BUTT," and he butts a poor sheep as long as it will stay in butting range. He will usually follow his butting with something like, "I believe in predestination, BUTT the Bible also teaches that man has a free will," or, "Sure, the Bible teaches predestination, and I believe it, BUTT if we'd only pray and preach and work harder, things would be better;" or, "Of course I believe the Bible teaches predestination, BUTT if the sheep do not stay with the Shepherd, then He will leave them to suffer the consequences." Another one

of his many lines is, "I believe in predestination, BUTT God would bless us more if we would just do His will, and that is left up to us."

One time a poor sheep said, "I believe in the absolute predestination of all things," which so infuriated this butting varmint that he hollered, "I believe in the predestination of all things, too, BUTTTT!!!!!!!" and he tried to butt the sheep right out of the pasture.

The rest of the flock of sheep did not like that at all, so they ralleyed around their wounded companion and the beast ran off and hid where he thought they would never find him. He was wrong. They found him right away. He was hiding, of all places, behind predestination!

"How did you know where I was?" he exclaimed.

The answer was given to him immediately: "It was simple. For a long time you have accused us of hiding behind predestination, just because we believe and love the doctrine; but you really hate the doctrine, even though you must pretend to believe it in order to stay around our pasture. The doctrine of predestination abases you and would humble you into the dust at the Good Shepherd's feet, which you could not bear and is why you hate it. So you tried to make us feel guilty for believing it, and at the same time you had to try to lull us to sleep by saying you believed it before you butted us!

"It is plain to see that you, not the true believers, are the one who hides behind predestination! YOU raise the word predestination as a screen, and after you butt us, YOU hide your free-willism, YOU hide your conditionalism, you hide your limited predestinarianism, you hide your works system and will-worship, and you hide everything else that is contrary to sound doctrine that you want to hide. You hide it all behind the LIE of saying that you believe in predestination!

"No sheep yet has ever hid his sins behind predestination, as you falsely accuse us! Their sins are hidden and covered by the Good Shepherd's blood. That is the only place sin can be successfully hidden, and the sheep believe that it was determined by God, fixed, decreed and predestinated to be just that way!"

At that, this mysterious critter bounded off into the woods and has not been seen around here lately. However, it is reported that he is roaming around the United States somewhere between California and Maine, trying to organize a Sunday School.

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them; so may the Lord grace us all to keep our ears and eyes open and be aware when such a varmint comes about. The best way to recognize him is by listening for him to say, "Of course I believe in the doctrine of predestination, BUTT..."

For love of the truth,
Z.

Meadows of Dan, Virginia

Dear Elder Smith,

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and God willing, I shall endeavor to write a little this afternoon.

It has been over six weeks that I have been unable to attend any meetings due to snow, sleet, and severe cold weather, but I hope to be thankful for good reading in the Bible, the *Signs*, and from correspondence. They all have richly fed me when God has opened them up to me. If I am in the school of grace, then God alone has put me there. This school is not taught by Sunday School Teachers, but God alone is the Teacher and is ever bringing His children to the acknowledgement of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Sometimes this school is taught in the forest, at our daily work, on the bed at night, in the deepest valley, and in every way you can name, in prison, and in crowds of hundreds, and the world could not hold

the many ways if recorded in books. No, it could not hold the books, but God has written them in the minds and hearts of His saints, and they are never erased, through all trials and persecutions.

If I should be blessed to write anything, it would have to be on absolute predestination of all things, as this doctrine feeds my soul. Using the word "absolute" does not add any thing to the Scriptures. It only sets forth that God is alone in His works and His works are absolute. Many hate this doctrine, but to me this is the very essence of salvation by grace. "Many are called, but few are chosen". The few that are chosen are like Paul - they absolutely do have to suffer for His Name sake, and blessed are they because they are persecuted for the truth.

If I should attempt to put on record all my persecutions, it would be a long list, and many of the Old School Baptist believers could say the same. But I do rejoice in them, as they have brought me in closer and closer with my Redeemer. Now, we cannot be persecuted unless we have a persecutor. The persecutor is God's also, same as the persecuted. They both are in the world and it shall be so until the end.

I read today with interest and fellowship a letter by Elder J. W. Wyatt published in the *Signs*. He has long since passed on, but his writings remain. I do not remember hearing him in person, but what he was blessed to write is the truth as I see it. How I wish I could hear some of the old Elder's declare this doctrine again. May the young ones be as bold as lions and meek as lambs, declaring the doctrine of the true Old School Baptist.

I do request that you, Brother Donald, and your brother in the flesh, and in Christ Jesus, Brother Wallace Smith, write your experience and call to the ministry and have them published in the *Signs* in the near future, as I would treasure them so much to read over and over.

Enclosed is \$10.00 for a two year subscription, and use the rest as you see fit.

I remain a helpless sinner,
Mrs. Pauline Spencer

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION

The 213th annual session of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to convene, the Lord willing, at North Creek Primitive Baptist church the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following. (September 30th, October 1st and 2nd)

The services are to begin on Saturday, at 11:00 o'clock, and at 10:00 o'clock on Sunday. Services are to be held at Pungo Christian Academy which is located just inside the city limits of Belhaven, N.C., on the right side of U.S. Highway 264. On Monday services are to begin at 10:00 o'clock at North Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

All brethren and visitors traveling U.S. 264 thru Washington continue on U.S. 264 about 10 miles east to N.C. Highway 92; take N.C. Highway 92 passing thru Bath, N.C.; and go about 10 or 12 miles to church located on left side of N.C. Highway 92.

We extend an invitation to our corresponding brethren and ministers of the same faith and order, friends and visitors to join with us.

Elder Marvin E. Garner
Association Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The 1978 session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, October 18th and 19th, with the Indiantown Church near Powellville, Maryland, on Route 354.

Anyone arriving Tuesday go to the home of William S. Adkins on Route 50, Mardela, or call 742-2198, or call Elder James F. Poole at 742-6406. All those coming on Wednesday go directly to the meeting house.

We invite all ministers and brethren of our faith and in order in their home Associations or Church to be with us.

William S. Adkins, Church Clerk
Route 50,
Mardela, Maryland 21837

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IN THE WORLD YE SHALL HAVE
TRIBULATION

Dear Friend, -- I had fully intended to drop you a line sooner, but have been waiting for the south wind to blow, that I might have some good news to send you. But I am obliged to set to and write without it; a poor dark, ignorant, stupid,

unbelieving wretch as ever lived upon earth; no more power to think, move, or speak in spiritual things than a beast.

Sure I am I know what David meant when he said, "I was as a beast before thee," or, "like an owl of the desert." Surely never one of the Lord's family is so stupid, foolish, barren, empty, and so ungrateful for mercies received as I am. O that the "south wind" would blow, that the spices might "flow out!" It is not my home to be here, but my misery. But sometimes I am so dead and barren that I cannot even be miserable under it. Last night I had to go to chapel to preach in this very frame of mind. I wanted to confess it before God, but I could not do so with my soul. I did it with my lips, but my heart was like a flint, unmoved. Surely, I thought, I never can preach. But the good Lord opened my mouth, and gave me a word to speak, which was a word in season to a few that were there; but no bringing completely out in my own case. And what is religion to me, if I have no life felt in my heart, no communion with Him, no intercourse between God and my soul? It is nothing to me. Indeed, my dear friend, I am more and more convinced of the real necessity of the work of the Holy Ghost; for I find, by downright feeling experience, that prayer, faith, hope, love, joy, humility, patience, thankfulness, yea, and every good thing, is the sovereign, free favor of God, and communicated to my soul by the Holy Ghost as freely as ever the work of regeneration is. And when the blessed unction of the Holy Ghost is withheld, I can no more bring one good thing into exercise than I can put out the blaze of the sun by lifting up my hand, or empty the sea with a bucket. I am at a point that no one can call Christ Lord, in a saving way, but by the Holy Ghost. O how blessed is the "still small voice" of the dear Comforter, when He takes of the things which are Christ's and shows them unto us! How delightful it is then to view Him as the Lord our righteousness and strength, in whom is all our boast,

joy, salvation, and glory!

There are neither crooks, crosses, nor miseries in Jesus; all is right and straight in Him. You have, my dear friend, at times found Him to be your Friend, that "sticketh closer than a brother"; and He that has delivered does deliver, yes and will yet deliver. But you are something like me, you want more joy, and less sorrow; longer days, and shorter nights; more life, and not so much death; more faith, and less unbelief; to be more with our Lord, setting at His blessed feet, and hearing His gracious words, and not so much grovelling in this miserable earth. But O my friend, recollect it is the absolute declaration of our adorable God and Saviour, that "in the world ye shall have tribulation"; and how could we be proved to be one of the family, if we knew nothing of it? I dare say you think sometimes that you could do very well without some of the tribulations you have, or if they were in another place you could bear them better. But not so; our troubles are all in their right places, and come at the right time, and by the right way, and answer the right end. We often mistake the real thing; it is our mind that is in the wrong place; for instead of having our eyes looking right on and our eyelids straight before us, viewing the wisdom, goodness, kindness, love, mercy, and faithfulness of our God, we are looking either to the right hand or to the left, poring over second causes, and wondering how that will turn out, and this be managed; until I sometimes get as miserable and as full of rebellion against God as if I were a devil let loose. And yet when I have done all, I have neither made one hair white or black; and I have been brought to see that the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord. I have ever found that when He has appeared it has all been right, and not one thing out of its place. And yet, my dear friend, when fresh troubles come, notwithstanding all that I have proved,

I am just the same fool as ever, when left to myself. *O that God may keep me nearer to Himself, waiting, watching, crying, believing, hoping, and receiving all blessing needful for me both for time and eternity!*

I hope, my friend, the Lord will help you to pray for me, for I am as poor and needy a worm as ever crawled upon earth. I am surprised, at times, at the goodness of the Lord towards one so vile and so unworthy of His mercies; and to think He should ever employ me in His vineyard as His mouth, is more astonishing still. But bless His precious Name, it is His sovereign will that it should be so; for they are hid from "the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes"; for so it seemed good in His sight. And so it does in mine at times, and I can bless Him for it. I hope, my dear friend, the Lord will keep you and Mr. _____ sensible of your dependence upon Him, and much at His blessed feet, for there is safety nowhere else but in Him. I have you much at times in my breathings to God, and my prayer to Him is, that you may not be carried away too much with the world, for it is a flattering thing, pleasing to flesh and blood; and if the children of God are at any time carried away with its pleasing streams, they are sure to carry them to some whirlpool or other, where they will be brought to their senses. The Lord ever keep you safe from all snares, both from within and from without.

That the Lord may bless you and Mr. _____ with mercy, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, is the hearty prayer of,

Yours in love,
J. W.

Trowbridge, May 14, 1823

One moment's communion with God is worth all the controversial volumes in the world.

Toplady

Brother Beebe: - The following is an old ballad, and much esteemed by many who read the Signs. You will confer a favor on such by giving it a place in the Signs.

P. K. Parr

Ye scattered flock of Jesus,
Wherever you may be,
I pray you, lend attention,
And listen unto me.

We're in a howling wilderness,
Of savage beasts of prey,
Surrounded by temptations,
And that from day to day.

For Satan is a striving
For us, to lay his snares,
Our minds are interrupted,
And filled with worldly cares.

We travel here like strangers,
And often go astray,
Yet live in hopes our Shepherd
Will guide us in the way.

We are poor wandering pilgrims,
Oft tossed to and fro,
Bleating about, from place to place,
And know not what to do.

Like scattered sheep we seem to be,
Our heads are bowed down;
And oft-times we are made to fear,
We'll never wear the crown.

O, where are our enjoyments!
Where's all our courage fled?
Or, has our light afflictions
Struck all our comforts dead?

Lift up your heads, ye tender lambs,
Assist me now to sing,
Your harps take from the willow-tree,
And let us praise our King.

Why should we be discouraged,
Since Jesus is our friend?
He's promis'd to be with us,
And help us to the end.

Behold him now enthroned above,
His arms extended wide,
With pleasing smiles and eyes of love,
For to receive his bride.

Then, come ye, Zion's travelers,
Our Jesus we'll pursue,
Although a dreary wilderness,
We are to travel through.

Our journey soon will have an end,
Our trials soon be o'er,
When we arrive on Canann's banks,
Upon that peaceful shore.

So, here's my hand, my brethren dear,
 Let's try to live in love,
 And walk along the narrow path,
 That leads to joy above.

Let's often meet together here,
 Let us often watch and pray,
 That Jesus Christ may give us strength,
 And guide us in the way.

December 15, 1868

My Dear Elder Smith:

I received the *Signs* last evening and want to write and ask that my subscription be renewed another year and want to express a few words about what I hope the dear Lord has done for me.

Ten years ago I was baptized and since that time I have been trying to tell a reason why I hope the Lord has blessed me. While I now believe I shall never be able to tell this reason to my satisfaction, I hope He who is God shall give me this desire all the days of my life and, if I am His, then I shall enter into that heaven where I shall praise Him days without end.

To be brief, three words seem to tell something of my "reason." The first word is condemnation. I do not like this word. But it fell on me when I was a young girl. It made me ashamed and afraid. I also thought I could get rid of it. Well, I soon learned it wasn't easy to put aside. And my shame increased. I care nothing about explaining or talking further about condemnation. I would say that in this state I walked more than twenty years and being in this state when the Lord took my Daddy I was not blessed at that time with submissiveness to His will.

Now the next word I love. It seems an evasive word but is a sure word. A small word but the biggest word we have. A singular word but, in its singular state, owned by many. The word is hope. When this word became precious to me I can't say. I heard it for years and it meant nothing to me. It was something those good people had. A day came

when I went before those good people and told them I hoped I loved them. They embraced me with love and in this love I hope the dear Lord shall be pleased to keep me all the days of my life. From the day I was baptized that small word "hope" has become more and more precious and it doth appear to be very large indeed.

The third word is revelation. I had heard this word for years also. But I believe I can tell when the word revelation became precious to me. The week following the Lord's taking of my Mother, words spoken years before came back to me with new meanings. I will try to tell one revelation. I often had to apologize to my Mother for my unbecoming behavior. On one particular occasion I went to her to ask her to forgive me and she replied "Child, I forgive you before you ever say anything." At that time I went my way happy that my Mother was not mad with me. But, my dear one, look at those words and tell me who forgives us before we ask. The dear Lord. The Lord hath charity. The dear Lord put those words in my Mother's mouth I do hope. And he gave them to me in His time I do hope.

In these ten years since being baptized the dear Lord has put many words of comfort in the mouths of dear ones for me. They talk of the Saviour who I hope brought me through the deep waters. Brother Smith, I wish I could do better in an attempt to tell the wonderful things I hope the Lord has done for me. I just wanted to renew the *Signs* and say a few words. I enjoy the *Signs* so very much. You may do as you think proper with these words. If you put them aside it will be perfectly all right with me. I write in such a peculiar manner even to myself.

My hope this day is that the dear Lord will keep us this day and own us in that day to come.

With love I hope,
 Reidy Pickral

EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 19:23, 24

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

The scriptures do not condemn riches nor do they condemn those who have riches, solely because they are rich. However, the word of God does tell us much regarding a proper view of riches and other material possessions. The Scripture does not say that money is the root of all evil. Rather, the love of money is the root of all evil. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (I Tim. 6:10)

The real problem believers have regarding riches is their attitude towards it. If we can but learn what is the proper attitude towards riches, the evil (love of money) will be overcome. That is, providing the Lord applies the truth of this vital subject to our hearts and leads us by His Spirit.

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon". (Matt. 6:24) Mammon means riches or material possessions. Devotion to both God and mammon is impossible and no amount of excuse-making can avoid the word "cannot".

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Luke 12:34) Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, where is your treasure? In banks, stocks, policies, houses? Is so, then that is where your heart is, too!!

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." (I Tim. 6:9) What an evil it must be when we have a will to amass riches and

worldly trinkets. Paul said not that you "might" fall, but speaks of the certainty of it.

"Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain." (I Tim. 6:5, 6) The apostle here speaks of those that "suppose" that gain is godliness. May God deliver us from supposing and bless us to learn what "great gain" there is in godliness with contentment.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Profit and loss is all many can think of. "Can I clear a profit on this deal?" Or "Will I lose anything in this venture?" Profit and loss are the great factors in worldly minds. If, however, our profits included the whole of the world would it be worth the loss of the soul?

"Were the whole realm of nature mine;
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my love, my all".

Watts

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (I John 2:15) This scripture is too plain to be misunderstood. We are absolutely forbidden to love the world (whole of creation) and also the "things" therein. Things! How much we are carried away with a care for "things". "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15) There is no life, true life, in things which we can but possess for a short while, for soon we must leave them all behind. This scripture also bids us to take heed. Take heed of covetousness. Covetousness is idolatry. "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

(Eph. 5:5) "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:" (Col. 3:5) Idolatry is a heinous crime before the Lord.

"The dearest idol I have known,
What'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne
And worship only thee.

Cowper

So clearly is inordinate affection, or a craving after material possessions, condemned by God's word, and the abiding Spirit within, that one is made to wonder in amazement at the scene of greed before him. Look where you will. This Babylon world has displayed her wares, and multitudes toil and labor to obtain a few scraps of perishing junk to call their own. Am I too severe in my observations? "And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:16-21) God calls such "fools"! May He in mercy spare us and keep us from laying up treasures for ourselves, and thereby prove ourselves fools.

"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his

mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand." (Ecc. 5:13-15) Solomon calls this a sore evil, yet a necessary truth to be understood so we may escape the allurements of uncertain riches, for we shall certainly not carry away any of this world's goods in our hands when the time of our departure comes.

I am reminded by Solomon's words of the old story of two women attending the funeral of a very rich citizen. "I wonder" observed one, "just how much that man left when he died?" The other woman, of a more serious and spiritual nature, quickly replied, "All he had!"

Is it not strange and inconsistent for those who possess a hope of better things in the resurrection to be so deeply involved, and even rooted in this present evil world? Why such mad pursuit after that which is to perish? Is there not a "better part" which our Lord commended Mary in choosing? "Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus's feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42) Martha was careful about many "things", but Mary's part shall not be taken away. "Lord, fix our affections on that good part."

On one occasion the Lord admonished the multitude to "Labour not for that meat which perisheth." (John 6:27) It is doubtful the excuses offered then were much different from today's variety. "I have so many bills to pay"; "The price of

everything is so high". True enough, but is God our guide in spiritual things only, or is He not also our wise leader in our material affairs, too?

Quiet frequently I hear those that preach the gospel and who are examples to the flock say they would like to give more time to study, to prayer, to visiting the sick, and the other duties of a pastor. They lament that house payments, car payments, putting the children through school, insurance, and so on, is so expensive that they must work long hours at jobs to meet these obligations. Dear brethren, the Apostle Paul told Timothy, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." (I Tim. 6:8) Food and raiment! Nothing more! Not even houses or homes are here mentioned! Only food and raiment. Another time Paul told the Corinthians, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place." (I Cor. 4:11) How those words should pierce our carnal hearts; no certain dwelling place! Paul had no place he could call home but heaven. I doubt that he was distressed about it either. Truly, he was unencumbered. Yes, Paul was a tentmaker, and he labored with his own hands. Dare you imagine, however, that Paul put tentmaking before the gospel? Of course not! Even our blessed Lord could not pay His taxes with what He possessed. He had not even a place to lay His head. If we can not feel shame in our attitude towards mammon and riches, then perhaps we are but deceived.

Do we not greedily or with worldly caution, try to save a little for a rainy day? The Saviour said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth". Will you militate against His plain words? It matters not how we gloss over with our carnal interpretations, these plain words. They still stand and we must submit or be broken before Him. Why, brethren, does our Lord lay

such a stressing demand on us? It is not to hurt or wound us. Nor is it to make us suffer deprivation. Rather, it is to make us dependent on Him and the riches of His grace. If we are full and have plenty we are not likely to cry to Him for our daily bread. But if we must walk by faith then we are made to feel our need of Him.

Most people are willing to walk by faith, just so long as they can see where they are going. What is Social Security, bank accounts, insurance, and other possessions of similar nature, but something we can lay our hand on? Security is what most people want but few know what true security is until they are brought in empty both spiritually and naturally before God and made to cry as needy beggars for their every necessity. When we then learn the other half of the Scriptures which begins, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth", we can begin to rejoice in the true riches. "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...." (Matt. 6:20) Yes, the riches that can be laid up in heaven are as surely ours as the earthly treasures belong to the earthly. And our heavenly treasure will not rust. No moth can corrupt it, and thieves cannot break through and steal it. Oh, what a treasure this is! And it is ours forever and ever. Peter speaks of this treasure as an "inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." Yes, reserved! (I Peter 1:4)

Someone may say that all this is too idealistic. They may admit that it is good to look to heaven but that we should keep an eye out here below. After all, says one, what about when we grow old? When we can't work? When times pass over us and we become feeble, what will become of us if we haven't made preparation? "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and even to your old age I am he: and even to hoar hairs will I

carry you: I have made, and I will bear: even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Isa. 46:3, 4) Need we more? Then hear these words and mark them well. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Where withal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:30-33) "Take therefore no thought for the morrow".

At the heading of this piece we gave a text which has appeared very difficult to many. There is, however, no real difficulty in the text when the Lord blesses us to see what He meant in its symbolism. The main symbol is that of the camel. Camels are a most fitting comparison for our subject. Consider the following brief facts regarding them:

Their natural habitat is in a barren land or dry desert. The camel has its own food storage compartment in the form of fat humps on its back. Camels are one of the most unsociable animals on earth. They will kick, spit at, and bite anyone or anything around them. Of all animals used in toil, the camel is the most reluctant to work and is very difficult to give orders to. Camels often go weeks without water or food and will as likely as not refuse water even when previously deprived of it. This creature can live on refuse as well as good food.

Much more might be offered to fill out our comparison, but this should be sufficient to show how much the camel resembles man in his unhumiliated, self-sufficient condition. Man dwells in a waste-howling wilderness; he verily

believes he shall never be in want for the bread and water of life; he is enmity against God and thoroughly unsociable spiritually, kicking against the pricks, and some even spat upon the Lord while others bit and gnashed on Stephen with their teeth. So goes the comparison in all its particulars. What then of the camel when he comes to the needle? The illustration lays emphasis on the eye of the needle. The eye is the tiny, small, narrow opening in the needle. Indeed, it is very straight and narrow, even as the scripture says the way into the Kingdom is, - much too narrow and small for the large, proud, and self-sufficient camel to go through.

How then can the camel enter and pass through? Even so, how can the rich enter into the Kingdom? "With men these things are impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matt. 19:26) The camel, in a starving condition has been known to completely lose its humps, for its reserve has been exhausted, much like the prodigal who has spent all. Would not then the camel in this condition be much reduced in size? We would not imagine, however, that it would be reduced sufficiently to go through the eye of the needle. Then, what is needed to make this unlikely passage possible is not only for the camel to lose its excess baggage, but for the eye of the needle to be much larger than before, then we will have no difficulty, provided one is reduced and the other is enlarged sufficiently. Here is what our Lord is teaching, regarding the camel and the eye of the needle. The rich, self-sufficient sinner must lose all he has to enter in. He can no longer trust to self and uncertain riches. And beyond this, Christ must loom larger and larger in the poor sinner's estimation and sense of value, while the sinner grows smaller in his estimation. Soon in this wonderful work of Grace the sinner, likened unto a camel, will be so small and poor that entrance into the

Kingdom through Christ will be possible because Christ as the Way is now a wide, large way.

How small and narrow He seemed when we were blinded by the mammon of this world. But if God in His matchless mercy is pleased to free us from our idols we find that Christ is not only a small eye of the needle to us in our beginning, but the great door of the sheep in our ending. And grace alone can make this change.

J. F. Poole

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

PREACHING MORALITY

The following question has been pounded to us, and we feel like trying to briefly respond. It may be that some of the readers of the *Signs* will find something of interest also in it, viz:

Is it the duty of a minister of the gospel to preach morality to the ungodly portion of their congregation?

It is right for a minister, as a citizen and neighbor, moving and acting among his fellow men, to encourage all that is right and just, and of good report among his fellow men. In this his duty is on a par with the duty of all other men. He is to be himself a good citizen, law-abiding and kind to all men. He is taught to pray for rulers, and for all that are in authority, that we as believers may live quiet and peaceable lives. That man who is not an orderly, law-abiding citizen, and a kind and helpful neighbor to all around him, cannot be an acceptable minister of Jesus Christ. Among the qualifications of one called of God to the pastorate of churches is this: he must have a good report of them that are without. It is sure that no man who is generally understood to be a dishonest, selfish, evil-minded man, ought to be put forward into the ministry of the word.

Not only is he to live so as to have a good report himself, but he is to advocate what is called morality, whenever occasion demands it, yet let it be remembered that the very best advocacy of morality among men is to live carefully and uprightly one's own self. But as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, standing before the people as a herald of the cross, it is his sole duty to proclaim the gospel of grace. We do not understand that morality makes up any portion of the work of salvation; that is all by grace. Very many men who are called moral by the world are not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are not saved, and die in their sins. Many who have been immoral in outward life, have yet been among the chosen of God, and have been called by grace at last to know, love and serve him. Neither the morality nor the immorality of the outward life has anything at all to do with a sinner's salvation. That is solely and alone through election and the atonement of Jesus Christ, and the effectual call by his Spirit. And we are fully convinced that in the pulpit, as a minister of the gospel, it is the sole business of the preacher to preach not morality to the unregenerate, but salvation by grace, and spiritual obedience to the redeemed. The gospel has no message to the unregenerate; it is for the called of God, and to them its message is salvation and spirituality of life through Christ, and not morality. Morality is not spirituality, any more than immorality is. A man's moral works are no more a help in his salvation before God than his evil works are. There are many who teach morality in a thousand ways among men, but they are not gospel preachers, and what they teach is not the gospel, and in it there is no salvation. No, it is not the place of the minister of the gospel to quit his high and holy calling and come down to inculcating morality. It is his to proclaim a finished salvation for poor sinners in Christ, and to exhort the

saved to spirituality (not morality) of life and conversation. We should be sorry indeed to hear one who we believed was called of God to preach Christ and his salvation, turn aside from the subject of his sermon some day, to address the natural part of his congregation in the way of urging them to practice all morality. (We use the word morality as it is generally used among men.) It is the business of the minister to declare what the law of God says to men, that the soul that sinneth it shall die; that all are already justly condemned before God by reason of original sin, and also by reason of the fact that all have sinned and become guilty before God, that no amount of legality or morality can put aside this just judgment of God and save men from the penalty of the law, and that the only remedy and the effectual remedy for sin is that Jesus has died for them, and saved them through his perfect work and meritorious death. This is presenting the law with its demands and curses, and the gospel with its full and accomplished salvation. This is the sole business to which God has called his servants, and like Paul, they have no business to know anything among the people save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Even though morality be held forth by a minister in the pulpit as that by which no man can be saved finally, but only that which will be praiseworthy among men, to fill up the time in urging it upon the people, is to forsake his high calling, and take up with an inferior one. It is to forsake the preaching of Christ, as the only Redeemer for sinners who can and does redeem men from sin and the curse, and to turn aside to that which can be but temporal, and beside, the fruit of it will be that men will be urged to attend to that which will not humble them, but will serve to exalt them in their own estimation. And this spirit is altogether foreign to the teaching of the gospel, which tends to humble men, and impress upon their minds that they are

fallen, and vile, and altogether evil. Let all who are called of God to preach Christ, confine themselves to preaching Christ. If any believe their testimony, such ones will have within themselves the strongest incentive to all godliness of life, for life itself, which is in them, will flow out in word and thought and deed, just as natural life exhibits itself in these ways. The query of such a heart will be, "What wilt thou have me to do?" And to such a query comes the response of the gospel, and to such hearts the preacher can only point out the way of salvation, and of gospel obedience. It is a spiritual life, and not morality, that the people of God want.

We repeat that the gospel minister has no message to the unregenerate, because the unregenerate could not hear it if he were to try to preach to them, and because the message which is committed to him is not morality, but the gospel, and the gospel is for them who need it, and feel their need of it. The word "morality," so far as we know, does not even occur in the Scriptures. As men generally use it they mean the requirements of the law of God, but if we preach the requirements of the law of God, we shall only set forth the one fact, that no man has ever kept or can ever keep those requirements, and that therefore all men are already condemned by the law which they have already broken. The truth is that when men forsake the preaching of the gospel, they do not even go on to teach the truth concerning the law of God. One must first learn what the law says, before he can be prepared to know what the gospel says. And the reason that so many preach such a perversion of the true gospel is that they also know only a perversion of the holy law of God. Ministers have a higher calling than to preach legality. Gospel obedience is not legality. Exhortation to the living is not to legal works, but to free gospel service. The unregenerate have no part in the gospel which we are called to preach,

and we are not called to preach the law to anybody, either as the way to salvation, or as a rule of life.

April 1, 1903

Elder F. A. Chick

BLACK CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing the 1978 session of the Black Creek Association will convene with White Oak Church located in Saratoga, Wilson County, North Carolina, the fourth Sunday in October and Friday and Saturday before.

Follow 264 east from Wilson to Saratoga, turn left at stop light on highway 222. White Oak Church is located a short distance from stop light on left side of highway.

All brethren and friends are invited to attend.

(Elder) Curtis R. Rains
Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held with Danville Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in October (October 28 and 29th), if it be the Lord's will.

All ministers, and brothers, and sisters, and friends are invited to come and be with us.

R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The Lebanon Primitive Baptist Church of Bracey, Virginia, has changed the time of their Saturday night meetings from 8:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.

Tom Martin, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Sand Hill the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1978.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

OBITUARIES

RUBY ALMA HOLLANDSWORTH

As requested by the Union Church while in conference on June 24, 1978, I will attempt to write the obituary of our Sister, Ruby Alma Hollandsworth, who united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1921.

Sister Ruby was born March 27, 1904 and passed away June 19, 1978. The time of her stay upon the Earth was seventy-four years, two months and twenty-three days.

Sister Ruby is survived by her husband, W.C. Hollandsworth, three sons; Herbert Hollandsworth, Randolph Hollandsworth and Elder Larry Hollandsworth, seven daughters; Mrs. Vernon Gallimore, Mrs. Bernard Cox, Mrs. William Reynolds, Mrs. Majella H. Myers, Sister Ardith Harris, Mrs. Donald Henley and Mrs. Joan Henley, one brother; Toy Quesenberry, thirty-four grandchildren and twenty-three great grandchildren.

For several years Sister Ruby had been afflicted by illness. Prior to her illness she enjoyed entertaining the brothers and sisters of the church and friends. After she became afflicted she enjoyed having them visit her at the home of her daughter to sing, pray and preach.

The remains of Sister Ruby Hollandsworth were laid to rest in the Hollandsworth Cemetery in Floyd County, Virginia to await the coming of Our Lord. We believe her suffering to be over and that she will be in that number when the Lord comes to call his children home. Home where there will be no sickness, sorrow or death.

May we at the Union Church and her family bow in humble submission to the One that never makes a mistake.

A Sister in Christ I hope,
Lessie Cox

SISTER MATTIE WARREN

Sister Mattie Warren, of St. Martins, Maryland, was called away by death on March 11, 1978, after a brief period of pain and suffering. She was blessed by her Heavenly Father to welcome the change.

Sister Warren lived nearly 74 years, having been born March 29th, 1904. Her maiden name was Mattie Byrd.

She was married to Arthur Warren on October 11, 1924, and from this union came

one son, Edward Warren of St. Martins, Maryland; one daughter, Mrs. Loren Kunkle of Wilmington, Delaware; and 5 grandchildren. Her husband was an Elder and a faithful pastor of a number of Old School Baptist Churches for many years.

Sister Warren was baptized on October 17, 1964, by her husband and traveled thousands of miles with him visiting the sick and going to his preaching appointments. She continued a faithful member of her church, Indiantown Old School Baptist, in Powellville, Maryland, after his death and until sickness prevented her attending.

The churches and friends of the Salisbury Association and many others sadly miss her, yet we feel a peace that the Lord took her to His presence and we bow in submission.

Her funeral was conducted in the church of her membership by her pastor, Elder James F. Poole, and her mortal remains were buried in the Forest Grove Cemetery, Parsonsburg, Md.

Resolved; four copies of this record to be made, one for the Church, two for the family, and one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

James F. Poole, Pastor
William S. Adkins, Church Clerk

MARY ELIZABETH SIMMONS

Seldom do we know anyone as faithful to her church as Sister Simmons. When times of misunderstandings came and some left churches for one reason or another she remained faithful to the people where she had asked for a home. This love was so strong, even the many years she was blind, didn't hinder her from asking about the church when we visited her and always wanted to sing and hear of God's grace to His people. Her faith gave her to speak of the day of departing these afflictions and being with the Lord, where peace and joy ever reign.

We feel her faith was not in vain and was given and kept by One whose promises can't be broken.

Sister Simmons died March 11, 1978, in Camelot Hall Nursing Home after five years of declining health. She was born Jan. 13, 1878, in Pittsylvania County, Va., and was a member of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church.

Surviving are a daughter, Mrs. Myrtle

Lewis, of Danville; three sons, Lloyd, Weldon, and Walter Simmons, all of Keeling; and 28 grandchildren, 73 great grandchildren, and 45 great great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel by her pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, and Elder Danny Parker. Burial was in the Lewis family cemetery.

Written by Elder Julian Williams

MYRTLE HOLLOWAY HUDSON

Myrtle Holloway Hudson, widow of Frank Hudson, departed this life June 3, 1978, at the age of 79. Born October 31, 1898, she was the daughter of the late Harvey and Emma Hancock Holloway. Sister Myrtle is survived by one brother, Horace Holloway of Salisbury, Maryland; one sister, Florence Blackson, of near Parsonsburg, Maryland; one stepson, Richard Hudson of Salisbury, Maryland, and three step-grandchildren. They were a faithful family to attend her needs.

She joined the Forest Grove Old School Baptist Church, Parsonsburg, Maryland, September 1958 and remained a faithful member. She was baptized by the late Elder Arthur Warren on September 28, 1958.

Sister Myrtle was a quiet and unassuming person. She was a loyal member of the church and was a firm believer in the doctrines of the Old School Baptist faith. She knew the source of all of her strength, both spiritual and natural. She loved her brethren and friends and enjoyed entertaining in her home as long as her health permitted.

The Baptists of this area will greatly miss Sister Myrtle, but though we mourn her death, we do fully believe her death brought her into the full realization of God's promise to His children. While on earth she suffered pain and failing strength; now in the presence of her Saviour, she sings praise to Him who was her strength and salvation. She fought the good fight, she kept the faith.

Her memorial service was conducted at the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland by Elder Jack Dawsey, her pastor, and Elder James Poole. Her body was returned to the earth at the Forest Grove Cemetery at Parsonsburg, Maryland.

Written by request of the church,
Elbert M. Robbins, Church Clerk

OBITUARY

Eugene Compton on Martinsville, Virginia, our beloved father was born September the eleventh, 1888 to J. M. Compton and Martha Stultz Compton. He died January 14, 1978 in the Martinsville General Hospital. His funeral was conducted by his Pastor Ramond Payne and Elder Rufus Brown at McKee's Funeral Home of Martinsville, Va.

He was married three times and all three wives preceded him in death. He was first married to Mae Hoskins, December, 1908 and father of thirteen children, five boys and eight girls. His second wife was Ida Duram and the third was Sarrah Wells.

He was ordained deacon in the year of 1956 and was known for his hospitality and kindness to all that knew him. In spite of the snow and ice a large number of people came out to show their respects for him. He will be greatly missed, but I do believe his troubles are over for ever. He was a strong believer that the elect of God were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world.

I could say many more nice things about our Father, but it wouldn't be any news to those that knew him.

Written by his daughter,
Ada Compton Campbell

ANDREW JACKSON BIRD

On Monday, June 5, 1978, Andrew Jackson Bird, age 86, of Culloden, West Virginia, was released from all the trials and afflictions he suffered while journeying in this world.

Brother Bird has been retired for some time. He united with Glennwood Park Primitive Baptist Church in 1956.

Brother Bird was well cared for by his loving wife, Lottie, who survives, together with sons, Hamen, Elmer, and Verlan; daughters, Mrs. Sylvia Blake, Mrs. Roberta Abbott, Mrs. Zelma Lawson; one sister Mrs. Vergie Pennington, 18 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted June 8, at 11 A.M. in Mount Moriah Baptist Church by Elder Ernest Branch, and Elder Amos Hash.

He was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to rest until his Saviour takes him to his eternal

home.

Written by request of Sister Lottie, who loved him and was so patient to the end.

(Elder) Amos Hash

 ROY EDGAR MURPHY (1901 - 1977)
RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas in the infinite wisdom of God, He saw fit to call from our midst Deacon Roy E. Murphy of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church, El Dorado, Arkansas. Therefore be it resolved that we be submissive to God's will.

Brother Roy was the fourth child of seven born to Thomas Edgar and Martha Ballard Murphy on January 10, 1901. He is survived by his wife, Myrtis Terrell Murphy, a son, a daughter, six grandchildren, and ten great grandchildren, two brothers, and three sisters.

From early childhood he was a quiet and serious minded person who enjoyed being by himself-traits which lasted his full lifetime.

He united with the church February 11, 1950, and served as deacon from August 1966 until his death.

Some of his outstanding characteristics by which he will be remembered are:

- 1) His strong belief and devotion to a Sovereign God.
- 2) His quiet and modest way of studying his Bible as long as his eyesight lasted. His study was his backyard barber shop.
- 3) His enjoyment in singing and leading the hymns in praising Almighty God. He set poems to music, one of which was found and read at his funeral.
- 4) His interest in writing articles expressing his hope in Christ. These articles were never printed or made public. He had a very strong conviction in his belief and faith in God.

His funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert and Elder David E. Turner. He suffered greatly in this world and entered his eternal rest October 24, 1977.

Be it further resolved that this article be filed in the Church record and copies sent to the family and to *The Signs of The Times*.

Written by order of conference Saturday July 8, 1978 by his pastor and youngest sister.

E. J. Lambert (his Pastor)
Clemmie Bishop (his Sister)

Signs of the Times

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/78
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

BANK OF FAITH

(Continued from October)

Some bought my book on purpose to laugh at it, and then lent it to others for them to do the same, to some of whom God blessed it; and who instead of laughing at it, wept over it, and had their faith encouraged by it. Those gentlemen acted the part of the Pharisees in the Saviour's days, who would not accept of His grace themselves, yet were made instrumental in bringing the poor adulterous woman to Him. And when such persons called on those to whom they had lent my book, and were told how they approved of it, these people (like the Pharisees) sneaked away as soon as a conscience had done her office. Wisdom's children will justify their venerable mother, and disdain to slight the breasts that have afforded them perpetual nourishment, or to accuse a poor preacher for endeavouring to encourage the faith of his poor brethren by displaying the parental care, tender regard, and narrow inspection of God in His universal providence. I know the Word of God bears me out in it, and much farther than I have gone; for I have taken no notice of the hairs of our heads, which Christ says are all numbered, and not one shall ever be lost; nay, He affirms that "there shall not an hair of your head perish." (Luke 21:18) But alas! such men are not acquainted with the Spirit of God, nor with the Word of God; if they were they would acknowledge the tender mercies of God to be over all His works; (Ps. 145:9) and His love be seen in executing judgment for the fatherless

and the widow, and even to the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. (Deut. 10:18) Indeed it is not worth my while to take notice of such professors, nor even to regard their reproaches; for no person's heart can ever be right with God who laughs at His Word or works; nor can they fare any better for their contempt of the truth than the Pharisees did who came to accuse the poor woman even before Christ Himself, whom heaven had appointed for her wonderful Counsellor and ever-prevailing Advocate.

But to return to my subject. I was wrong in supposing that the letter was set as a trap to keep me at home on such a day, that they might laugh at my disappointment, as I conjectured; for it was sent by a friend; and the man came, as was appointed, to measure me for a great coat. I asked who sent him. He told me that was to be kept secret. But as I suspected the letter to be a cheat sent by some enemy, I insisted on knowing who sent him. He then said he was sent by a woman who once asked me for a root to put in her pot. I told him that I had got two very good great-coats, but stood in need of a close-bodied one; and, if the lady thought proper to make me a present of such, I should be obliged to her; but I had no need of a great-coat. The man measured me, and brought me the coat home. I offered him a small present for his trouble; but he refused it, saying that he had received orders not to take anything. Christian reader, give God the glory for His wonderful works, and let not fortune and luck rob Him of His honour; "Jesus we know, but who are they?"

Some have objected to my book, saying that asking for carnal things shows a carnal heart. It is true, that if a man follows Christ for loaves and fishes, it certainly does. But for a believer in Christ and a labourer in the vineyard to ask his Heavenly Father to bless the work of his hands, and send him food and raiment, shows just as

much carnality as the Saviour's looking up to heaven for a blessing to multiply the barley loaves in order to feed His hungry followers, when He said, "I have compassion on the multitude; I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way." (Mark 8:2, 3)

The man that robs God of His glory, and makes a god of his money, shows more carnality than one does who prays for neither poverty nor riches, but to be fed with food convenient for him, lest he be full and deny God (by giving glory to his own wisdom or good luck); or lest he be poor, and steal, and take God's name in vain (to escape the whip or the pillory). (Prov. 30:8, 9)

I found at times a great desire to read some old commentators, in order to see how my judgment agreed with theirs in some particular texts of Scripture. And when I have heard of such a book being published, I have felt a desire to have it, if I thought the author was sound. This bookish fit coming often upon me, drained my pocket now and then of a guinea, which I wanted in more ways than one. In short, I found buying of books to be like Solomon's account of compiling them, "In making many books there is no end"; nor is there any end in buying them unless you have plenty of money to go to market with. However, the Almighty condescended to stop the rapid spreading of this disease by a singular circumstance. I received the following note from an unknown friend:

"Mr. Anti-Arminius' free-grace love to Mr. Huntington, begs his acceptance of a dish of dead-men's brains. He believes most of them are of the evangelical family. They will be with him in a day or two. He is desired to ask no questions of the bearers.

"Dead-man's Place," etc.

What these dead-men's brains were I could not conjecture; but suspected something to be sent by way of contempt, as the doctrines which God had taught me are point blank against

Arminianism. Howbeit, in a day or two the dead-men's brains arrived in a very large packing-case, brought by two chairmen; which I at first refused to take in, suspecting an Arminian cheat. However, I opened the wooden skull, and examined the brains, and found them to be three or four hundred volumes of divinity, geography, history, etc.

A few days afterward he was pleased to send me another dish of brains, or a second course; which he informed me, by note, consisted of some good and some bad. And so I found them, for, among others, were the tracts of the irreverent Dr. Priestley, clothed in a suit of red morocco embroidered with gold. I did not read much of him before his priestly craft greatly disgusted me. I stripped it out of its coat of many colours, and served it as I think Christ will serve the author; that is, I cut it asunder, and appointed it a portion in the fire, as the Lord will do with all hypocrites and unbelievers. I confess to being displeased to find some precious old authors, who were capable of administering comfort to the people of God, with nothing but a sheep's skin jacket about them; while the doctor, that sworn enemy to the God of Hosts, was strutting about with an embroidered uniform, busy in undermining and destroying that comfort. "Ah doctor!" thought I, "I will put this scarlet suit on one of these old warriors who have been good soldiers of Jesus Christ; they shall walk in embroidery, for they are worthy." There were a few more sly hypocrites poked in among them, to whom I gave house room until I found them out, when I sent them bag and baggage after the doctor.

This present of books served to quench my bookish thirst for the time being; for they will take me two or three years to read, sort out, and vamp up; and then perhaps the fit may take me again. Who that friend was that sent them to me I know not, nor do I believe he

intends I ever shall.

Some time after I received these dead-men's brains, God was pleased to lay His afflicting hand upon my body, and to bring me very low; so that, as it were, He laid me aside for a month. To this I very reluctantly submitted, being very poor in pocket. My wife and eldest daughter were taken ill at the same time. However, the morrow took thought for the things of itself; for in a day or two a person brought me a guinea, another two guineas, and a few days after a lady sent me six; so that God paid me my wages while I lay useless, the same as if I had been bearing the burden of the day.

I learned one blessed lesson in this affliction, agreeable to that holy text which affirms that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." For during my illness I was several nights insensible, while the fever was at its height; and, during the time that I was in a state of insensibility as to everything round me I discerned a most glorious ray of divine light, which shone conspicuously on the Covenant of Grace agreed on in the ancient council and settlements of the Trinity, sweetly executed by Christ, and revealed by the Holy Ghost; and of the stability of it to poor penitent sinners; and, to be plain, I had no doubt of my own interest in it. This taught me a lesson, which I had long wished to learn, having often thought within myself, "Suppose I should die delirious in a high fever, or go out of the world without the use of my rational faculties, how would it be then?" I now clearly saw, by this glorious display of divine light during my state of insensibility, that the holy and blessed Spirit of God can, and I believe often does, operate as the candle of the Lord, as the Spirit of love and of power, and make His glory appear fresh in us, even if we are delirious; as saith the Psalmist, "My heart and my flesh faileth; but the Lord is the strength of

my heart, and my portion for ever." In which words, I presume, something more is meant than simply heart and flesh in a natural sense; for neither heart nor flesh can support a soul in a trying or dying hour.

The sweet and bright views which I had during my illness grew fainter as I recovered, though there still appeared a glimmering ray of it at a distance; yet I could not collect my views so as to form them into a sermon. But it afforded me great satisfaction to think of the condescension of God, who has promised to make our bed in our sickness; and that, as our days are, so shall our strength be. For my part, I comfortably believed that a soul once effectually enlightened by the Holy Ghost shall never totally lose sight of the covenant again; as appears by the prophets, who even in their darkest seasons spoke the most glorious truths. O! happy and blessed is that soul upon whom the Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in His wings; such shall find the Lord to be their everlasting light, and their sun shall no more go down.

I once had a most glorious view of a passage in the Book of Daniel during a fit of sickness which I had at Thames Ditton. The text that occurred to my mind was this, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, One like the Son of man came in the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him." (Dan. 7:13) This text rolled over my mind perpetually during the great part of my illness, bringing great light and comfort with it; and led me to see the clear and concise views that the Old Testament saints had of the blessed Saviour. One of them saw conspicuously His ancient undertaking in the eternal council of the Trinity; and His goings forth from of old, yea, from everlasting. (Mic. 5:2) Another had clear views of His coming to assume human nature. "Burnt offerings, and offerings for sin, Thou

wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me." Another saw His birth, and says, "Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given." Another saw Herod, that wretched blood-hound, grinning like a dog pursuing or chasing the Hind of the morning. Another represents Rachel as weeping in Ramah over her slaughtered grandchildren; the offspring of her Benoni, the son of her sorrow. Another saw Joseph and Mary bringing the young Child out of Egypt, and says, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son." Another saw Him sitting among the doctors, and mentions the first text He publicly handled, "The Spirit of God is upon Me," etc. Another saw His harbinger John preparing His way before Him, and making ready a people prepared for the Lord. Another saw Him tempted in the wilderness, etc., and at last placed on the pinnacle of the temple; and says, "He shall give His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways, they shall bear Thee up in their hands lest Thou dash Thy foot against a stone." (Psa. 91:11) Another saw Him in the ministry, spreading His glorious light and truth; and says, "The land of Naphtali, etc., the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

(To conclude in next issue)

Danville, Va.

Dear Editors,

My subscription to the *Signs* expired with the April issue. I am thankful that you sent me the May issue. I enjoyed every article in it, especially Elder Julian Williams' experience.

I was in the hospital for surgery in April and have just gotten to the place that I can write a little. I have been in since December. I was blessed to get to my church at Malmaison the first Sunday in December, but I haven't been able to go since then.

I wish I could absorb the wonderful truths that our Editors have been blessed to set forth, but I feel so small and insignificant. I feel unworthy to call my Lord's Name, but am thankful to say that there is a joy in just believing in my Lord and Saviour, and His great works.

My Hope, which is very little at times, is all I have to live for here in this world, since I cannot get to the meetings to fellowship with the Saints. I thank God for giving you Editors the knowledge to expound the Truth, and the whole truth of our Precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May He continue to bless each of you with good health and the ability to continue to preach only Jesus and Him crucified for our sins.

Enclosed is money to renew my subscription for one year. I did not mean to write so much, as I seem to have said so little, though it was written in love.

Pray for a little sister when you are at the Throne of Grace.

Lillian H. Holt

Willis, Virginia

Dear Brother Donald Smith,

I am sending you a letter I received from a sister who was baptized into the fellowship of Union Primitive Baptist Church at Indian Valley, Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in September, 1977, along with five other sisters. If you feel it is worthy of space, please print it in the *Signs of the Times*.

The church received a candidate for baptism at our last meeting, too. We have been blessed to have good meetings, for which I hope we are thankful.

Guy Phillips

January 9, 1978

Dear Brother Guy,

It seems that you are on my mind this morning so I'll try to write you a little. I hope you are still getting along all right. Fay and I went down to Mother's on Tuesday, December 27th and were going

to come and see you but it began snowing so hard, we had to hurry back home. It sure is cold and bad out today.

We went to Salem Church Sunday. I enjoyed it so much. Elder Agee and Willard were there. I thought Willard spoke very pretty and so did Elder Agee.

I know it must be very hard for you to be shut in and not be able to go to meetings. It seems so long to me from one 4th weekend to another. I was so glad to get to go yesterday. It was like a drink of water in a dry place. I feel this morning to be so blessed of God that I want to talk about it to someone. I don't always feel this way. Most of the time I go around complaining. But the Lord has been so good to me all the days of my life. My family has given me so much love and happiness and so little worry. This, I believe, is a gift of God and He has led me along so tenderly all through the years and then made a way for me to have a home in the Church. This seems to me to be the greatest of all blessings here on earth.

I have had many doubts and fears since I came to the Church. I was afraid I had come only because Mother did. But I have been made to see that this also was the work of God. I am so glad that Mother went first. She had waited and carried her burden so long, it was so beautiful with her, but I don't guess she has told anyone but me. On that Friday night, she was so burdened and tried to pray and beg to be shown the way. She asked her God to go with her and just start her feet to moving. She couldn't do it herself. Then at the Saturday meeting she said she tried to go up when the door of the Church was opened, but couldn't. Then when the singing began, her feet just started moving. She took hold of my arm, but I don't know if I went with her because I thought she needed to be led or because I needed leading. I don't think it matters because this was God's way of making a way for all of us who had been longing to go. Our God is so good to His

little ones, and sometimes I feel to be one of His.

I don't know why I have written you all of this, but I hope it will be of interest and a comfort to you.

Sometime when you feel like talking, call and talk to Mother. She has been so lonely since Daddy died, but she never complains. She has been so much comfort to me these last few years. It seems that I never knew her before as a person, just as a Mother.

I hope this finds you feeling better and hope that you will be able to be at the meeting the 4th weekend. We miss you when you aren't there.

With love, a little sister, I hope,
Margaret

Olney, Texas

Dear Elder Donald Smith,

I am almost 70 years old and I have had the *Signs of the Times* before me to read all my life. Sometimes my Father or Mother would let it expire because they did not feel they were able to take it.

I believe if I had never read it or the Bible either I would still be what is called an Absolute Predestinarian. I feel I have been on the Jericho Road all my life and it gives me some consolation to read the *Signs* and the Scriptures where there have been others before me and are now on the Jericho Road.

I have a little daughter I believe will get some consolation from reading the old *Signs of the Times*, so I am sending you a check to renew my subscription and also a two year subscription for her. Please use the rest as you see fit.

Elder Smith, I have at hand Volume #135, January, 1967, of the *Signs of the Times* with your ordination in it. There is also an Editorial by Elder Chick written in Jan. 1902, which I feel I can fully endorse.

I believe Christ stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of this world to save His people from their sins,

regardless of their nationality or tongue, from Adam to the end of time here of this earth. And this He did when He said, "It is finished". At the appointed time Sara shall have a son, and at the appointed time everything else that the Almighty God has willed has happened, including Jesus Christ being nailed to the cross when His hour came.

I do not know of a Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Church within a hundred miles of here, and there used to be lots of them here. Most everyone believes in good and bad luck. Some will say that destiny has a lot to do with a man's life, but when you say "predestination" and "the foreknowledge of God" they run backwards. I just cannot believe God predestinated a few things and let the rest happen by chance.

I believe that God has given doctors the knowledge and skillful hands to do operations, but they don't prolong life. He has give scientists the knowledge to build the Atomic Bomb and the television. The Scriptures says, "He will send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie and be damned". This atomic energy and gas, oil, sulphur, and coal may be God's preparation to fulfill 2 Peter 3:10. I believe I feel that I can say with Job, "I will trust Him tho He slay me". David said in II Samuel 15:25, 26, "behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." Read 139th Psalm, and also the 40th chapter of Isaiah. O what a great God we have to worship. I am not a member of the Old School Baptist Church, but I believe I am a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, and all this is a gift of God.

In Hope,
Joe Kee

Dittmer, Mo.

Dear Elder Smith,

I am sending a check for \$9.00 for 2 year subscription for the *Signs of the Times*. I didn't know just how to go about getting in touch with you, but it

looks like the Lord has found a way. I have 5 copies of the *Signs* dated back in 1952 and 1953 that my dad sent me before he passed away. He has always taken the *Signs*. I have read and reread these over and over again. They have been of great help to me.

I don't feel like going on much any more. I lost my wife last of September, 1977, and now the going is hard. I still have 6 children in school, and I must go on for their benefit. I have 11 children altogether. I just can't explain to any one how I feel since my wife passed away. I would like to go to the Old School Baptist Church, but don't know of any around here. Maybe some day I will be able to make connections with some.

I will close for now and I hope to receive the *Signs* soon.

Respectfully,
Hugh C. Harwell

New Waverly, Texas

Dear Sirs,

Please find enclosed \$10.00 for a two year subscription of the *Signs of the Times* for my brother, Mr. Jim L. Beene, 1139 B.W. 166th Street, Gardena, California. That town is just outside of Los Angeles, I believe.

When we visited him recently he asked us if we knew of any churches in that area. We do not, so thought he might get some comfort from the *Signs*. He is in very poor health, but we hope he will be able to read some.

Best wishes,
Aaron O. Beene

Dora, Alabama

Dear Editors,

You will find enclosed a check for \$5.00. Please send me the *Signs of the Times* for another year. I have been a subscriber for a number of years now, and it is so much comfort to me.

I keep most all the copies and get them

out and read them from time to time. They are as comforting now as they were when they were first published.

I am living in hope that I am a child of His.

Lydia B. Chafin

Ruston, La.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*,

I don't know how I would get along without the *Signs of the Times*. Enclosed you will find a check for a two-year subscription. I don't get to go to church as often as I once did, but am thankful to be able to be as well as I am. I can read my Bible and paper, and stay with my children.

My love and best wishes to all who love these truths. My eyesight is poor but somehow I read a lot and get great pleasure from the Bible and my *Signs*.

Sincerely,
Mrs. H. A. Patterson

How careful and anxious we should be to have two points well secured in our hearts! First, to be right as concerns the foundation. "Do I believe in the Son of God?" The next important question is: How stands the superstructure? "Has the Holy Ghost wrought anything with divine power in my soul?"

Philpot

We regret that several announcements of Union Meetings and Associations were left out of the *Signs* for the month of October. We received them too late for insertion. Will those who read these lines kindly advise their clerks that we must have announcements two months in advance or they cannot be printed.

This is by no means a schedule for our own convenience. Rather, it is the necessary timetable we have with our printer, who gives us every consideration they can.

Thank you,
Editor

PSALM 46:1

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

It is my desire to write a few words on this beautiful scripture, and I hope and trust my thoughts will be directed by the Lord; because I know that of myself I can do nothing that would be glorifying to His holy name, nor comforting nor edifying to any of His precious children; which is my desire.

This scripture says what it means and means what it says as much so as any other scripture of holy writ. Let us take a look at each of the words.

GOD. Though there be many "gods", I am sure David was talking about the true and living God; the God who created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, by the word of His power; the God who said, "Let there be light", and there was light; the God who speaks and it is done, and who commands and it stands fast; the God who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"; the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God in whom I hope I have been given to believe.

From my youth, I was taught by man the scriptures; yet I knew not the meaning of them, nor God. I was told that if I would only put my trust in Him, (I was never instructed how this could be accomplished), and accept Christ as my Savior, then He would save me; because He was constantly pleading with me to do this thing. This I thought I did, (by putting my name on the church book), but it was not so. When I was made to see what a vile, filthy, corrupt sinner I am, I immediately began seeking ways to justify myself in His eyes. But my searching only led me to conclude there was no way I could accomplish this, and that I would be justly condemned to hell. However, praise be to His holy name, He lifted this great burden, and caused me to trust Him, and to believe that His

darling Son had died that I might be justified. I thought my troubles were over, but it is written, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also suffer for his sake." Phil. 1:29. Faith is not something we can reach out and grasp at will, but is given unto us. And who would, in his fleshly mind, choose to suffer? It is not a matter of accepting Him, but whether He makes us accepted in the Beloved; not a matter of Him pleading with us to be accepted, but our begging to be accepted by Him, once we have been made to see His amazing grace. When we have been enabled to recognize this truth, we see that God is, (not can or will be if we let Him), our refuge and strength.

David not only had the Almighty God in mind, but also a particular people. God is our refuge. Not only was I taught that I must do something to be saved, but that the scriptures were written to the whole Adamic race. I have been shown this is erroneous and that they were written to the children of God only. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes." If the scriptures were written to the wise and prudent, why did Jesus say this? Are they not of the Adamic race? Christ expounded the scriptures to two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus, yet they did not understand, until their eyes were opened to know Him; and then they said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" Later at Jerusalem, Christ appeared unto the apostles and those that were gathered with them and, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." This should be sufficient proof that the scriptures are closed to everyone until God, in His own appointed time, reveals them to each individual. He has hid them from the wise and prudent, but hast revealed them unto babes. "But you can become a

child of God if you will let Him come into your heart and accept Him as your personal Savior", I was taught. What do the scriptures say about this? "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 the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13. If you are born of flesh and blood only, then you are excluded. If it is your will in the flesh to accept Him, you are excluded. If it be the will of some other man, you are still excluded. Therefore, as it is written, it must be according to the sovereign will of God if you are now, or will ever be, born again. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3:6. We have no more power of choice in our fleshly state to become the sons of God than we had in choosing our earthly parents. Paul also tells us that we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and were predestinated unto the adoption of children according to the good pleasure of God. Eph. 1:4-5. Also, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Rom. 9:8. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." These scriptures should suffice to show that the chosen and born again children are the ones referred to as "OUR" in the text.

God is our REFUGE. He is our shelter and protection in the times of danger and trouble; our haven of retreat when our enemies overwhelm us. Under the great wings of His love and mercy we find safety and comfort and strength. We would never seek this refuge if we never faced danger, difficulties or troubles; but as soon as we are overcome by the raging sea, see the boisterous

waves about to overflow us, and begin to sink as did Peter, we cry, "Help, Lord, or I perish." And the Lord is always there. He is omnipresent - everywhere present and nowhere absent - therefore He is a VERY PRESENT HELP. "The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that he cannot hear." Isa. 59:1. He hears our cries for help and He always delivers us; because we have no strength of our own to deliver ourselves. Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing." Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Let us always remember from whence cometh our help, and who is our refuge and strength; and offer our prayers and supplications unto Him daily. Praise His holy name!

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203

To believe on the Son of God to the saving of the soul is not a matter of reason but of faith; not of argument but of revelation.

Philpot

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116

THE DOWNS AND UPS OF GOD'S CHILDREN

The experience of the heir of grace is an ever-changing road. The Lord Jesus Christ described it as being a strait gate and narrow way. Not "straight," meaning without turn, bend or curve, but "strait," meaning a narrow space or passage, a situation of perplexity or distress, difficulty or need (Webster); and elsewhere in the New Testament the word translated as "narrow" is rendered by the words, "afflict, throng, suffer tribulation, and trouble" (Strong's Concordance).

The unending cycles of this life are described and symbolized variously

throughout the scriptures by hills and valleys, day and night, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, light and darkness, height and depth, captivity and freedom, war and peace, defeat and victory, calm and storm, and many other pictures expressing the fluctuating experience of God's children.

In Psalms 120 through 130 taken together, as a whole, there is an amazing sequence of spiritual hills and valleys which illustrates some of the ups and downs of a spiritual life: in Psalm 120 a distressed soul cries to the Lord; he is for peace but is opposed by lying enemies who are for war; he is down. In Psalm 121, the distressed soul looks up to his Helper, Keeper and Preserver, who is none other than Jehovah, the maker of Heaven and earth. In Psalm 122, this distressed but preserved soul rejoices at the prospect of attending to the house of God and prays for the peace of God's children and church. He is up. He looks again, in Psalm 123, to his God and maker, helplessly dependent upon Him alone, as his enemies proudly and contemptuously scorn him; the Psalmist is down again. He confesses in Psalm 124 that, in the face of men rising up against him like overwhelming waters, his continued existence is solely due to the help of the Lord who made heaven and earth and the fact that He has not given us as a prey into the enemy's teeth. The distressed soul then rejoices in the preservation of the Lord's people and prays for them, the upright in heart (Psalm 125); he is up again. Realizing the Lord's deliverance, he is made to laugh, sing and speak of the Lord having done great things for His saints; but even this rejoicing is touched with tears and weeping. Through sowing in tears, however, he yet anticipates reaping with rejoicing (Psalm 126). As he sows, he knows that the increase is of the Lord--God giveth the increase: laborers labor in vain, watchmen wake in vain, one feeds on sorrow in vain

when the Lord is not pleased to bless otherwise, providentially, in each case. Fruitfulness is of the Lord and leads to happiness and being unashamed in the face of enemies (Psalm 127). This Psalmist, who fears the Lord and walks in His ways, is blessed to do so; now he is happy, spiritually well-fed and fruitful, and he has the promise that he indeed will see the answer to his earlier prayers (in Psalms 122 and 125) for the peace of Israel (Psalm 128). He is up again; but from such an exalted state he is immediately plunged into meditations on the afflictions of the Lord's people, and he prays against their enemies, the wicked (Psalm 129). Again finding himself in the depths, he cries once more to the Lord Jehovah, bemoaning his iniquities, hoping for God's forgiveness, mercy and redemption, intent to rest only there (Psalm 130).

The sequence goes on in the Psalms which follow, but these eleven Psalms are more than enough to illustrate the range of ups and downs one goes through, sometimes almost daily, sometimes even changing from one moment to the next, while by God's grace he or she is walking the strait and narrow way.

In the 121st Psalm, the writer lifts up his eyes to the hills, his high places, and asks, from whence cometh my help? In the mind of that ancient writer as he gazed upon the beautiful hills of Judea, he knew he needed help, as all who are taught of the Lord know that they need help, grace, deliverance. He certainly did not look to those hills themselves as his help; nor did he depend upon the armies of Judeans which possibly he could rally from out of those hills to be his help in any ultimate sense. He answers his own question. "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth," the Maker of all things, who is none other than Jesus Christ, God the Son, Himself. "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible

and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist (Col. 1:16f)." These "all things" which consist by Him include our valleys as certainly as they include our hills and high places.

The literal slopes of hills and valleys are symbolic of all of life's ups and downs, and God by His predestinating grace and providence is the Maker and Controller of them all. "Thou knowest my downsitting" (valley experiences) "and mine uprising," (mountain-top experiences) said the Psalmist. How does God know them? Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18). This is not merely a bare acquaintance, and external knowledge, but determinate knowledge based upon His ordering each detail to come to pass. David said, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure (II Sam. 23:5)." Why were all things sure? Because all things were ordered by God. Hannah knew this and said, "The Lord killeth and maketh alive; He bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich; He bringeth low and lifteth up." In bold and arrogant contrast, modern carnal religion says the devil killeth and God maketh alive, Satan maketh poor, but God maketh rich, the devil bringeth low and God lifteth up. Thus the heresy is perpetuated that Satan has independent power while God is continually fighting a defensive, reactionary battle. In its essence modern religion is merely a timid form of Satan-worship. True rest and peace, however, only come through Jesus Christ and the God-given realization that (1) He has never abdicated His throne, (2) the powers that be are ordained of God, and (3) although we may not understand the dark trials of our valleys God nevertheless is in firm

control, having a good and wise purpose in every event that has ever transpired or ever will.

The hills and valleys of one's life include happiness and sadness, times of confidence and times of fear; health and sickness, defeat and victory, failure and success, tribulation and peace, death and life. They include the day-to-day secular grind as well as one's "religious hours"; these hills and valleys represent life as it is lived, which is more than Bible reading and mourning for sin, as important as these things are; but life also includes having a flat tire when you are already late for an appointment, friends and relations failing you when you feel that you need them most, and air-conditioners breaking down on the hottest day in summer. As the poet Ryland so beautifully expressed this truth:

Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise;
All my times are in thy hand,
All events at thy command.

His decree who formed the earth
Fixed my first and second birth;
Parents, native place, and time,
All appointed were by him.

He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by his wise decree.

Times of sickness; times of health;
Times of penury and wealth;
Times of trial and of grief;
Times of triumph and relief;
Times the tempter's power to prove;
Times to taste the Saviour's love;
All must come, and last, and end,
As shall please my heavenly Friend.

Plagues and deaths around me fly;
Till he bids, I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit.

Elijah, one of the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, had his ups and downs. He was up on Mt. Carmel (I Kings 18), and down in the valley of Jezreel (I Kings 18:46 - 19:3), down in the

wilderness (I Kings 19:4-7), up, down, and up again at Mount Horeb (I Kings 19:8-18). When he came down from Mount Horeb he was still "up" spiritually, even while he was in the wilderness—a point which should be well noted.

Immediately after Elijah's two "mountain-top experiences" at Mount Carmel and Mount Horeb, the people of Israel had their own hills-and-valleys experience thrust upon them. The Syrian King Benhadad provoked Israel's King Ahab into war by adding insult (I Kings 20:5f) to injury (I Kings 20:1-4. Read I Kings 20:1-43). Israel's army was "down," from the human standpoint hopelessly outnumbered, "From the human standpoint," however, is worth nothing when the predestinating grace of God is considered (Jonathan, for example, in I Samuel 14, "from the human standpoint" had no prospect for success in single-handedly overthrowing the Philistines' armed garrison; yet the human standpoint was not his consideration. He said, "It may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is NO restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.")

Applying Psalm 121 to Israel's confrontation with Syria, God had said, "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. . . The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore." In Israel's struggle against Syria, as always, the True and Living God was in the matter. He sent His prophet to Ahab saying, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Hast thou seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord (I Kings 20:13).' Thus, God teaches by experience that (1) deliverance comes from the Lord, and (2)

He, Jehovah God, is the Lord. When the battle was engaged, Israel was delivered from the overwhelming might of Syria, and God taught His elect nation the ageless truth, "Salvation is of the Lord," not merely in theory or theology, but by direct experience.

Israel's experience that day was only typical of the experience of God's children in every age; it was so with Noah in the world that then was, Abraham as a stranger in a strange land, the Israelites in Egypt and later against the seven Canaanite nations greater and mightier than they; David against Goliath, Daniel versus the powers of Babylon, the early church in the Roman Empire, and you in your struggle against the cares of this world, this life: the ravages of ill health and bodily weakness, the dragging-down tendency of society around you, the struggle with debts, the decay of material possessions; the misunderstanding of friends, loved ones, relatives; the little foxes that spoil the vines—ten thousand day-to-day problems which tend to turn our eyes from the blood of Christ and His finished work. Daily news broadcasts promoting and magnifying strife and warfare among people, races and nations; fear on the streets, fear of "the Bomb," fears about pollution and inflation, fear about food shortages and population explosions; tragedies, loved ones maimed and dying; disease, ill health, injuries and "accidents" played upon to the uttermost by insurance companies intent to sell more policies; the list could seemingly go on endlessly. Through it all, however, whether in Ahab's day or ours, one of God's constant, unswerving principles stands out: When the enemy comes in like a flood (our valley experiences, as it is valleys that flood) then the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard (Jesus Christ) against him! (Isaiah 59:19)

The Syrians were not so taught. They speculated, "Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than

we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." Typical of modern religion, Syria assumed that God is only the God of "high places," of happiness, health, and "good things" but that for one reason or another He cannot do very much about sadness, depressions, doubts, fears, and despondencies. They would have you believe that these areas are Satan's domain, somewhat "off limits" to God, who has never been very successful there, according to their doctrines.

Accordingly, a year later the Syrians numbered another army man for man, horse for horse, chariot for chariot, to test their theory scientifically. The Syrians "filled the country" with Israel before them "like two little flocks of kids," typifying God's humble poor among the Jews and those among the Gentiles.

This time the battle was to be in the valleys, the low places: the valley of the shadow of death, the valley of Baca (weeping), the gloomy recesses of doubts, fears and despair. However, it was here, in this very place, in the valley of Humiliation and not on some mountain-top, that Pilgrim vanquished the dread Apollyon in Bunyan's allegory, *Pilgrim's Progress*.

God again sent His prophet saying, "Thus saith the Lord, because the Syrians have said, 'The Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys,' therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

In the ensuing battle, 100,000 Syrians were killed by the two little flocks of Israel. The remaining Syrians regrouped in the city Aphek. "Aphek" means strength, vigor or fortress. Worldly wisdom always tries to buttress and solidify its own position. There in Aphek, a city wall collapsed on their army killing 27,000 more men.

What does this wall of Aphek say to us? Walls in the scripture speak of

salvation, clearly enough stated in Isaiah 26:1. The world and worldly wisdom sought salvation in a fortress of strength and vigor. Their very salvation, the walls which "from the human standpoint" should have saved them from Israel--their dependence upon their own strength and vigor--was the very thing which collapsed upon them and was their undoing, ruin and death! This is what will happen to everyone who carries through on the false and egotistical notion that "it all depends upon me, my strength and my vigor," in any sphere of life.

Casualties for the day: Syria, 127,000; Israel, no casualties reported. Jesus Christ is the wall of salvation around His strong city (Isaiah 26:1). The victory and rest in Him does not come from personal strength and vigor on the left, nor from a merely passive laxness on the right, but it does come from Christ Jesus Himself in a quiet assurance of His strength and power, and a God-given dependency upon Him as you face each battle (for battles there are and will be) while walking in the light of this truth: the battle is not yours but the Lord's.

The world says, "We all have our ups and downs." Perhaps it is better to think of this truth as downs first, then ups, for the promise to those in Christ is ultimately and finally up: "The Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath." May that be our lot, begun in this life and brought to full fruition in eternity by Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

In hope of life in Christ,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

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 EDITORIAL

LIGHTING ON THE FIELD OF BOAZ

And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

And Ruth the Moabite said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go my daughter.

And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech. (Ruth 2:1-3)

The name Boaz commonly interpreted means strength or "in him is strength". He was, as our text states so clearly, a mighty man of wealth, a kinsman of Elimelech, Naomi's husband, and consequently a bonafide member of Elimelech's family. In all of these attributes, Boaz prefigures the life of Christ to His people very beautifully as we shall endeavour to illustrate.

Boaz, as a kinsman of Elimelech, showed compassion upon Naomi and Ruth following their return to Bethlehem-Judah as Christ does upon His people in the wilderness of this world. Oh! how merciful God was to give His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus, to be a propitiation for the sins of His people. Forasmuch as the children of God are partakers of flesh and blood, Christ, likewise, took part of the same that through death He might destroy him that had power over death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage. To do so, He took not on Himself the nature of angels, but He took on Himself the seed of Abraham and the seed of David, wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make

reconciliation for the sins of His people. For in that He, Himself, suffered the temptations of Satan, He is able to succour them that are tempted. How wonderful!

And to enable Christ the more fully to know the frailty of our frame, He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death; He was despised and rejected of men; He was a man of sorrows and well acquainted with grief. On earth He knew no place to lay His head, and He condescended to men of low estate, suffering shame at the hands of His wicked persecutors. He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He was cut off from the land of the living. Yet in all His suffering, He went as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so, He opened not His mouth.

But He who went forth weeping and bearing precious seed will doubtless come again bringing His sheaves with Him. He shall see His seed for His days shall be prolonged and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. This is Christ Jesus, the real kinsman of Naomi's husband, Elimelech, and revealed to us in type by Boaz. Christ is our elder brother, our fellow sufferer and our great high priest who maketh intercession for us before the great Jehovah. Indeed, He is a kinsman, this man Christ Jesus, and because He was the Word made flesh and dwelt among us, He can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities.

It is interesting to note that as soon as Naomi and Ruth arrived at Bethlehem, Boaz became the central figure in the account. Immediately he took pre-eminence over all others for he was a mighty man of wealth. And indeed he must needs be to reveal Christ to us as the heir of all things and the one whom God set over the works of His hands. Boaz superintended the field of gleaning to show us Christ having all things put

in subjection unto Him. The name of Boaz became uppermost in the mind of Naomi and Ruth to elevate the name of Christ as being more excellent than any other name and more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir. Boaz owned the part of the field where Ruth gleaned to reveal Christ to us as the one anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. Indeed Boaz was a mighty man of wealth to show us the richness of God's grace as revealed in Christ Jesus.

A similar vision of Christ as a mighty man of wealth is evident in the life of David when he went as a young shepherd boy to defend Israel against the Philistines of Gath, and in particular against the giant Goliath. Goliath represents within us that sin that doth so easily beset us, even the sin of unbelief which culminates eventually in death for the soul that sinneth, it shall surely die. None could be found among the Israelites who would go forward to conquer this giant who came forth from his camp each morning and evening for forty days to defy the armies of the living God. Then David came clad in his shepherd's garb carrying only a staff, a bag or scrip, a sling and five smooth stones out of the brook. It was enough, for one smooth stone hurled with deadly accuracy was sufficient to slay Goliath, the giant, who stood over eleven feet in height. Now what reward was to be given to the man who would kill this Philistine of Gath. Indeed we learn from I Sam. 17:25 that the king would enrich him with great riches, and would give him his daughter, and cause his father's house to be free in Israel. Thus David was rewarded, but is not this a beautiful picture of Christ who came and swallowed up the last enemy death for His people and having done so was endowed with the riches of His Father's throne, was given the King's daughter to wed and caused His Father's house (the elect) to be free in Israel?

I believe, dear children of God, that the richness of God's grace as revealed

in Christ Jesus is explicitly described in Psalm 103 when David blessed the Lord with all that was within him and exhorted his soul to forget not all of God's benefits. In this moment of extreme thankfulness, David cried, "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." Then he enumerated all of God's benefits as follows: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things: so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." If we are given these benefits, numbering five in all, are they not sufficient and all embracing? Are they not a measure of the sure mercies of David and the richness of God's grace? Are they not, indeed, the five smooth stones out of the brook any one of which is sufficient to slay the giant unbelief within us? Indeed, Christ, in possession of these treasures, which He has stored up for His people is a mighty man of wealth, the genuine giver of every good and perfect gift, a clear reflection of whom is found in Boaz as he is manifested in the book of Ruth.

Now Boaz was a kinsman of Elimelech, Naomi's husband. Let us examine this relationship more closely for no book in the Old Testament provides a clearer insight into the generation of Jesus Christ than the Book of Ruth, but to appreciate its significance in this regard we must make a careful study of the two genealogies of Christ given in the New Testament. The first of these is recorded in Matthew 1:1-17 and the second is recorded in Luke 3:23-38.

The Gospel as written by Matthew reveals Christ as the King of the Jews and in keeping with this point of view traces the genealogy of our Saviour from Abraham through Boaz and Ruth to Obed, Jesse and David and forward

through David's son Solomon to Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. Matthew does this to reveal Jesus as the "seed of David" or a descendent born of David's line, if you prefer, and thereby possessing royal lineage making Him an heir to the throne of David the great king of Israel. Christ's entitlement to the throne of David was not impeded in any way, because Joseph was not really His father since He was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit, because by Jewish rule the man who "brought up" the child was designated the father or parent even though he may not have begotten him. By referring to Genesis 5:3-32 and Genesis 11:10-32 this same genealogy as given in Matthew 1:1-19 can be traced all the way from Adam through his son Seth to Noah and in turn through Noah's son Shem to Abraham and Sarah. Thus the natural lineage of Christ through the "father" figure Joseph can be traced forward all the way from Adam. Matthew does not include all of Christ's ancestry in his gospel however, for a very specific reason. Instead of beginning the generation of Jesus Christ with Adam, he does so with Abraham, because he purposes to show us Christ as the King of the Jews, and Abraham, as the "father of a multitude", was the founder of the Jewish nation. Before turning our attention from this genealogy in Matthew, however, let us make two further very significant observations. First, David is the key figure in this lineage because Matthew is primarily concerned with showing us Christ as the "seed of David" and consequently the heir to his throne. Second, the lineage of David comes through his son Solomon, a fact we shall refer to later when we examine the genealogy in Luke.

Now let us turn to Luke 3:23-38. At first glance this genealogy of Christ seems to describe His lineage through Joseph as well only this time all the way back to Adam. A closer examination of

the royal ancestry, however, enables us to discern even more significant relationships in the family tree which we shall enumerate as follows. As the genealogy begins in verse 23, note the expression, "And Jesus.....the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli". But Joseph, according to Matthew 1:16, is the son of Jacob. Is this, therefore, a contradiction? No, not really, for the marginal reference beside verse 23 of Luke Chapter 3 gives us the key. From this reference, we see that "son of Heli" should read "son-in-law of Heli". Consequently, this genealogy is really that of Mary, who gave birth to Christ and is therein not a repetition of Matthew's ancestral documentation but a complement to it identifying the lineage of Christ through Mary His earthly mother. How wonderful!

Now this view of Christ as the Word made flesh is in keeping with the Gospel according to Luke for he presents our Saviour as the "man Christ Jesus", the one who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, the one who knows the frailty of our frame and the one who makes intercession for us before His Father's throne. What better way could Luke treat this viewpoint of Christ than to present His lineage through His earthly mother Mary directly and completely to "Adam, the son of God" who, of course, is our federal head.

Careful observation of Luke's ancestral tree also reveals that Mary's lineage traces itself back to Boaz, Obed, Jesse and David just as Joseph's did, but this time through David's son Nathan instead of Solomon. In this "generation of Jesus Christ" then, from Adam to David provides common ancestry to both Mary and Joseph as a trunk of a great tree which separates into two main branches; one leading from David's son Solomon through to Joseph and the other from David's son Nathan through to "Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (Matt.

1:17) Matthew's genealogy of Joseph shows Christ as "the seed of David according to the flesh" and heir to the throne of David, while Luke's genealogy of Mary reveals Christ as the "seed of the woman" who would bruise the serpent's head. Common to both the ancestry of Joseph and Mary, of course, is David the beloved King of Israel from whence comes the importance of the Book of Ruth for in it we have revealed to us how David's great grandmother Ruth was brought from Moab (a gentile land) to meet and marry Boaz a kinsman of Elimelech, Naomi's husband in the city of Bethlehem-judah. It is interesting to note in Matthew 1:5,6 the specific reference to Ruth in the "generation of Jesus Christ" as the wife of Boaz for this union produced Obed who in turn begat Jesse who begat David. Ruth was a Moabitess or a Gentile and her inclusion in the lineage of Christ signifies the grafting in of the Gentiles as a branch of the true vine and proof positive of the fact that both Jew and Gentile are made one in Christ.

One further observation! Both the genealogies of Matthew and Luke to which we have been referring, reveal Christ's ancestry from the time He was the "Word" made "flesh" and dwelt among us and these ancestries can be traced back from Joseph and Mary all the way to Adam. But Christ as the "Word" was from the beginning and long before Adam. John's gospel puts it this way, "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." (John 1:1,2) In addition to preceding Adam, Christ was not merely the "first begotten" of the Father but the "only begotten" of the Father. The rest of the household of faith came by adoption, but nevertheless by adoption they are not only children but heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Now the fact that Christ not only preceded the first man Adam but later became human flesh and was

born among the children of God makes Him no less than the One who "was" and "is" and "is yet to come" and above all our "elder brother". This relationship makes Christ a near kinsman to us just as Boaz was said to be a kinsman of Elimelech, Naomi's husband.

"And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace." A field is an area of the earth in which the soil is cultivated, seed is sown, plants take root from whence springs forth the blade, the ear and then the full corn in the ear. Finally when the crop ripens, the field becomes white with harvest. In Matthew, Chapter 13, verse 44, we find that, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." Christ is the man who came and sold all that he had, that is He gave His life, to purchase the field in order to secure the treasure which, of course, represents His people. In the same Chapter in Matthew when Jesus explained the parable of the wheat and the tares to the disciples, He answered as follows, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels."

It is also interesting to note that when Joseph was raised up in Pharaoh's house in Egypt, the famine became so widespread and severe and prevailed over the Egyptians to such a degree that Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. In this manifestation of sovereignty, Joseph reveals the majesty of the Lord as He sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof appear as grasshoppers before Him. It is Christ who was made heir of

all things, who was set over the works of the Father's hands and who had all things put in subjection under His feet. We cannot help but obtain a glimpse of the supremacy of Christ in all His grandeur along with our own unworthiness when we view Ruth approaching the field of Boaz in order to glean the ears of corn after him in whose sight she hoped to find grace.

Corn is a generic name for the several cereal grasses cultivated in Palestine, and so staple that corn and wine stand figuratively for most of the vegetable produce of the fields according to Genesis 27:28. The chief varieties of "corn" were wheat, barley, spelt and millet. Famine or plenty pretty well depended upon the supply of corn. Spiritually corn represents heavenly food, for in Psalm 78:24, we find that David praised God for having rained down manna upon the children of Israel to eat in the wilderness or in other words David declared God "had given them of the corn of heaven". Indeed, corn is Christ, for "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" as Christ did in His death becoming the first fruits of them that slept. It is also informative to note in Leviticus 2:14,15 that when green ears of corn, even corn beaten out of full ears were offered as a meat offering, they were to be offered with oil and frankincense. How descriptive this is of our experience for when we are given to feed upon the rich morsels of His word (the corn) it is eaten with the oil (the application of the spirit) and received with thanksgiving which evokes prayer and praise (the fragrance of incense) before the Throne of the Most High.

Ruth's desire to glean ears of corn in the field of Boaz is representative of the desires of every child of grace for we do hunger and thirst after righteousness. We crave the sweet morsels of heavenly food and need the fresh courage daily to

press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Ruth desired to glean ears of corn after Boaz in whose sight she believed she would find grace. Grace is the free and unmerited favour of a benevolent Providence bestowed upon a people chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is, also, a prescriptive demonstration of the mercy of God above the law upon all who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Furthermore, it is the predetermined result of the effectual calling of a child of Jehovah by the Holy Spirit and the sweet evidence of the love of God as it is manifested in the believer by the Lord God and reciprocated to Him by the object of His affection. As the precious evidence of our hope of mercy, grace enables our weary souls to exalt the name of Jesus as the Lord, Our Righteousness. As Doddridge expresses it, "Grace all the work shall crown, Through everlasting days: It lays in heaven the topmost stone, and well deserves the praise." It was this evidence of divine favour that Ruth was searching for in the field of Boaz.

And Naomi said unto her "Go, my daughter." The Household of Faith is ever desirous to encourage the little ones as they exhibit true evidence of being exercised in the way. Indeed, Jesus said to Legion after he had cleansed him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." (Mark 5:19) And this is the prerogative of Christ, is it not, to set the time and to give the direction? And if so, what then is the obligation of the Church? Is it not to provide the atmosphere of love and understanding? Paul identified this obligation in his epistle to the Hebrews when he said, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." Surely this is the epitome of a Godly walk in a Godly house for God is love;

and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Now the desire of Ruth to glean in the field of Boaz was fulfilled for she went and began gathering the ears of corn in the field after the reapers. From Matthew 13:30, 39, we know that the reapers are angels. It is they who are sent to prosper the way of the saints, and at harvest time are commissioned to separate the tares from the wheat. The fact that Ruth gleaned in the field after the reapers is significant for she followed those who are sent ahead to guide, direct, protect, provide for, minister unto and comfort the elect of God. In no less measure were certain angels appointed to minister unto Jesus when He was on earth for the angel of the Lord announced His conception, heralded His birth and proclaimed His resurrection and angels in concert witnessed His manifestation in the flesh, ministered unto Him following His temptation by Satan and stood ready to bear Him up in their hands lest at any time He might dash His foot against a stone. If angels were entrusted to minister unto Christ, how much more might they be entrusted with Ruth. Indeed, Ruth, and likewise you and I are in good hands if we are one of His.

And Ruth's "hap" was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz. This expression has always seemed beautiful to the writer for it evokes a glimpse of my own pathway as it wandered here and there and then was brought (I trust) to the same field to glean. How, dear child of God, did you "hap" to come to this field too? Can we not say with the hymn writer, "The steps that I tread, and the station I fill, My Father determined and wrote in His will."? Volumes could not contain the travels, the afflictions, the sorrows, the joy and the thanksgiving of our earthly trail. But in trust unto Him, we hope and pray it was all designed to bring us to His feet, to lay us low and keep us there.

And with these thoughts of Ryland, we close, "Sovereign Ruler of the skies! Ever gracious, ever wise! All my times are in thy hand, - All events at thy command." But, why, dear reader, why, if I am His, why me?

Humbly,
(Elder) Stewart McColl

What! at peace with the Father, and at war with His children? It cannot be.

Flavel

Atlantic, Virginia

Dear Editors,

I believe that it is time to renew my subscription, so enclosed you will find a check for two years, with the balance to use as you see fit. It means so much to have this paper coming into our home every month and we do look forward to it.

I think often of all of you and wish I could put down of paper the things that are in my heart, but it is not possible. The Lord has been so gracious to me, that if I could spend every waking minute of every day praising Him it would be a pitiful offering. But alas, I find that much of my time is spent in attending to the things of this world, and His presence seems clean gone. So mostly my condition is one of a begger-imploing Him for a sweet visitation, a manifestation of His Spirit with me, or simply a sweet thought of heavenly things.

I have had my hills and valleys of late (and it does seem that there are more valleys than hills), but trust that He has blessed me with a thankful heart and a knowledge that all things are in His hand, and working out to my benefit if so be that I am one of His. The kind providences of the Lord to me have been many and beyond recounting and just recently He has blessed us with a fine, healthy grandson who is dear to us already, and I feel truly, from my heart to say, "All is well".

May God continue His blessings on all of you and keep you in the Way. My earnest prayer is that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart may be acceptable in His sight!

In bonds of love,
Dixie Davis

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I KINGS 6:12

ELDER BEEBE—DEAR SIR:—If you will give your views, through the *SIGNS*, on 1 Kings 6:12, you will much oblige me. Does it not convey the idea that there are conditions on the part of Solomon, which lies entirely to his choice, on his part, whether or not he will accept the warning given, in order to obtain the promise given in the thirteenth verse? And does it not also convey the idea that it is left entirely optional with Solomon, whether or not he will receive the counsel? This, with other similar passages, it appears difficult for me to reconcile with absolute predestination, since there are numerous passages in the Scripture wherein the command, precept or exhortation is given as if it were in the power of the creature to obey or not to obey. I only ask for information, and would be glad of perusing an editorial from you on this subject.

Yours truly,
J. Croom

Mifflin, Tennessee, April 14, 1860

REPLY

1 Kings 6:12, "Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments and keep all my commandments, to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David, thy father."

The first interrogative presented by our correspondent, on this text, is "Does it not convey the idea that there are conditions on the part of Solomon which lie entirely to his choice, on his part, whether or not he will accept the warning given in order to obtain the promise given in the thirteenth verse?"

To this inquiry we answer, it does not convey any such idea to our mind, and we should be greatly shocked if it did. What could be our views of the eternal perfections of Jehovah, especially of his truth, and of his immortality, were we compelled to believe that Solomon, as a man, a finite being, had power to decide whether God should or should not perform the things which he had promised David that he would perform? Or that God's promise to dwell among the children of Israel and not forsake them, depended for its accomplishment on the volition, not of his own will, but on that of a poor, finite, fickle man. In this case a promise was made and sworn to by the immutable God, and David relying on the certainty of its accomplishment had died in faith, but now, according to the horrid suggestion, we are to understand him to waive his own truth and holiness, and submit the whole matter to the decision of Solomon. What confidence could we repose in any of the promises of God, if we were compelled to believe that God could or would change the thing that had gone out of his mouth?

"Let frightened rivers change their course,
And backward hasten to their source;
Swift through the air let rocks be hurl'd,
And mountains like the chaff be swirl'd,
Let suns and stars forget to rise,
Or quit their stations in the skies,
Let heaven and earth both pass away,
Eternal truth shall ne'er decay,
A God, all truth, can never lie."

That God had predestinated the building of the temple in Jerusalem, and that he had made known his purpose to David, before Solomon had any knowledge of the matter, and perhaps before he was born, establishes the doctrine of predestination which these queries seem to be calculated to assail and to controvert. Instead of Solomon having power to sway the action of God, he, with all other finite beings, was himself subject to the power and providence of God. This Solomon understood when he wrote the proverb, "The King's heart is

in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he will." — Prov. 21:1. To any one who knows the Lord, this declaration of the wise man will commend itself; but what would be the result if this text could be transposed and made to read, The heart, or will of God, is in the hand of man, to be turned whithersoever man willeth? Could such a perversion of the truth of God add to the security of the children of Israel, or to any other of the creatures of God? Jehovah has himself settled this last question, "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob, (or children of Israel) are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6.

It is very true that Solomon lived under the covenant of works, and that the promises of that covenant were conditional, in form, but not in any way to lessen the sovereignty of God, or make it necessary for him to wait their decisions. He has declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And we are expressly informed that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. And hence it is that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In giving the ceremonial law to Israel with all its conditional provisions, the precise effect it should have on them was fully known to God; for known unto him are all his works from the foundation of the world. That law was the shadow of things to come, and embraced the types and figures of what should be more clearly understood under the new, the better covenant, which is unconditional, and abounds with God's immutable wills and shalls. None but temporal blessings, such as corn, wine and oil, were conditionally promised in that covenant, none but temporal curses were conditionally threatened by it. No spiritual blessings ever were or can be promised conditionally, for they are all embraced

in that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure.

Let us now consider the true import of the text in its typical and prophetic application to one who is greater than Solomon. It is not difficult to show that Solomon, in many respects was a brilliant type of Christ: As the son of David and occupant of his throne; as king of Israel; as builder of the temple in Jerusalem, and especially as so identified with the subjects of his government that the great matter of God's presence with Israel was thus connected inseparably with his obedience to all the precepts and commandments of God. Christ, who is the Son of David, in a spiritual sense, is prefigured in this subject, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit a priest upon his throne, &c. (Zech. vi. 13.) This is the key of our subject. Leave Jesus out of the Scriptures, and what would they be to us? But how easy to understand, that the whole matter of the salvation of God's elect, the children of Israel spiritually considered, all rested upon the perfect work of our dear Redeemer. Mark with what force and beauty the text applies to Christ. Concerning the house which thou art in building. What house was Jesus in building? His church; for he said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He shall build the temple of the Lord. Paul says to the church of God, "Ye are God's building." Peter says, "Of lively stones, built up, a spiritual house," &c. Again, Paul says to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, "And ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself, (not Solomon) being the chief corner, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."—Eph. ii. 20, 21. The weighty responsibilities resting upon Christ, and which he came down from heaven to execute, were all "concerning the

house, which he is in building." Such was the vital relations he bore to his people, that all the responsibilities resting on him concerned them, as the house which he was in building.

If we understand Christ to be the anti-typical Solomon of our text, we see all the responsibilities of our acceptance resting on him. And he says, "Lo, I come! in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God." And in doing the will of God, he was to fulfill all the jots and tittles of the law, to walk in the statutes of that law, to execute the judgments or decisions of the eternal counsel, and to keep all the commandments, and to walk in them. This he undertook, and this he has finished. The law is honored, justice is satisfied. The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake, and the promised results of his obedience are secured to all the children of Israel, that is to all the spiritual seed, for "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." The word which God had spoken to David, his father, as recorded in the eighty-ninth Psalm, and elsewhere, is secured to those for whom he lived and died and arose from the dead. And furthermore it is now certain that God will dwell with his children, and that he will never leave them or forsake them.

The second query proposed, is, "And does it not also convey the idea that it is left entirely optional with Solomon whether or not he will receive the counsel?" If left entirely optional with Solomon, then God retained no power of decision, laid aside his own will altogether, and consented to be governed wholly by Solomon's will. Does such a conclusion seem reasonable? Does God work after the counsel of a creature's will? Be astonished, O heavens, that such a question could be for one moment seriously entertained by any rational being. The option of Solomon was under the control of God. Solomon's testimony before referred to prove this; besides he

says, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue are both of the Lord." But our querist virtually asks us whether Solomon's heart and actions were governed by the Lord, or the Lord's course governed by Solomon, and seems strangely to favor the idea that God's ways were governed by Solomon.

"This," says our correspondent, "with other similar passages, it appears difficult for me to reconcile with absolute predestination." But why so? If the matter, as you seem to suppose, was left entirely to the option of Solomon, and Solomon decided by his option whether God should dwell with Israel or not, that was predestination; only man is the sovereign, and God obeys. Now, perhaps after all, the Arminians would subscribe to absolute predestination, so defined as to rob God of all controlling government, and place the royal diadem upon the head of a poor, finite man. We do not wonder that those who stumble at the eternal sovereignty of God, should fail to see the harmony of the Scriptures of truth. There is not a text in the Bible that more clearly, fully and unavoidably teaches to our mind the unchanging purpose of God, and his absolute predestination, than this on which we have written these remarks.

The doctrine of predestination does not dispute the application of the commands, exhortations and precepts enjoined by the Scriptures, and demanding obedience; but it shows that if the fear of God is in our hearts, God has there implanted it, and if we be willing or obedient, it is because God has absolutely predestinated that Christ's people shall be willing in the day of his power. And it asserts that it is God that worketh in their hearts, both to will and to do his good pleasure. Our friend, of course, only asks these questions for information. We will not question his honesty, but pity his deplorable want of understanding of divine things. May

the Lord, if consistent with his immutable will, enlighten the eyes of his understanding, that he may see and rejoice in the divine government of the All-Wise and Infinite Jehovah.

Upon the subject of the Absolute Predestination of all things, and the free volition of the human will, many seem to be perplexed. They cannot see how God can positively ordain and control all the actions and movements of men and devils, and yet in such a way as to leave man to act voluntarily and justly accountable to God for his actions. Could we, poor finite beings, comprehend the infinity of God, we might be able to trace his footsteps in the mighty deep, and his ways would no longer be past our finding out. Who will dispute that the feathered tribes of the air move voluntarily from place to place? We can perceive no restraint upon them, yet we are told that not a sparrow can fall to the earth without our heavenly Father. Does God care for or provide for sparrows, attend to the wants of ravens, and number the hairs on our heads, and has he irrevocably ordained that not a hair shall fall to the earth without an order from his throne, and left the final destiny of mankind unsettled and undetermined?

See by the laws of nature with what regularity the marshalled hosts of heaven fill their orbits, and move in their appointed spheres, without collision, for ages, while moving with a rapidity which mocks our vain attempts to comprehend them, and then inquire, "Has God in wisdom decreed their every movement, and left the final destiny of man to rest on chance or uncertainty?" That Infidels and Arminians should belch out their maniac ravings against the predestination of God, is only what we reasonably expect from them, but that any who are born of God, taught by his Spirit, and who believe the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election, can doubt the all pervading providence of God, is strange indeed to us. Many clear

examples are given us in the sacred Scriptures of the absolute purpose and determinate counsel of God, determining beforehand the result of the wicked actions of men and devils, and yet the perfectly voluntary action of men and devils, in bringing those very results to pass.

Herod acted out the unrestrained wickedness of his murderous heart when he sought to slay the child Jesus, but by his wicked machinations, occasion was furnished for the fulfillment of the Scriptures: "Out of Egypt have I called my son." He also acted without restraint when, by his wicked action in the murder of the infants of his dominion, God caused to be fulfilled the prediction of "Rachel weeping for her children," &c. The brethren of Joseph acted voluntarily in selling him into Egypt, yet God had a design to be accomplished in his being thus conveyed to that place. The Jews acted according to their wicked inclinations when they persecuted the primitive saints, and drove them from their homes, but God made their wicked conduct the occasion of the gospel's being preached everywhere. Our Lord Jesus Christ was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, when the Jews and Romans crucified him with wicked hands.

In view of these examples of the power and absolute government of God over all the events of time, what folly, what madness, what infidelity, for men to deny his predetermination of all things. He is supremely holy, in the broadest sense; but can we believe that to maintain his spotless purity he must yield up his government or any part of it? Must devils be unchained, and all the flood-gates of wickedness thrown open, and Chance enthroned to rule in his place, in order to preserve the unblemished glory of the eternal God? Is it not much more difficult to imagine how God's majesty could be sustained, if anything could possible transpire by chance, or inde-

pendently of an order from his throne? None can rejoice in spirit that the Lord God Omnipotent doth reign; that he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, who desire to pluck the crown of ruling power from his head, and place the sacred diadem on Chance. Who would feel secure under his protecting providence if he were not the only and blessed Potentate? or how could we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, if we did not know that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will?

Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., May 15, 1860.

NEARLY HALF A CENTURY AGO

The above editorial was written by the founder of this paper, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and at that time the *Signs of The Times* had the largest circulation it ever had, and of its more than ten thousand readers, none then entered a protest against the doctrine set forth either on the subject of predestination or conditional blessings. It has been charged by some that the *Signs* has changed, and its position today on these principles is different from what it formerly advocated, but we could not write anything stronger in defense of predestination, and unconditional spiritual blessings, than the above editorial. Especially would we call attention to the expression on first column, page 218, viz: "No spiritual blessings ever were or can be promised conditionally, for they are all embraced in the covenant which is ordered in all things and sure." This expression went unchallenged by the readers of the *Signs* in 1860, and if it is refuted today by any claiming to be Old School or Primitive Baptists, which has changed from the Old Baptist doctrine, the *Signs* or the dissenters?

B. L. Beebe

April 1, 1903

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**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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BANK OF FAITH

(Continued from November)

Zechariah saw Judas selling his Master; and tells the Rabbis who bought His blood to cast the thirty pieces of silver to the potter. David saw the band of soldiers apprehending Him in the Garden, and going back and falling to the ground, when Jesus said, "Whom seek ye?" and says, "When they came to eat up My flesh they stumbled and fell." Isaiah saw Him nailed to the cross, "as a nail fastened in a sure place," that every vessel of mercy, even from the cups to the flagons, might hang all their hopes on Him with safety. And all the glory of their salvation must hang there too. (Isa. 22:23-25) David beholds this, and says, "They have pierced My hands and My feet. I may tell all My bones: they look and stare upon Me. (Psa. 22:16, 17) David hears His confession and complaint, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Psa. 22:1) And expresses the cruel insults of His murderers, which were afterwards repeated, "He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver Him. Let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him." David saw them giving Him gall for His meat and vinegar for His drink; parting His garments among them, and casting lots upon His vesture; and after that His yielding up His Spirit to God, and sinking into shades of death. Isaiah saw His resurrection, and says, speaking by the Holy Spirit, "With My dead body shall they arise." Hosea saw Him vanquishing death, "O death, I will be thy plagues! O grave, I will be thy destruction! repentance shall be hid

from Mine eyes." David saw Him ascend, after He had captured the devil, sin, death, and the world; saying, "He hath ascended on high, He hath led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." David also saw Him enter the royal pavilions of heaven, when he says, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall enter in." This was prefigured when the ark was brought into the tabernacle in Zion; and realized when the anti-typical Ark ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, as "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." (Heb. 8:2) David likewise hears the heavenly anthems sung, "Who is the King of glory? The Lord of Hosts, mighty in battle." He then reflects on his own blessed hope, saying, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness." (Psa. 17:15)

Daniel's faith takes him up to where David left Him; namely, just as He ascended; and saw the Son of Man come with the clouds of heaven. By which may be meant, first the cloud that received Him out of the apostles' sight. But the angelic hosts, and the spirits of the just made perfect, seem chiefly to be intended here; the cloud of witnesses with which we are compassed about, (Heb. 12:1) who fled as a cloud to the Rock of Ages, or, "as the doves to their windows." (Isa. 60:8) And who, like a cloud, fled, and spread their heavenly testimony among men, while "their doctrine dropped as the rain, and their speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deut. 32:2)

"He came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him." (Dan. 7:13) The angels attended His glorious Majesty as their confirmative Head; and the spirits of just men made perfect followed Him, their Redeemer,

Saviour, and Almighty Deliverer; and attended Him to the Ancient of Days; in all the glorious acclamations of heaven they brought their glorious Head near before Him; mercy and truth being met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. The grand Creditor was well pleased at the infinite satisfaction given by the Surety, while all the hosts of heaven attended the solemn coronation of the King of kings and Lord of lords, who appeared in His garments (of human nature) dipped in blood.

This was typified by the coronation of Solomon, while the acclamations of the attendants made the earth ring again. But it was verified at the coronation of Christ, after He had vanquished all His enemies; there "was a crown given unto Him; and He went forth conquering and to conquer." (Rev. 6:2) Or, as it is in Dan. 7:14, "There was given unto Him dominion and glory and a kingdom; that all people, nations and languages, should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

The triumphant Church above, who is the mother of us all, is the mother of Christ also, as touching His human nature; even as Christ's Father is our Father (John 20:17) by spiritual regeneration. Of Zion it shall be said, that He was born in her; (Psa. 87:6) even as we are said to be born of God. (John 1:13) "Salvation is of the Jews; (John 4:22) "of them as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." (Rom. 9:5) And it is plain that His venerable mother, the triumphant Church, dropped her crown before Him, and crowned Him with the praise and glory of all her salvation at His glorious coronation, when God set His King upon His holy hill of Zion. (Psa. 2:6) And we must, while here below, copy her, and submit to the sovereignty of His grace, His moral government, and eternal reign. "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion,

and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith His mother crowned Him in the day of His espousals, and in the day of the gladness of His heart." (Song 3:11)

He ascended His throne as David's hereditary Son, and as a lamb slain, to show that He was to appear as a perfect sacrifice, once, for all His members; and now as an ever-living interceding priest, to make intercession for us. "He shall be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech 6:13) So that "He ever lives to make intercession for us."

Thus God led me to trace the blessed Saviour up to His glorious exaltation on His throne; a blessed view! to see His human nature, which is a part of ours, exalted so high, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named." (Eph. 1:21) His being a lamb slain shows Him to be a sacrifice as well as a priest; and His throne shows His divine sovereignty, as it is written, "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes." The seven horns were represented to me as showing His perfect and universal dominion, or as representing His sevenfold government. First, He is "King of glory". (Psa. 24:10) Secondly, He is "King of Zion." (Psa. 2:6) Thirdly, He is "King of Nations". (Jer. 10:7) Fourthly, He is "King of (all earthly) kings". (Rev. 19:16) Fifthly, as the God of Armies, He is King over all devils. (Eph. 4:8) Sixthly, as the Holy One, He is king over all sin. (Rom. 6:14) And seventhly, as the resurrection and the life, He is king over death; (Hos. 13:14) or the Lord of life and death. (Rom. 14:9) This is thy King, O Zion, who once came unto thee riding upon an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass; who is now risen, exalted, and crowned.

God the Father delivers the book with all its seals into His hand; containing the Father's will, the number and names

of all the elect, and all the promises made to Christ and His seed, which were these: first, God promised that of the fruit of David's body He would raise up Christ to sit on David's throne, and build up His throne to all generations; a throne of grace to all generations of the covenant line; for all generations shall submit to either His iron rod, or peaceable sceptre. This, you see, is fulfilled; He is crowned and seated upon the throne of David, according to the promise, "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform (hath performed) this. (Isa. 9:7)

Secondly, that He would give Him the heathen for His inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for His possession. Not that all the human race are the special gift of God the Father to Him, nor were all redeemed by Him; for all are not sheep. No; but God gave Him power over all flesh (to awe and control them), that He might give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him. (John 17:2)

Thirdly, the Father promised to give Him the sure mercies of David. These mercies given to Him as a federal head, were to be sure to all His seed, or offspring; for loving-kindness is never to be taken from Him, nor the faithfulness of God to fail them. This mercy, given to Him as a federal head, was given to Him as a king likewise, and is secured to all His subjects, so that it is to terminate in one single kingdom; a kingdom that will outlive all other kingdoms, and be proof against all revolutions and commotions whatever; as it is written, "Once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptable with reverence and godly fear." (Heb. 12:26, 28) This kingdom

shall demolish all earthly kingdoms, and make them like the chaff of the summer's threshing floor; survive them all, and appear the only kingdom in the "new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Thus mercy shall be built up for ever, and (God's) faithfulness shall be established in the very heavens." (Psa. 89:2)

Fourthly, God promised that the Saviour should see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied; that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in His hand; that kings should shut their mouths at Him; and that He should have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. That every chosen vessel should be gathered by Him and gathered to Him as their proper Head; be governed by Him as their rightful Sovereign, and wait for His second coming as the grand Accomplisher of the whole divine scheme of man's salvation and glorification.

Then He shall appear to be admired by all that know and love the truth, when the world shall be destroyed, the mystery of God finished, the Church exalted at the right hand of the King; in which will be manifested the secret intention of God, which was to display "the riches of His grace and glory by Christ Jesus."

The angels above, and the spirits of just men made perfect, who are perfect in knowledge when compared to us, understanding these things better than we can in this state of ignorance, seem wonderfully enraptured at the exaltation and coronation of their great Confirmer and Deliverer; and each host, both angels and glorified souls, sung their coronation carols. The spirits of just men made perfect began first, as it was impossible for them to keep silence when the Lord of hosts appeared in human nature, as one that hath trod a wine vat; or as a man of war, with His garments rolled in blood. They saw the scars of war on His humanity, and the sword of eternal victory by His side, a

proof of His Deity. "He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." (Rev. 19:16) I say the redeemed first began their carol. This was prefigured when He rode triumphant into Jerusalem on an ass; the multitudes pulling off their clothes, covering the ass, spreading boughs, casting their garments in the way, and crying, "Save, Lord, we beseech Thee," or "We beseech Thee, send prosperity." But it was realized when Jesus entered the heavenly Jerusalem above, not on an ass, but in the triumphal chariot of an Almighty conqueror, and received the kingdom; while His enemies in local Jerusalem sent after Him, saying, "We will not have this Man to reign over us." But when He had received the kingdom, He sent forth His armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city. (Luke 12:46; Matt. 22:7)

When the Saviour entered the earthly Jerusalem He said, if His infant attendants held their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. How much more when He entered the heavenly Jerusalem, where all knew His divine majesty, His super-excellent amiableness, and what He had done for them! They did not deride Him, refuse Him, nor withhold divine homage from Him; but began their triumphant anthems, or songs, without hesitation, when the solemnity of His coronation was ended. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne; "And when He had taken the book, the four beasts," or representatives of all the hosts of gospel witnesses, including both ministers and people, but chiefly ministers, "and four and twenty elders," or twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, the natural and ministerial foundations of the Jewish and Gentile churches, as representatives of them both, "fell down before the Lamb; having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sang

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 indeed the militant church whom they represent, does reign on the earth, through grace; but in the new heaven and the new earth they shall reign without an enemy, and their King without a rival.

The angels' coronation carol comes next, and ends with a united chorus. "And I beheld and 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 (to govern); and riches (to endow); and wisdom (to direct); and strength (to support); and honour (as an everlasting Father); and glory (as the God of all salvation); and blessing," (as the sinner's loving, immutable, and best Friend.)

Now comes the united chorus. Some hymn His glorious grace, some His creation work, and some His universal providence; which is echoed from the heavens, the church, the world, and the sea. "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, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, 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." (Rev. 5:13, 14) Thus the fruit of David's body ascended the throne, and appeared as a Lamb slain. As God, He never was from the throne; for as God, He is both throne and king. As man He was crowned, and as man He received wisdom, power, and strength; and as God-man, He received honour and glory, and blessing; but as God He could

receive nothing, for all things were created by Him and for Him, and by Him all things consist.

Reader, I could have mentioned many more blessings which came to me in a way of providence; but as I have recited, perhaps, too many of them already, I have here given thee only a few fathoms of heavenly meditation, with which the God of all grace enabled me to sound this mystery in a fit of sickness that befel me at Thames Ditton. Then it was that I received the greatest part of this consistent chain; the links of which kept every faculty of my soul, and every thought of my heart so delighted and entertained, that I sat down a most willing, submissive, and delighted captive, at the foot of my prevailing Lover and Almighty Conqueror.

If my reader shall meet with any worldly professor, who tells him that temporal mercies are not promised to us, nor to be sought by us, let him examine all the prayers that are left upon record in the Bible, and he will find nine out of ten of them to have temporal mercies included. And surely he must be a native of Ashdod, or a bastard Jew, that contradicts the consecrated language, and gives the Divine Speaker the lie. Such men appear to me to be the figurative offspring of Epicurus, who first assaulted the doctrine of Providence; of whom Cotta declares that, "by making God careless of the affairs of men, he utterly subverted all religion." And I think Aristotle's reply to Epicurus's system of nullity is applicable to many bastard professors in our days; wherefore I shall bring him to rebuke them. "Diversity of questions" says he, "requires diversity of answers. Some ask whether fire be hot? These must be answered by being made to touch it. Some ask whether their parents are to be honoured? These are not to be discoursed with, but rebuked. Others ask whether there be any Providence that rules the world, and refuse to believe it without apparent demonstra-

tion! Such men should be answered by a whip, rather than by a philosopher."

Reader, fare thee well. Grace and Providence be with thee; while I remain,;

Thine to serve,
W. H.

Kernersville, N.C.

Dear Elder Smith:

I am writing you a letter that I would like to see published in the *Signs of the Times*.

If the Lord will bless me to do so, I will attempt to write some of the things that I have experienced in my life. Some of them were made precious and dear to me at a very early age. From my earliest recollection of remembrance of the date, I was not more than nine or ten years old when I was made to rejoice in God as my Saviour, and I truly believe that if I was ever made to feel His blessed love at all I did at that time when He shed it abroad in my poor heart and soul. I believe at that tender age that I was taught of God to know what no other being could teach me - that salvation is of the Lord. I saw my sinful, lost, and ruined condition, and what I was by nature, and what I must be made by the Grace of God, to enter into the glorious Kingdom of God. I have no confidence in the power of men to effect as help in the least for the salvation of a poor sinner. Neither do I have any fellowship for the forms, fashions, and customs that cannot be found in the laws of Jesus Christ and as practiced by the Apostles and Prophets of old, and the Old School Primitive Baptist Church, wrought out through all generations. I have the Good Old Way and I have no desire to bring anything new in the Church of God that would cause trouble and confusion among God's people. The Scriptures teach us to inquire for the Old Paths and walk ye therein. Thus saith the Lord. "Stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the old paths, wherein the good way and ye

shall find rest for your souls." (Jeremiah 6:16)

An elder told me that he did not intend to walk in the old paths. The false prophets said that they would not do it in Jeremiah's day, and they are saying the same thing in this day. There seems to be some among those so called Primitive Baptist of today that are getting to be very progressive. They desire the fashion, form, custom, and pleasure of this world rather than the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Brethren, I do not intend to follow any man or group of people who do and practice that which is wrong and not according to God's Word. I would like to see the few remaining churches of the Old Line, true Old School Primitive Baptist people that love the truth, sound doctrine, order, and practice as taught by the scripture once more be united in sweet bonds of peace, love, and fellowship, one for the other. What a blessing it would be to see the bars of non-fellowship removed. I believe in many instances that the division is of the flesh and not of the Holy Spirit. When we are blessed with the Spirit of God we are humbled down and have fellowship for our brethren. Jesus said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12) If we truly love each other we will bear with one another, esteeming our brethren better than ourselves. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." (I John 4:20) My humble and sincere prayer is that God will draw His few, afflicted, humble poor together in sweet bonds of love that we might be enabled to enjoy once more the sweet fellowship that once existed among our brethren.

I have written this in love, and I hope that it will be of comfort to His little ones. I am now in my seventy-fifth year. My race will soon be over. But as I grow

older my faith grows stronger and I so very much feel the need of my precious brethren and God's love manifested in them, and I hope, in me each day.

Yours in humble hope,
Gilmer L. Williard

Bracey, Virginia
May 12, 1977

Dear Sister Viola and Elder Stewart,

I had you all on my mind this morning to write to you but decided that if I didn't get busy and cut back my shrubs they were going to take the house - so I went out and pruned and was given such a beautiful message with such grace and mercy and love I would like to share it with you.

John 15 - Verse 1 and 2 - "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

I was deeply concerned about hurting the shrubs in the breaking off the branches, shrubs are living things, did they hurt, did they suffer as they were pruned?

By grace I was given to know the relationship of the shrub to myself, and myself to the Father and once again the beautiful example of the oneness of God and His grace.

I had planted the shrub to enhance the beauty of the house. If I did not prune it, it would eventually hide the house and completely cover that which it had been planted to enhance. So it was with the Father. The seed is planted in us and left to ourselves in the gratification of the flesh and without the pruning there would be no evidence of beauty, truth and love, attributes of the Father within. These would be completely covered and hidden.

As I pruned I noticed how much easier it was for the old growth to be broken away but the new growth would cling so tightly. As we are given through grace

through years of experience to learn there is no peace found in worldly things, these things break away in the knowing they are nothing. But the young in carnal nature cling to the worldly. But through experience and grace and rebirth of the spirit and the newness of knowing all things are perfected in Him, of ourselves, we can do nothing; that all things are by Him, in Him and for Him; we are given to see that perfection and feel His love - then with the newness of the new growth, we cling to Him. Oh the suffering of the pruning, but I am made thankful for the pruning, for I believe the depth of our sorrow equals the heights of our joy and Oh! the joy we are given to experience. Would that I could be more thankful but I know in the depth of my being I can only be thankful in His measure, not my own. Without the pruning, without the cutting away done by the Husbandman, indeed there would be no beauty in this vessel of clay to show faith, no fruit, no recognition of the lambs. These were a few of the thoughts that came to me. I did not intend to write so much, nor to bore you.

Thank you dear people for the invitation to visit you the 4th week-end in June. If it be God's will to be with you, I would consider it a blessing from our most gracious God. If not, He has blessed me to know that His will and purpose will be performed and with it His divine perfection.

May He continue to watch over us all and keep us under His wing in His care.

In bonds of love,
Tom and Florence Martin

708 N. Casa Grande Circle
Duncanville, Texas 75116
July 29, 1978

Dear Elder Poole:

In my younger days I was involved in publishing a few things and sending them out, unsolicited, to a large list of folks whose conception of the Ultimate Truth was diametrically opposed to mine. That is why, when an unsolicited

publication appears in my mail I am not particularly surprised. I can hardly blame those who, thinking they have come upon Ultimate Truth, wish to share it with others.

Now, when I was publishing and sending out things pertaining to the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who had not asked for my opinion, it was not because I felt that I had comprehended all or even most of the Ultimate Truth; it was just that I felt I was much closer to it than those on my mailing list were, and thus I felt I had somewhat of an obligation to at least make the attempt to say, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

The large majority of those on my mailing list did not believe much of anything I told them. Many of them plainly told me they did not believe it. Such things quickly bring one to the basic question, who was trying to straighten out whom? Was it I, with my presumptuous and unsolicited mailing, that was trying to straighten out those on my mailing list? Or, was it the vocal ones who fired back replies who were trying to straighten me out? Or, was it both? Or, neither? Such considerations, along with deep thoughts on I Peter 3:15, soon stopped my bulk mailings.

In any case, from time to time I still receive periodicals I have not ordered. Human nature being what it is, my reaction is much like that of those on my old mailing list - I do not believe much of the unsolicited material that is sent to me. We live in a junk-mail society where there is more glitter and less gold than ever before; where "ever'budy talkin' 'bout Hebb'n ain't a-goin' there," and where a person, group or periodical is not Primitive Baptist just because he, she, or it calls itself Primitive Baptist.

For instance, a paper representing itself as "affiliated with the Primitive Baptist denomination," whatever that means, came to my mail box the other day. The opening paragraph of the first article on the front page spoke of the gospel ministry as being God's designed

means to save His children from "the condemnation that rests upon the unbelieving and disobedient child of God." Right off, I wondered, where did Jesus or any of His apostles or any of the other scripture writers ever speak like this?

Belief is a basic characteristic of God's children. "He hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all (Rom. 11:32)." This mercy includes the sovereign gift of belief (Phil. 1:29), and the facts that they believe through grace (Acts 18:27) - not merely believing about grace, but grace is the effectuating cause of their belief! His children are forever classified as believers, and the Father views them as believers, although their experience may make them cry, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

Unbelief is not a characteristic of God's children: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep," Jesus said (John 10:26).

When the Lord spoke of condemnation and unbelief in the same context He said, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Christ divided the human race into two categories: those who are not condemned, and those who are already condemned. Those who are not condemned are spoken of as being believers because they will assuredly be brought to belief in Christ by the Holy Spirit. In contrast, he who is condemned already "believeth not." I have seen in the scriptures where God's children pass from death unto life, but never have I seen where a person passes from being "condemned already" to being "not condemned."

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1)." If we could find where God's children were ever not in Christ Jesus, perhaps we would find them in condemnation; but since they were chosen in Him before the founda-

tion of the world (Eph. 1:4), in God's eternal purpose they were freed by the work of Christ from any condemnation which came upon Adam's race.

Isaiah said, "For He said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was (not, "became") their Saviour. . .and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." If we could find a "when" when Christ was not their Saviour, or a "day" when He was not bearing and carrying them, perhaps we would also find His children in condemnation then; but also, we would be talking about a changeable God if a person who was "condemned already" should suddenly be "not condemned;" for it seems that that would be the equivalent of saying someone previously not chosen in Christ Jesus somehow got into Him.

As for the disobedience referred to, Christ also commented upon that in the same context: "He that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God," or more literally, produced by God; it is not their "trying harder," but God's working in His children to will and to do of His good pleasure which is the source of their obedience.

Allow me to mention one other article in the periodical which was sent to me. In the very heart of it the author said, "Even at the very best, man within himself is liable to fall and is sure to exalt himself when God begins to bless him from any angle," and, "Just as sure as you and I try hard to serve God, He will bless our efforts." Now, if these statements were true, that

- 1) if we try hard to serve God then He will bless our efforts, and
- 2) if God blesses us then man is sure to exalt himself, then it seems that we are led to the inescapable conclusions that
 - a) if we try hard to serve God we will surely exalt ourselves;
 - b) if we do not want to become self-exalted we must avoid God's blessing as

well as avoid trying hard to serve Him; and, therefore,

c) we are left with the deplorable alternatives of being either un-blessed by God, or self-exalted.

Such is the miasma of conditionalism; but I forbear. If you cannot believe the first paragraph on the first page, why continue?

Someone might say, why all the fuss? It is just a difference in terminology. "We be brethren." To me, the fuss is this: the terminology does not become sound doctrine (Titus 2:1); Paul told Titus to speak the things which become sound doctrine, but in all of his exhortations and admonitions Paul never preached that people can earn blessings by "trying harder." Again, the terminology is not acceptable words; the preacher sought to find out acceptable words (Eccl. 12:10), and he did not write about doing better so God would bless us more, or the gospel minister usurping the work of Jesus Christ in delivering His children from condemnation. Why all the fuss, indeed? Because God's children are saved by the finished work and shed blood of Jesus Christ. What is at stake is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the merit and all-sufficiency of His blood, and the honor of God the Saviour.

That, in every age, has caused men to seriously question whether or not "We be brethren" with those who would mingle human effort with the perfect sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God.

Thank you for bearing with my uninvited comments on an uninvited paper.

For the truth's sake,
(Elder) C. C. Morris

It is beyond the power of the greatest gifts to change the heart. A man may preach like an apostle, pray like an angel, and yet have the heart of a devil. It is grace only that can change the heart.

Matthew Meade, 1661

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Elder Donald E. Smith, Publisher

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UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1978
CIRCULAR LETTER

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, seventy-second session, July 15, 16, and 17, 1978, being held at Dan River Church, Rockingham County, North Carolina.

We, of the Upper Country Line Association, welcome our sister associations and churches to meet with us for this session.

I believe that it is through and by the mercies of a covenant keeping God that we have been spared and gathered together for this meeting with our brethren of the same precious faith.

He is a merciful God who saved us, called us, and carries us all the way from birth through death. But God who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us. (Ephesians 2:4)

"For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion"

We read that He fought our battles for us. It was not by our own strength that we won any of them. In reading the Book of Job, we find he had afflictions, trials, and tribulations. He did not fail to have patience and believe that the Lord is full of pity and tender mercy.

We hear our ministering brethren tell of going with a bowed head and a sad heart, begging God to be merciful to them and show them the way. In Exodus, chapter 17, we read that Amalek came and fought with Israel. "And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."

I feel that if we as brethren could be blessed to stay up the hands of our ministering brethren, that they could prevail in this journey of life set before them to preach a just, righteous, and merciful God.

When this life is over, may we hear the King say, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, a home that is made not with hands, eternal in heaven where there will be no sickness, sorrow, trials, or tribulation, where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes.

I feel that we can say with Jacob when he saw the wagons coming, it is enough that our merciful God is alive and is ruling in heaven and among the inhabitants of earth.

May God, who is rich in mercy, be with us until we meet again.

Submitted by John E. Herndon.

(Elder) D. V. Spangler, Moderator
(Elder) Donald E. Smith, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Old Beulah the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December, 1978.

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us.

Harold Pittman, Clerk
Box 4524
Rocky Mount, N.C. 27801

Delhi, La.

Dear Elder Smith,

I see that my subscription is due for the *Signs of the Times*. Enclosed is a check for two years renewal and use the rest for the Indigent Fund.

I enjoy reading the *Signs* and especially the "Voices of the Past". I have been enjoying the Bank of Faith by William Huntington. May the Lord continue to bless the Editors and writers to earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the Saints.

In gospel bonds,
(Elder) G. W. Jones

Roanoke, Va.

Dear Elder Smith,

I copied the enclosed for your consideration, hoping it is worthy of space in the *Signs*. It is of interest to me and may be of worth to other readers.

The *Signs* has been in our family for many years, and has been read with interest and comfort. May the grace of God be with you and those who labor with you to bring the readers a sound and well balanced periodical for the praise of God and comfort of believers.

Yours in Hope,
N. F. Conner

December 1, 1917

Dear Brother Gold:

Our friend and brother in spirit, W. W. Payne, Asheville, Ala., requests me to have the following letter published in Zion's Landmark for the benefit of its readers.

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

Here is a question: Would God command us to not love what He loved? I believe not. He said, "Love not the world, neither the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him". 1st John 2:15.

Now there is something wrong about the way the people you spoke of look at the teachings of the Bible. We must love that which is loved by the Father or we are not His children. His children are of one Father and are brethren. He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

The text at the head of this article teaches the doctrine of election very strongly. There is an elect world, or the children of God here in this race of Adam. They are the world that God loved. The apostle said of them, little

children, love one another. Thus what God loves He commands His children to love but He commands them to not love the world.

Paul tells the Ephesians that they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. He tells the church at Rome that they were predestinated (or foreordained) that they should be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. See? He bases the whole thing on the predestination and election of God in His Children.

Again, our text gives the blessing of God's love to whosoever believeth. Not if they will believe nor any other condition. The word "believeth" is in the perfect tense. That is wherever there is one that believeth there is one who is saved. He is one whom God has predestinated and chosen unto salvation. Not because of his belief, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given him in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is brought to light through the gospel. Instead of believing being a condition of salvation it is an evidence that one is saved.

There is a difference in faith and belief. Faith is evidence. "The substance of things hoped for, and evidence of things not seen".

We have to believe things sometimes that we do not want to believe because the evidence is so strong that we cannot doubt it. That evidence is faith. We cannot have it. It does not come by us. In salvation God gives it. Jesus Christ is the Author and the Finisher of it. Therefore it came out from him, or is the fruit He bears to us. As this evidence (Faith) is given us we believe. It is not optional with us as to whether we believe or not. We have no control of the matter at all. The evidence (faith) fixes our belief or unbelief.

Therefore the question revolves into this: Do we believe that Jesus Christ came in that wonderful love of God to save poor lost sinners? If we believe that, why do we believe it? If we believe it because we have heard it preached or read in the Bible, that would be the evidence and not our own and in that case we would not be witnesses. He that is born of God hath the witness in himself. He does not have to go to another for evidence. When you have the evidence in your own heart you love to hear another tell it. That brings you into brotherly fellowship and proves that you are both of one spirit, both born of God. That you are sons of one Father. Therefore believing is not a condition which will draw down the favors of God on you, but it is a sure evidence that you are of that world into which Jesus came which was predestinated and chosen to be saved by Him, and that salvation has been given or manifested in the one for whom it is prepared.

The divine arrangement, the Father's will was so perfect that neither the Father, the Son nor the Holy Ghost, nor the complete Godhead can in any way change it.

When the mother of Zebedee's children came to our Lord with the request that "These, my two sons, shall sit the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left when thou comest into thy kingdom," the Lord said to her, "This is not mine to give but to them for whom it is prepared." This proves that there was a former preparation, that it was given or prepared for some one, and that the Lord Himself could not give it to any other. This is election to a fine point.

This proves the steadfastness of God's purposes, the stability of His will. Jesus Christ was the Executor or doer of that will and had no power to change it in a single letter nor sentence. The Holy Ghost is the holy guardian of those whose names are written in that will, or the citizens of the world that God loved, and that Jesus came to save, and who

are given to believe on Him. Not one of them is or ever will be lost. Jesus has satisfied the law in their behalf and they are justified in the sight of God, without a spot or a wrinkle, or any such thing. These shall not perish but have eternal life, and that life is in His Son, Jesus Christ, and He is at the right hand of God.

Everything they receive as they journey is perfectly free. Not as a traveler who is thirsty and comes to a river or a fountain by the way where the water is free on the condition that he drink it; no. It is free in that the first he knows his soul is filled with the water of life and he is praising God. There was no condition in it to him. It was given and it was in him a well of water springing up into life eternal. If it was offered on the condition of our drinking it we would never receive it. More than that it would not be free. Anything we receive on the slight condition of our receiving it is not free for we have done that much. If salvation was put down so near to us as the earth is on which we walk, and was offered to us on the simple condition that we accept it, it cannot be said to be free or of grace.

No, there is absolutely no condition in it. It is given, not offered. It is by grace. It is of the Lord who loved us. He hated our sins and gave His Son to take them away, and He did it to the perfect satisfaction of the Father in the law of His divine justice so that justice is satisfied and mercy has her plea. The poor sinner is saved. I trust that I am that poor sinner, and my hope is altogether in Him. The Lord be praised.

The Lord abundantly bless you and all yours is the prayer of your brother in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Atlantic, N.C.

L. H. Hardy

Look where you will, and you will generally find that free-willers are very free-livers.

Toplady

Prospect Hill

Dear Elder Smith,

Enclosed you will find a check to renew our *Signs of the Times* subscription for two more years. Please use the balance as you wish.

I love to read this paper above all papers. The dear ministers, when inspired by God, write articles that are so sweet. Also others of like faith, when blessed to write their experiences, give peace and comfort to all who read them. I often find myself weeping while reading, yet I am bound to proclaim what a great and merciful God we have and greatly desire to press onward and upward toward the mark of a higher calling.

I beg God in my humble way that He give you and all the others who edit this paper strength (for without Him you cannot) to continue to publish His truths for Christ's sake.

In bonds of love, I hope,
Irene Warren

CORRESPONDENCE ON "BANK OF FAITH"

The purpose for publishing the following three pieces of correspondence will be observed in their contents. We hope our readers will accept them at face value.

Editor

September 12, 1978

Elder James F. Poole

Mr dear brother in Christ Jesus,

This has been on my mind to write you and tell you that I **do not** enjoy the article, "Bank of Faith", by William Huntington which is being printed in our *Signs of the Times*.

This has took the place of our dear writers and has not fed me. I have heard several of our sisters in our location say the same. We desire to see better doctrine than this in our paper. We understand this man was a Methodist.

Some of the brothers also have made the remarks that they do not get anything out of Mr. Huntington's article.

We desire this paper be kept in the old way, as when our dear Elder Wood was Editor.

I surely think that when we are not fed through the *Signs*, we should say so and let the Editors know. I remain a helpless sinner and your sister in Christ Jesus.

Mrs. Pauline Spencer

P.O. Box 1250
Salisbury, Maryland 21801
September 15, 1978

Dear Sister Spencer,

Thank you so much for taking the time to write and express your feelings in regard to the *Signs of the Times*.

While we have had a number of favorable remarks about the "Bank of Faith" by William Huntington, S.S., there have also been those like yourself who derived nothing from it. This we regret, and hope you may be patient with us thru December of this year, when the article will be finished.

When Elder Spangler and I determined to publish the "Bank of Faith" we realized that to some, the point that William Huntington, before becoming an independent minister, was a Methodist would cause some to lay him aside. This was also my reaction when I first read the work. I must say, however, after about seven readings, including proofing, the "Bank of Faith" has been much blessed to my soul.

Your desire to see the *Signs* kept in the old way as when dear Elder Woods was Editor is, I hope, my humble desire also. I know that I am younger and less experienced than Elder Wood, and this makes me painfully aware that I need not expect to gain the favor he held, and indeed I would not care to. If I may but serve our dear Lord's family in the field where He sends me I will be fearfully

thankful.

Please remember me to all the family of Faith in your area. I do hope we will be spared of the Lord to continue to meet in His Holy Name and enjoy the fellowship of the Saints.

May I make a request of you, now? Since several pieces by you have appeared in the *Signs* from time to time, I know that you feel led to write for publication. Do you desire to have your letter to me as Editor published? I will be glad to, if you wish, but if not, I will forebear.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain, a servant to you in Christ.

Sincerely,

James F. Poole

c.c. Elder D. V. Spangler

Meadows of Dan, Va.

September 25, 1978

Dear Brother Poole,

I received your letter of September 15, 1978, asking my permission, or if I desired to have my letter to you published in the *Signs*.

Yes, I desire you to publish my letter to you, and also your answer to me. Please publish them both. If you do not have a copy of your letter I shall be glad to send one to you.

Yes, Brother Poole, if not deceived, God has sent His Spirit into me, making me willing to write for our paper, *The Signs of The Times*. I have had brothers and sisters to tell me they were fed by what God has ordained that I write, and I have heard that some opposed my writings. Let that be as it may, some still reject the Truth and some still love the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the light", also He told Martha that He was the resurrection and the Life, and no man cometh unto me except my Father which sent me draw him, and I shall raise him up in the last day. And Oh! thanks be unto God who has done all things and declared there is a rest for His people. Yes, Brother Poole, are you

not glad there is no work system in the redeeming blood of the Lamb. It has already been ordered and sure in the one Covenant, before the foundation of the earth, and praise God it is yet standing, regardless of what may be done against it. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against a little subject of grace. We may be slain by the wicked ones, but we are not to fear what man can do unto us, but fear God who can destroy both soul and body in Hell.

I hope I am in that chosen seed, and election, and predestination, and if not, I shall still have to say that God's righteous law approves it well.

But Oh! how I pray at times that God will save this trembling helpless sinner. If saved it is by grace and grace alone.

I remain a helpless sinner,

Mrs. Pauline Spencer

P.S. You may publish this note if you desire.

Tarboro, N.C.

Dear Brethren,

"Is there not a cause?" Our first great Cause and last great End, on Thee for help I call. I have been about 3 years or more trying to write to the *Signs of the Times*. I have tried ever since the death of Brother C. W. Vass. He was a precious brother to me. He would come to my home several years before he passed away and spend the night with me. We would have such a wonderful time together. We would take off the next day to the Staunton River Association. It was such a lovely time. We would stay the three days there and then he would go to Hillsville, Va., to stay with his brother until the Upper Country Line Association. Then he would come home with me and spend the night on his way home to Elizabeth City, N.C. Then he would come back in September to go to Seven Mile Association. How wonderful it was. I do miss the dear brother so much. The good Lord has been so good to me to have met and loved C. W. Vass

as I did.

I am a retired truck driver. I hauled cars all over the Eastern seaboard. That's why I say, "Isn't there a cause?" I would see the Primitive Baptist from New York to Florida, but they did not mean anything to me. It was not the time, but God moves in a mysterious way. I didn't love the Gospel and the people then in the way I do now, in fact, far from it. If I know anything about it I have a hope that I do now. I have had such delightful times at the Associations for such a long time now.

Please excuse this writing, but I am thankful I can do this well, for I have been partially paralyzed in my right hand. I never could write very well, but now it is even worse.

It is about time to go to the Associations again. I hope I can go to most of them, and if it be the Lord's will I shall. He has blessed me to go to all of the ones that we correspond with, and may it be so again.

I do hope some of you dear brethren will be blessed to come to see us. We would be very thankful for it if the Lord sees fit to bring it to pass. May the good Lord bless all of you.

A brother in Christ, I hope,
Lee Gooch

It will be of no avail to us in the hour of death to have heard talented ministers - even true servants of Christ - or to have been the means of putting them into the pulpit - if we have not the fear of God in our own souls.

S. Pack

The flesh, it is true, loves an easy path, and left to ourselves we would almost barter eternal life for better health, greater strength, and a larger amount of earthly goods. But it is our mercy that we cannot choose our own way, our own will, or our own cross.

Philpot

Godly fear - we can never praise God sufficiently for His restraining grace; for what should we be without it? What an unspeakable mercy, then, it is that you cannot be what you would be, nor act as you would act, nor speak what you would speak, nor do the things you would do, because there is in you who fear God a spiritual principle which holds you up and keeps you from the ways of sin and death in which the flesh would walk. How this spirit of grace and godly fear kept Joseph in the hour of temptation! How it preserved David when he had Saul in his power as he lay asleep in the cave! How it kept Nehemiah in the fear of God from extortion and oppression! And how in thousands of instances it has preserved the feet of the saints, kept them from doing things that would have ruined their reputation, blighted their character, brought reproach upon the cause of God, and the greatest grief and distress to their own consciences!!

J. C. Philpot

EDITORIAL

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." Psalm 45:6.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." Philippians 4:4

I hope my heart is inditing a good matter, I hope I can speak of the things which I have made touching the King, I hope my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

This poor sinner, if not deceived, lately has been given the grace of rejoicing that "The Lord is King" - that our Saviour reigns, that His kingdom cannot fail, that, He all His foes shall quell and that we must rejoice in glorious hope that Jesus the Judge shall come and take His servants up to their eternal home. Often, the words have been forthcoming and sweetest when there has been much trouble of mind.

In a state of nature, in ignorance and

unbelief, we once rejoiced, as do the children of wrath and disobedience, in temporal things. We wanted the vain delights of earth to share. We wanted the mirth of fools and pomp of kings. When we saw the sight of Thy dear cross, O Lord, it weaned our soul from earthly things, and Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid that we should seek our pleasures in earthly things. Rejoicing in earthly things was once our pleasure but now rejoicing that the Lord is King is our chiefest joy.

David saw Jesus by faith, that His throne is for ever and ever and that His sceptre is a right sceptre. He saw that mercy and grace were held forth for poor enlightened sinners. He saw that this right sceptre was held forth as an emblem of the dominion and government of our Lord. He saw, as Paul did, in Hebrews 1:8 that this sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness, that our sins are imputed unto Christ and His righteousness is imputed unto us.

Paul, in his epistle to all the saints in Christ Jesus which were at Philippi, called upon these same saints to "Rejoice in the Lord, alway: and again I say, Rejoice". Phil. 4:4. It is a blessing when we are given to rejoice in the Lord. It is a blessing when we are given to rejoice in Him in the day of prosperity. It is a blessing when we are given to rejoice in Him in the day of adversity. Paul exhorts to rejoice in Him alway. There is always cause to rejoice in Him, regardless of how things seem to be set against us at times. Yet, how can we rejoice unless given the grace to rejoice? Paul says, "again I say Rejoice". How sweet to be given the sweet hope, the glorious hope that we shall rejoice in time to come, that when this cottage of clay is dissolved, we have an house of God, eternal in the heavens. He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

Our Lord is King in a two-fold sense. Firstly, the kingdom of nature and providence is His. It reaches to all crea-

tures, both visible and invisible. He rules in the armies of heaven among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand. Christ is the creator of all. In the beginning, He laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the works of His hands. We believe that they shall perish, they shall all wax old as doth a garment and as a vesture shall He fold them up and they shall be changed but He shall remain the same. This kingdom is over angels, good and bad, and men, good and bad, indeed, He is the head of all principality and power.

I believe this poor sinner has seen God's hand in providence in situations, in dealings with men in business and other relationships. Sometimes I am blessed to feel in the very depth of my being that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose". Romans 8:28 and "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31. On three occasions that come to mind, now, I believe I can witness that I have seen Him "turn the heart of a king" in dealings in business, and in my vocation as a teacher. When we see these things take place, there is no room for boasting for mortal man when we are given to see the Hand of the Lord and the grace to rejoice that the Lord is King. When we see that the whole world lieth in wickedness, that it waxeth worse, and worse, that sin is on every hand, that men desire to do what is right in their own eyes, that men seem to spit in the face of the knowledge of all ages, that there go we but for the grace of God, and we are blessed with the grace to rejoice, we rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Yes, thus far men shall go and no further.

Secondly, there is another kingdom. This kingdom belongs to Christ as mediator, the one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. This kingdom is a special kingdom and concerns the elect of God and others as they have to do with them, even their

enemies. The subjects of this kingdom are the saints, those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. These God foreknew and did predestinate that they should be conformed to the image of His son. He calls them with a holy calling not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. The very same ones are justified by faith which He gives to them. The same ones that are justified are glorified. My friends, this is a finished work and it will be completely manifest. The title and character of Christ with respect to them is King of Saints. When the number of His elect is completed in effectual vocation, He will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, perfect and entire, that God may be all in all.

We rejoice that the quickening of those that are dead in trespasses and in sins is the work of the King. It is in the hands of one who has loved us with an everlasting love and draws us by His sweet resistless grace. We are thankful that He has not dealt with us after our sins nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. We rejoice that He has extended to us His loving kindness and tender mercies. We are blessed to see Jesus "as fairer than any of the children of men" because He is without sin and no guile is found in His mouth". When we were blessed to see the King, the Lord of Hosts, we saw ourselves unclean as Isaiah did. Yet as sin revived and we died, we were given to feel and know that we had a high priest who could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for He was tempted in all points like as we, yet He was without sin. How we desire to fly away to be where He is, be like Him and be satisfied. We were made willing to wait upon Him, to wait all our appointed time until the change come and He will call and we shall answer Him. We rejoice that He, and He alone, hast the words of eternal

life. We rejoice that great is His faithfulness and He will not forsake one of His little ones. We are given to know that the work He has begun, He will perform unto the day of Jesus Christ. With Him, we are thankful to the Father that He hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. We rejoice. His arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies whereby all His people fall under Him. We are glad that it is His work from beginning to end. We are glad that the work of slaying us is in His hands and the work of giving us to trust in Him is also His work. As we are given a desire to depart from iniquity, we are glad that He loveth righteousness and hateth wickedness. We are glad that He is meek and lowly and in Him we find rest unto our souls. We know that we cannot keep alive our own soul.

We rejoice that the work of protection and preservation of us from our enemies is in His hands. We are conscious that without Him we would be reduced to our former state of captivity and slavery. Without Him we would be under the dominion of sin and its damning power. How wonderful is His manifestation unto us of the pardon of sin. How wonderful is that faith in Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. How precious is our hope that maketh us not ashamed of Him and His cause, that hope which is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. We rejoice that our King neither slumbers nor sleeps but is ever mindful and supplies all our need (which is Christ) according to His riches stored up in Himself for us. We desire to be kept by the power of God through faith ready to be revealed at the last time. Often my prayer is "O Lord, in life and death abide with me".

We are glad that His honour is engaged to save the meanest of His sheep. He has promised to save us from the last enemy, death, not from dying a corporal death, but from the sting of death and from it as a penal evil, and

from a spiritual death and from an eternal death, by which we shall not be hurt and which shall have no power over us. Faith assures us, though we die, that the heavenly temple stands. We rejoice that our King will come again without sin unto salvation to take us home to be with Him. As we have born the image of the earthly we must also bear the image of the heavenly. This mortal must put on immortality, this corruptible must put on incorruption and when this is brought to pass by Him for us, Death will be swallowed up in victory for us and we shall dwell forever with Him. Heaven for us is, "The Lord is there".

We rejoice that the Lord is King. We are glad that the old man (the old I) is not king for the way of that old man is death. We are glad that no other man is king. We are glad that the watchman upon the wall is not king in the church. We rejoice that the Lord is King. We are glad that no other man is king in the church. We rejoice that the Lord is King.

We are thankful that Christ's kingdom is spiritual, not carnal, earthly and worldly. We would not want to live always here. We rejoice that Christ's kingdom is a righteous one, the whole administration of it is righteous, He reigns in righteousness and His sceptre is a right sceptre. We rejoice that Christ's kingdom is a peaceable kingdom, He is the prince of peace, His gospel is the gospel of peace and His subjects are sons of peace. Of peace and its increase there shall be no end. We rejoice that Christ's kingdom will have no end, as it is an everlasting kingdom and an unchangeable kingdom.

May we be blessed to continue to see that His throne is for ever and ever, that His sceptre is a right sceptre. May we continue to be blessed with grace to rejoice in the Lord and again to rejoice more and more unto the perfect day where there we shall find the high privilege of rejoicing evermore that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS 9:22

"What if God, willing to show his wrath?"

It is not strange that men should contemplate the mercy and grace of God with satisfaction, while they dread his awful wrath, for we have all sinned against him, and should he display on us his wrath, as we have displayed our rebellion against him, no flesh could endure the weight of vengeance under which we should be crushed. The greatest Arminians we have met with, seem perfectly willing that God should show his mercy, his long-suffering and kindness to the children of men, while they deny his right, in justice, to show his wrath, but how few consider that eternal justice calls for wrath, and when justice calls for wrath, that justice would be violated, outraged and trampled upon, if mercy should take the place of wrath. Depraved men, in their unregenerated state, find it hard to conceive how the holy God can pour his wrath on them without violation of his justice, especially if he has made any discrimination, and saved some from wrath, and consigned others who are only of equal guilt, to wrath. But quickened sinners, when under his mighty hand, convinced of their own lost and helpless condition, wonder with much greater admiration, how God can be just, and yet the justifier of any of the guilty sons of men.

Whatever, however, may be the views or speculations of men upon this subject, God has on various occasions shown his wrath in his providential government of the world. In bringing the flood upon the ungodly in the days of Noah, and sweeping the guilty race from his footstool; in the case of Pharaoh, Amalek, Moab, and upon the heathen nations of the earth, and that he has done it dem-

onstrates that he did it willingly, or willed to do it, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For his pleasure, we are told, the earth and heavens are and were created, and that he doeth his pleasure in the army of heaven and among men, and none can turn him. Had God been unwilling to show his wrath; who could force him to do it against his will? And had he not been willing to show his wrath; when the Son of God hung writhing on the cross, by what door could grace and salvation have entered for any of the guilty sons of men? But, was God willing to show his wrath, and pour his vengeance upon the suffering, bleeding Lamb who died on Calvary? "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief."—Isaiah 53:10. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. For this very purpose came he into the world. "Then, said I, Lo, I came to do thy will, O God."—Psalm 40:7, 8; Hebrews 10:7, 10. And when the dreadful hour had arrived for which he came, he was seen crushed with agony in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, and praying, "O, my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass." But no other way was possible. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isaiah 53:6. And where iniquity was found, the bolts of justice must fall. The doleful prayer wrung from the agonizing heart of the suffering Savior, fully establishes the doctrine for which we contend. "If it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done." Could wicked Romans or spiteful Jews; could earth or hell inflict on him one pang beyond what was the will of God? Never, we confidently affirm, from the creation of the world to the great burning day, has wickedness of men or devils been so fearfully developed, never has hell belched forth so much spite at any time, as when the immaculate Lamb of God, loaded with the iniquity of all his people, stood the victim. "Truly against thy holy

child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts 4:27, 28. *What if God willing?* Does that make him the author of sin? or does it afford to man a just cause to blaspheme his holy name? God forbid. Because God has power and wisdom to control, restrain, permit, overrule, and even to make use of the wicked acts of men and devils, just as he pleases, does that imply that he is himself a sinner, or that sin flows from, or is compatible with his nature? Absurd and preposterous. Nay, wicked and blasphemous as such conclusions are, the charges are often belched forth from infidel lips, and alas! must we add, that some of God's dear children have thoughtlessly, or carelessly indorsed the horrid blasphemy, by arguing that if he absolutely governs and controls all beings, all worlds, and all events, then he is, or must be the author of sin? But, be entreated, dear child of God, to pause and consider this matter a moment. Must God lay aside his crown, must he yield some part of his governing power, in order to escape your charge? But you say you admit that he has all power, and that he controls all events and all worlds. But, forget not that he is the infinite God; of one mind, and none can turn him; what he wills to allow today, was his will yesterday, and from everlasting. You cannot believe that he has found out anything new, that he did not have in his mind and will before he made this world. One of two things you must admit, either that Jehovah knew precisely what kind of a world he was about to make, and that he made it just as he intended to, or else that he has been disappointed in his purpose. You dare not deny that this world with all its vast machinery, is precisely as the omniscient eye of God saw it, before the days of creation: peopled with all its

infinite variety of men, and beasts, of birds, of fishes, of serpents and of worms, from the grosser objects down to the myriads of animalcule which people a single drop of water. What part of the history of the world have we a right to believe God did not know from everlasting, and what may we presume he knew, and yet had not in his inscrutable wisdom determined? Is there a sparrow or a worm by him created, for which he has no use? True, we may not know or comprehend the use of many of his creatures, but we are finite, and have only that measure of intelligence which he has appointed and provided for us, and beyond that measure who can go?

But, once more. What if God be willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known? The apostle anticipates the ranking venom of the depraved hearts of men, and says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will?" In one general sense, every carnal man has and does resist the will of God, they are not reconciled to it; they hate it, and employ all their depraved powers in opposing it, as Stephen charged the persecuting Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." But how vain is their resistance. All the powers of earth and hell combined cannot prevent the execution of his purpose so as to cause a sparrow to fall, or bring even a single hair of our heads prematurely to the ground. But in the sense evidently intended, the apostle does not say that any have or can successfully resist the will of God. Woe to the world, if they could. What then would it avail us to know that it is our Father's good will or pleasure to give us the kingdom, if he were unable to execute his will? But must it be inferred that if God is so infinitely wise and omnipotent, that he executeth his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, that he has therefore no right to punish men

for their wickedness which he overrules for his own glory? This is strange logic for infidels, but stranger still for christians. "Nay, but O, man who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hast not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known?" Has he not an undoubted right to do so? Are any of his creatures able to give a reason why his will shall not be the supreme rule of his government? If any of us feel that it would be unsafe for us, why do we mock him by praying, "Thy will be done," and then object to his universal control and government of all beings, and of all events, according to his own sovereign will?

But, instead of the frightful images painted in the vain imagination of men, as to the consequences of his wearing the crown, bearing the sceptre, and occupying the eternal throne, let us consider how he shows his wrath, and how he makes his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

If it were his sovereign pleasure to show his wrath and to make his power known upon the vessels of his wrath, by crushing them to atoms, or by such signal displays of his power and wrath as when he destroyed Sodom, or when he deluged the world in the days of Noah, his right to do so could not be contested. But it is his will to show his wrath and display his power in a very different form. By *enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction*. By allowing them to pursue their own course, act out the enmity of their own wicked nature, walk in the light of their own eyes, and to fancy themselves the masters of their own destiny. Long has he suffered them to dispute his reigning power, and to call his sovereign government unjust. With much long-suffering has he spared their

lives, afforded them health and strength to fill up their cup of iniquity, by stoning his prophets, killing his messengers, under the old dispensation, and with what endurance and long-suffering has he allowed them to drench the earth with the blood of his saints, and even to stain their guilty hands with the blood of his dear Son. With what forbearance did he wink at the idolatry of the Gentile world before the advent of the Redeemer, and how has he, for purposes of righteous wrath, allowed the anti-christian powers of iniquity to make drunk the nations of the earth with the wine of Babel's intoxicating cup. Even now, what more awfully retributive judgment of God can we contemplate, than to be suffered to reject and defy his government, and to pursue our own course, the course of this world, under the power of darkness, in the pride and vanity of our own hearts treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? Why has he suffered the wicked to prosper, or seem to prosper, in their abominable wickedness? Had he no power to restrain them? He had, for he has all power. But it is because in his inscrutable wisdom he saw fit thus to show his wrath, and to make his power known on them.

How, or why is it that unto his chosen, redeemed, regenerated children, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and from all others this knowledge is withheld? Because, in this very way it is his sovereign will to show his wrath and make his power known. Nor is this a matter for his saints to regret or deplore. Having the mind and spirit of Christ, we will rather with him rejoice and thank God that he has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because so it seemed good in his sight. If our Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in spirit at the accomplishment of the sovereign will of his Father, can we possess his Spirit, and yet desire that it should be otherwise? If any man have not the

Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

We do not say that God could not display his mercy without also making a display of his wrath, for we dare not limit his power and wisdom, but the Scriptures teach us that it is in wrath, that he remembers mercy. (Hebrews 3:2; Isaiah 61:2, 63:1, 6.) The very first intimation of mercy made to fallen man fully expressed this doctrine. The seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. God's people were preserved by the destruction of their enemies. Egypt must suffer the wrath of God, that the Hebrews might be mercifully released from bondage. The same miraculous display of power which wrought the salvation of Israel at the Red Sea, overwhelmed in wrath, and utterly destroyed their pursuing enemies. The everlasting salvation of the church of God, from sin, death and hell, was made manifest by the wrath which her sin-bearing Savior endured, when he carried her sorrows and bore her griefs, when the chastisement of her peace was laid on him, by whose stripes she is healed. And the final triumph which awaits the saints at the resurrection, their bodies will be raised simultaneously with the destruction of the last enemy which is death. What then, we once more inquire, "If God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known,"

"Shall man reply against his God,
And call his Maker's ways unjust?"

"Shall mortal man presume to be
More holy, just or good, than he?"

Does it not rather become us to be still
and know that he is God?

The will of God being the only recognized standard of holiness in heaven, whatever that will dictates, whether of wrath or grace, is right, and just, and harmonious with all the eternal perfections of Jehovah. If then it be his will to launch the fiery bolts of vengeance down upon the ungodly, or even to bruise his only beloved Son, when the guilt of his people was laid on him, or if he choose to redeem from sin, and death,

and hell, millions of the chief of sinners, and ultimately to raise them up to crowns and seats at his right hand, all, all we need to know is, that it is the will of God, and then we know it is all right, for that will is the true standard of righteousness. High as the heavens rise above the earth, are God's ways and thoughts transcending our ways and our thoughts. Therefore, with the apostles, we beseech the saints to be reconciled to God. Our brightest, our only hopes of heaven, rest on the complete and perfect execution of the will of God in all things. If in a single thing it could possibly fail, that failure would shake the very foundation of our hope. It is because he is God, because as God he changeth not, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. O, may we then in sincerity and truth pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven." Middletown, N.Y., August 1, 1860

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Examine your relation to Christ. Are you His spouse? Have you forsaken all for Him? (Psa. 14:10) Are you ready to take your lot with Him, as it falls in prosperity or adversity? (Jer. 2:2) Are you loyal to Christ? "Thou shalt be for me and not for another." (Hos. 3:3) Then you may be confident you are interested in the benefits and blessings of Christ's last will and testament.

John Flavel, 1671

Read and Read again, and do not despair of help to understand something of the mind and will of God therein, though you think they are fast locked up from you. Neither trouble your heads though you have not commentaries and expositions. Pray and read, and read and pray, for a little from God is better than a great deal from men. Also what is from men is uncertain; but what is from God is fixed as a nail in a sure place.

Bunyan

OBITUARIES

DAVID SIMON HOUSTON

It pleased our heavenly Father to call our dear husband and daddy, David Simon Houston, from our midst on May 18, 1978, making his stay on earth 65 years, 7 months, and 7 days. He was born October 11, 1912.

He was married to Glennie Mae Futral, and to this union was born three sons and six daughters. He united with Sand Hill Church on June 27, 1954. He was a faithful member and a strong believer in salvation by Grace. If my memory is correct, he only missed one yearly meeting and only one monthly meeting in the 24 years.

We, the family, miss him so much. We trust the will of our heavenly Father who does all things well. We hope our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted at Community Funeral Home in Beulaville, N.C., by his pastor, Elder Curtis Rains, and Elder D. B. Stokes. He was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Sand Hill Church Cemetery to await the second coming of the Lord.

Written by request of Sand Hill Church by his wife and his son.

Glennie Houston
Milton D. Houston

ROBBIE QUALLS

In His infinite wisdom and mercy God has called to rest Sister Robbie Qualls, a beloved member of Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma. She passed away in the Good Samaritan Nursing Home, Hobart, Okla., November 18, 1977, after being in declining health for several years.

Sister Robbie was born September 18, 1896, near Greenville Texas. She was married to Oliver C. Qualls on October 11, 1914.

She is survived by one son, Oliver Wendall Qualls, Hutchison, Kansas; one grandchild, Billy David Qualls; and 3 great grandchildren. From a family of six brothers and four sisters, only two sisters survive.

She joined Little Flock Church by experience and baptism on September 23, 1962, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood.

She was a lovely person. She counted it a privilege and was blessed to help members and friends of the church any way she could. This writer and other members and friends had enjoyable visits in her home.

For a period of time she did not live close enough to attend church often, but was there when possible.

She was blessed by a merciful God to have her son and daughter-in-law near her for a year or more before her death. They were with her day and night except for a brief trip to their home in Kansas on business. They did everything possible for her comfort and welfare.

May God reconcile and make us submissive to His dear will.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood, from Gish Memorial Chapel, Hobart, Okla., on Sunday, November 20, 1977. Interment was at Davidson Cemetery, Davidson, Oklahoma.

Done by order of the Church while in conference.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Ava Stewart, Church Clerk

CORINNA BOSWELL MORGAN

Sister Morgan was born to James and Martha Page Boswell on February 24, 1889. She was married to Charlie C. Morgan on November 14, 1911, and to this union no children were born. It was our Heavenly Father's will to call her home on March 29, 1978. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them". (Rev. 14:13) She had three sisters, Emma and Betty (deceased), and Mrs. Naomi Brooks; four brothers, Oscar, Lewis, John, and Willard Boswell (all deceased).

She was received into the fellowship of Bush Arbor Church the second Sunday in March, 1961, and was baptized the following second Sunday. Although she was not permitted to attend regularly due to her health, she was a faithful member to the end. She loved the scriptures, and she found much comfort in them.

It is my desire not necessarily to express sympathy for the creature, but that God be glorified. So:

"With joy let each afflicted saint
This cheering truth behold,
That when he's tried he shall not faint,
But shall come forth as gold".

Her funeral was conducted at Rich and Thompson Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Wallis Smith, and Mr. Roman Miller. Her body was laid to rest in the Pine Hill Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, there to be with Him and be forever satisfied.

Be it resolved that one copy be placed on the church records, one sent to the family, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Written by T. I. Rice as ordered in conference July 8, 1978.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

ROBERT WILLEY LAWSON

Brother Robert Lawson departed this life on May 7, 1978 at the age of 75 years. He was the only deacon of Antioch Primitive Baptist Church near Warren, Ark. Brother Lawson was not only a faithful member of Antioch Church, but he also loved to visit other churches. He was a very humble brother who had a great zeal for spiritual things. He rejoiced so often in hearing the truth preached that it caused him to shed tears. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; (I Peter 1:8).

Survivors include his wife, Sister Velma Cruce Lawson of Monticello, Ark.; one son, Bruce Lawson of Pine Bluff, Ark.; three daughters, Mrs. Kathleen Rash of Monticello, Mrs. Joyce James of Dallas, Tex.; and Mrs. Robbie Cater of Monticello; four brothers, Joe Lee Lawson, Bro. Jessie Lawson, Bro. Carroll Lawson, and Bro. David B. Lawson, all of Monticello; one sister, Gladys Coffman of Peoria, Ill. and 14 grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder David E. Turner and assisted by Elder George W. Jones. His body was laid to rest in Beulah Cemetery near Warren, Arkansas.

Written by request of Sister Velma Lawson.

(Elder) W. W. Hudson, Jr.