

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1967

NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"MERCY AND TRUTH: RIGHTEOUSNESS
AND PEACE"
(Psalms 85:10)

"Mercy and truth are met together;
(In the dear Prince of Peace)
Righteousness and peace kissed each other"
(By His great work of grace).

This quotation is from Holy Writ,
As the saints do well know,
And what comfort and joy it brings
To pilgrims here below.

How sweet the language of Scripture!
All by inspiration;
For sweetness, that of profane writ
Doesn't match Revelation.

Christ is the central One set forth
In the written word of God;
His are kept by His mighty power,
Justified by His blood.

"The greatest Personage ever lived,"
I said in a sweet dream,
And I hope I am one of those
Given Him to redeem.

I can't speak too highly of Him,
"The Saviour of the world,"
At Whom, in His great agony,
Blasphemous words were hurled.

I love to extol His virtues;
In Him no sin was found;
All that He accomplished on earth
Did to God's glory redound.

To praise Him for the salvation,
Which He wrought out in time,
Will be the joy of the redeemed,
In the celestial clime.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

PRAISE AND HONOR

Dear Lord I know that thou art great:
Thy name I do adore.
With patience thy coming I wait,
To meet thee on that bright shore.

In praise and honor is my song:
And I often want to sing.
Sweet meditations all day long,
Sweet comfort and sweet peace bring.

Sometimes in praise I try to sing;
Then sometimes I am down cast.
But when I sing and praise His name,
It seems then my joy will last.

I rise above the clouds of life,
And hope I will stay up there;
But I come down — I fall in strife:
Then fall down, dear Lord, in prayer.

Hail ye! Hail ye! ye saints of God,
Look ye up and praise his name:
All glory to his holy Word,
This is all the song I sing.

At times I hope I've seen the light
Of the great all powerful God:
Then my days clearer, my ways bright,
Make easy the path I trod.

Lidie Brown
921 Yorkshire Street
Houston, Texas 77022

"MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH"

*"But the hour cometh, and now is,
when the true worshippers shall wor-
ship the Father in spirit and in truth:
for the Father seeketh such to worship
him. God is a spirit; and they that
worship him must worship him in spirit
and in truth." (John 4:23, 24)*

It seems that this scripture sets forth
very clearly how the children of God
shall worship him. Just prior to this,
the Samaritan woman had said, "Our
fathers worshipped in this mountain:
and ye say that in Jerusalem is the

place where men ought to worship." Christ is telling her that it is not the place of worship that is important, but rather the attitude of worship. And this must be in spirit and in truth. For a person to worship God he must be in the Spirit; and to be in the Spirit he must be born again, as Christ told Nicodemus. (John 3: 3)

Man is born into the world a natural man of the flesh, and possesses only a natural mind, and natural desires and habits, and has no knowledge of God, or the Spirit of God, in a proper sense. He lives his life here at peace with the world, and is satisfied that he is just as good as anyone else; and thoroughly capable of taking care of himself, and of determining his own destiny by his own course of action. If questioned about his spiritual welfare, he will probably answer in much the same manner as Nicodemus answered Christ: "How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born." There is nothing but a natural knowledge and understanding displayed here. In this state he is dead in trespasses and in sin; and does not even know it, because he has never known anything else.

Man in this state is walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, and will continue in this manner, if he is left to himself. He is carnal, and knows nothing about a spiritual realm — so how could he possibly attain unto it of himself: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Therefore, he must be changed from this state. The change must be made for him, since he is completely unaware of his present condition. As it is written, "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." So, in this condition, if it depended on man, there would be none saved.

"But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: (by

grace are ye saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This scripture does not mention any action on the part of the man who is dead in trespasses and sin; nor does it mention any conditions that must be met by him. And yet he is translated from being dead in sin, to sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. What a marvelous miracle this is to such a one as this! Is there any wonder that they never feel able to praise Him as they ought? Their sincerest efforts to praise His holy name, seem so weak and pitiful; and yet they spend the rest of their lives desiring to worship him in spirit and in truth. It takes the same power, however, to enable them to worship Him that it did for them to have their first view of the glory of His kingdom.

I believe that the quickening together with Christ, is being born of the Spirit of God; for the verse immediately following says, "And hath raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Christ told Nicodemus that except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Where would the heavenly places in Christ Jesus be, except that part of the kingdom of God that his children experience in this life? These experiences are the foretastes that they have of the heavenly things that are laid up for them that love his appearing: the things that are reserved in heaven for them that are joint heirs with Christ of the promise that is sure to the seed. This is the earnest of the inheritance which they have until the redemption of the purchased possession.

The earnest of an agreement is not the full payment of the contract, but is a small portion of that which is to be realized in its fullness at some future date. The earnest of the inheritance likewise is a small portion of that which will be realized in its fullness when Christ comes in all his glory, to gather his elect and take them home, to be forever with him. In a natural covenant, the debtor pays the earnest requirement; **but, this is not a natural cove-**

nant. In this covenant the price or debt has already been paid, and the earnest of the inheritance is to the heirs of the covenant, as evidence that the debt of the law has been paid for them; that their hope is in God, and that their salvation is complete. These evidences along the way renew their strength, and enable them to press on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. At which time they will realize the fullness of the inheritance in Christ.

The spirit quickens one when it takes up its abode within him, and leads him in ways he has not known. It shows him what he is by nature, and what he must be by grace. And he sees that God's ways are as high above his ways as the heavens are above the earth. He has been looking at the law, and it is indeed a fearsome sight. He sees what he must be to meet the requirements thereof, and knows that with man it is impossible. He realizes that he is a wretched sinner before a just and holy God, and that his only hope is for a mediator that can stand between him and God. He can then pray, "Lord have mercy on me a sinner." He would never pray this as long as there is a shred of evidence that he can fulfill the law himself; but, now his prayer is, "Lord undertake for me, or I perish."

The Spirit shows the way of salvation. It is written, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit is come, he will guide you into all truth." All these are shown, and made to feel, that it is only when led by this Spirit that man can do anything that is pleasing to God. They read in the Scriptures of the patriarchs and prophets of old times, being led of this same Spirit, and being blessed to subdue kingdoms, overcome great obstacles, and to stand in the face of grave peril, when sustained by the Spirit of God. The Apostles on the day of Pentecost were in one place, of one accord, and the Spirit sat upon them as cloven tongues like as of fire; and they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. They read of Saul of Tarsus being struck to the ground: turned from his

former ways, and made a preacher of the gospel, (which he once persecuted,) by the working of the Spirit of God.

These testimonies are now significant to the children of God, because they hope they understand them as they see in them a similarity to their own travels. What a blessed revelation to those who have reached the place that they realize that they cannot save themselves, to find God's blessings were showered upon others who testified that they felt to be the chiefest of sinners! What a comforting message to read of others who were turned about, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, simply because it was the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom!

They now examine more closely the natural life and ways of the world, and feel to see that it is true that man in his best estate is vanity. They realize that there are within themselves, two separate entities, warring one against the other. There is still the natural man of the flesh with all his passions, thoughts, and deeds; and now there is the Spiritual man which is judging the man of the flesh, and gives him no peace when following the things of the world. It causes him to go mourning, feeling completely undone; and wondering, Was there ever such a one as I? They realize that they are not directing their own way, and can only pray that God, whom they now feel to know and fear, will lead them gently. They know that a display of his wrath, which they deserve, would utterly destroy them. This fear is the beginning of wisdom; and this wisdom is the knowledge that in God is all power, holiness, righteousness, grace, truth, mercy, peace, and love. They realize that in Him all their fullness dwells: He is their all in all, and their only hope of salvation.

This is my understanding of how a child of God is born again of the Spirit, and is made a fit subject to worship God in Spirit and in truth. This is why they will ever ascribe all glory, honor, and praise to God, for having mercy on one such as they feel themselves to be.

These are the ones that declare that Jesus Christ is the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. These are the ones that God seeketh to worship him, and this they most assuredly shall do. God seeketh them, not to see if he can find them, or how many he can find, for he shall find them every one, and they shall show forth his praise, as is pleasing unto Him. They shall worship him in spirit and in truth. "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles; whether we are bond or free: and have all been made to drink into one spirit." Yes, they have all been made to drink into one Spirit. That Spirit is God, and he shall lead them into all truth. It shall enable them to stand in the face of anything that may confront them in this life, if it is the Lord's will.

This Spirit is the Comforter that Christ promised to send unto his children; and it is their constant companion, leading them in mercy and grace. At times they may feel alone and forsaken; but they are never alone in the sense that they were before they had a hope in things eternal. They may feel cold, and void of any spiritual characteristics; and fear that they are mistaken in it all. Yet, the very fact that they fear that they are mistaken, is evidence that there is still hope. At other times it causes them to rejoice with an inner joy they cannot explain to anyone, except those who have also experienced this same joy and peace: as it is written, "From faith to faith." Then they are singing praises to His holy name for this gift which God alone can bestow; and are, in fact, worshipping God in Spirit and in truth.

Yes, they are then praising His holy name, and are saying in their hearts, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Or, "This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it." Words are poor vehicles to convey the feelings of one who has experienced these seasons. And yet a brother begins to smile, and agrees when one first begins to try to express

himself regarding them. This is the witness within, which causes the brethren to love one another with the same love that they themselves are loved: if indeed, this is of the Spirit of God, as we hope and trust it is.

May the Spirit ever be our Comforter, and continue to lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake: for these are the only times His children have any peace. When so blessed, they are truly clothed and in their right minds, and worship God in spirit and in truth — praising him from a pure heart for the many, many blessings they have received from the giver of every good and perfect gift.

In bonds of Love,

Richard H. Campbell
2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn.

GOES ALONG WITH THOSE WHO LIVE BY HOPE

1302 Walnut Street
Benton, Ky. 42025

To Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is a check for two renewals for two years, as shown.

We, the Old School Baptist people of the Soldier Creek Association, have been so abundantly blessed this year, 1966, in so many ways — materially and we hope spiritually, that it amazes us, and makes us to wonder, Why?

Losing some of our stalwart members along with Elder O. W. Perkins, we yet go on, keeping our appointments; and so far we are able to say that these appointments surely, surely were made possible by the Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness or a shadow of a turn. The last appointment we made was for Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, Tennessee, to be with us at Soldier's Creek Church Saturday before the second Sunday in November, to meet with Elder Poyner, the Moderator of the church. The old church

house was warm and pleasant, and we felt that we were made to sit together in a heavenly place, and the banner over us was love.

Elder Biggs spoke concerning the last part of the seventh chapter of Romans, beginning with the ninth verse, "... for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I," etc., showing man's dependence on God to strengthen him and lead him in the way he should go: delighting in the law of God after the inward man. In all of God's children there is the outward and the inward man: one warring against the other; and while we live in this time world there will be no discharge in this war. We hope we can say with Paul, after all our warrings, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Yes, we have been wonderfully blessed all our lifetime, as well as this year, to go along with those who live by hope, and trust God to choose their changes for them; and make the rough places smooth for them, if it is in accord with his holy will.

Farewell, in hope,
Effie Bowden

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Malmason Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1967. The meeting house is located five miles north of Danville, Virginia on Highway 726, off Highway 29.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Falls of Tar River Church, Rocky Mount, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1967. Elder G. G. Travathan was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder B. D. Handy, alternate.

We extend a cordial invitation to all to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Pittman's Grove, Johnston County, N. C., the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1967.

The church is located on Highway 222, between Fremont and Kenly, N. C. All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

PLEASE NOTE:

We regret that we did not include the address of Sister Lavonia Lee when we published her article on the Resurrection in the November issue. It is P. O. Box 183, Huntland, Tenn. 37345. - J.D.W.

A WORD FROM ELDER WEAVER

In a letter from Elder George L. Weaver, 3415 Westbury Road, Shaker Heights 20, Ohio, Zip Code 44120, he asks that we express his continued love for the brethren, and that due to his age and condition of his health, he cannot expect to travel among them again.

Brother Weaver is ninety-three years old, and his birthday is early in January. We are sure that letters or cards from the brethren and friends would give him great pleasure, and bring many pleasant memories. — J. D. W.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To November 1, 1966)

E. G. Akers, Va.....	\$ 5.00
C. Z. Moseley, Ala.....	2.00
Mrs. Claude Jackson, Ala.....	5.00
Eliza Turner, Va.....	1.00
Essie W. McGregor, Ky.....	1.00
Mrs. W. G. Thompson, Can.....	5.00
Mrs. Charles B. Gordy, Mich.....	3.00
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Elder A. I. Hash, Va.....	\$ 1.00
Mrs. Underwood, Va.....	3.00
James L. Howell, Ala.....	15.00
Mrs. A. T. Couch, Ala.....	3.00

Danville, Virginia January, 1967

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EDITORIAL

ANOTHER NEW YEAR

We feel glad that we are able to greet our brethren and friends at the beginning of another New Year; and the beginning of another year of the publication of the **Signs of the Times** — the 135th.

When we are given to be thankful for all our blessings of the past, we are aware that the Lord's people are so greatly blessed, that it is impossible for them to realize the half of them very often. To have been brought to fully believe without reservation, all that the Lord has revealed in his written Word, and to have this word confirmed by His light shining in their hearts, is indeed the greatest experience poor mortals can have in their life span. This, added to all that the Lord gives in his providential

dealings with them, makes a full life in living; and assurance of a forthcoming living in dying.

The world is divided into a thousand kinds of religion and religious practices; but the Lord's people have only one. Their's is what the Lord himself reveals. And when He reveals all other ideas or thoughts of a seemingly religious nature, are vanished as surely as the fog vanishes before the rising sun. This the Lord's people know; but they are no more able to convince others who have not this experience, than Paul was able to explain to his former compatriots why he believed and preached what he once belittled.

These believe that God has revealed in his written Word **all his way and manner** of saving sinners; and that this is the only way that sinners are saved. And they believe that the Scriptures give a full account of those who are the recipients of salvation. This is not just merely a matter of **their belief**, for the mere belief of anything does not make the thing believed of any real value: the real value lies alone in the value of the matter believed. So, when these talk about salvation by grace, they express the sum total of it: it is wholly by grace, without any so-called works of the creature, either to obtain salvation, or to retain it.

Is this what you believe? If it is you do not need to be told that there are also many who answer **Yes** to the question, but then add some ifs or buts to qualify their reply.

Paul said in the 2nd chapter of Ephesians: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." This is a comprehensive statement of what the Lord's people believe. They realize that faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and that one must be born of the Spirit, else he has none of its fruits. "... looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," said Paul to the Hebrews. That it is not of themselves, is shown plainly by John when he said, "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."

So the grace they love to talk about, is grace all the way. They do not attempt to qualify their understanding of it, for **grace means grace to them.**

Again, those who are the recipients of this grace is as well and definitely described as the grace itself: They are, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," and, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (6th chapter of John) As to the "time" of their choice, or their being given to the Son, we read, ". . . who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," (Ephesians 1: 3,4) and, "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." (Timothy 1: 9)

When Peter wrote in his first epistle, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," he was in full accord with Paul in Romans, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified, them he also glorified."

These and all other revelent scriptures give account of God's election or choice of those for whom he sent his Son to redeem to himself. And all of these testify that their choice by the Father was certainly not because of any indwelling goodness in themselves, nor because of any of their works, (for all their works were evil,) but alone because it seemed good to the Father to manifest his love

for them. When one is brought to know that he and all men, are dead in trespasses and sin, he cannot possibly claim that he has any goodness of his own that he can exercise, to promote his cause before God; or claim any birth-right other than that of Adam. He knows that he comes short of the glory of God in his flesh, or in his Adam standing; and is amazed that, he being in this state without strength, and a sinner, Christ is revealed as having died for him.

Have you not asked, Why me? Why of all men did God include me in that number that he loved, and gave his Son to die for my redemption? And yet all the exercises in godly experience give you that hope and assurance.

These things the elect of God feel and believe, without claiming any extenuating circumstances to try to lessen their guilt before their offended God. Thus God's mercy is their whole desire: it being the only thing that can give relief from condemnation. When they fled to the deeds of the law for righteousness, it only condemned, and made their guilt blacker and more hideous. And this they learned was the very purpose of the law: it entered that the offense might abound — and it surely abounded when the commandment came in their experience. How true it is that sin then revives, and the subject dies. But thanks be to the Father, that where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Now as to those who compose the household of faith, or the elect of God, it is evident that everyone in every age of the world, of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, (Revelation 5:9), for whom the Lamb was slain, and were redeemed to God by his blood, make up the complete redeemed family; and each of these is particularly begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be

revealed in the last time. (1 Peter 1:3,4)

Surely no one has ever advocated that Primitive or Old School Baptists are exclusively the church of God; but it is advocated that everyone who has evidence of God's mercy towards him, and given a hope of eternal life as the anchor of his soul, must of necessity believe what genuine Primitive Baptists believe. There is no other conclusion that can be drawn by any who claim to believe that the Scriptures alone are the inspired word of God, and present all that we can know of God's way and manner of saving sinners. A candid and unbiased examination of the doctrine of the Scriptures — examined to find what they really teach — without wresting them to conform to that which seems right to men, will show that the doctrine that Christ and his apostles taught, is yet taught and contended for today by those who hold to the Scriptures as the complete authority for Christian doctrine.

But how often it is that those who love the name Christian or Baptist, hold some things which are evidently true according to the Scriptures, and yet hold other things so contrary to the same Scriptures, that the "other things" cannot but be considered to deny what they have otherwise confessed; for one cannot be consistent while he holds two opposite doctrines. No doubt we have all heard men preach, or read their writings, in which they seemed to go to great length to prove the doctrine of election, predestination, etc. (and we were greatly interested in it,) then, in conclusion, virtually deny what they have preached or written by appealing to the people to accept the Lord while they can, and before it is too late; etc.

But what we intend to point out is the fact that the Lord's people when brought into the knowledge of the truth, believe what they believe from an inward teaching which cannot be other than called spiritual, from the fact that

it is not unlike the Saviour's statement to Peter and the brethren, "Flesh and blood has not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The new birth of the Spirit opens up a view of the kingdom of God, and by all the attending power and grace of God they manifestly enter into the kingdom of God; and are taught things no others can know unless they too are led the same way. It is so evident that all of this is the work of God's grace, that Jesus said to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." And it is also evident that this is God's way of revealing to each of his own, that he has loved them with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness drawn them; and of making known to them for the first time that they were chosen and belong to the elect family of God.

So, brethren, how great is the multitude of God's blessings to us; but, if you are like the writer, you are so prone to forget from whence they come, and are not thankful to the giver of all things as we feel we ought. Yet we know of a truth that all the praise, honor and glory is his.

We are republishing under "Voices of the Past" the **New Year's Greeting** of Elder Chick of January, 1902, which expresses many pertinent things, which we endorse fully; and which we hope will be found of great interest by all who read it.

We hope the brethren and friends will continue to support the paper, so that, the Lord willing, it will continue to go forth contending for the same truth it has for these many years. You can help your editors by submitting articles to be considered for publication, by sending in new subscriptions, by remembering the Indigent Fund, or by your comments in general.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with each of you.

J.D.W.

EDITORIAL

"DRAW ME, WE WILL
RUN AFTER THEE"

This petition, or prayer, of the church is recorded in the 4th verse of the Song of Songs. This is the constant prayer of the church as a unit, because each and every individual who compose it, have learned that no power within themselves can enable them to take the next step. The magnetic power of the Spirit may be blessing you to take the step you are now taking: yet, the present blessing does not suffice for your next step. We are taught to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." The children of Israel were taught that they could not eat left over bread on the next day. (Exodus 16: 20) We are forever dependent upon Him to cause us to follow Him. Each day we pray: "draw me."

I shall never forget the first highly magnetized piece of metal that I ever saw in operation. It had such impression on me that I traded my most treasured possession for it. I marvelled at its power to draw small pieces of steel to it. It was interesting to observe that these small pieces of steel, such as shoe-tacks, would be so obedient in rushing to the loadstone when placed near them. It was difficult to pull them away. Constant contact with the loadstone would empower these small similar objects for a very short time to draw tiny pieces of steel to them. I wondered why that the loadstone would draw tacks to it, but would not draw toothpicks. I noticed that iron objects only were drawn to the loadstone. When God, the mighty magnet, infuses His own with some of His characteristics they are drawn to Him. This magnetism is of such quality that none can resist His power: therefore, His own are drawn to Him. It does not draw those who have the characteristics of the devil only. God infuses eternal life in them in regeneration. They become subjected to His irresistible drawing power. Lord, draw me.

Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me

draw him." The Father must draw us out of the black and miry pit of corruption before we can be possessed of the will to go to Christ. The natural man has no foot to take one step toward Heaven. The natural person has no desire toward God. Man is passive in regeneration. He is passive in being born again: but, He is then conscious of the terrible dungeon that he is in. He, then, desires to be brought out after experiencing the vanity of his own efforts. The drawing by the Father pulls us up out of the miry clay of the horrible pit. The loving kindness of God is the cord that is used to pull the sinner upward. We must be pulled out of the horrible pit before we can take one step toward God, or Christ. God must draw us from corruption of soul before we can see the wickedness of the lusts of our flesh. According to the testimony of Jeremiah recorded in chapter 31; 3: the Lord said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." When God draws our conscience it is troubled. Love draws the soul toward God. If we experience that drawing our souls must have eyes, hands, and feet. When we have only eyes, we feel the necessity of being brought to Him. We feel so far away, Lord, draw me.

Knowledge is the eye of the soul. Spiritual knowledge can only be realized by being blessed by the Father's revelation. We cannot truly say from the depth of our innermost soul that Jesus is the Son of God except it be revealed to us by the Father. We cannot say that we are sin polluted creatures except it be revealed. Faith is the hand of the soul. We cannot have this faith except it be given us by God. The soul cannot reach toward God except it has the hand of faith. Obedience is the foot of the soul. Our souls must have spiritual feet before we can run after Christ. Obedient Christians run on two feet. Augustine says, The foot is the affection, or appetite, that carries me whithersoever I go." I cannot run with one foot. I must not only have the desire but also the ability to preform. All this

must be by grace. **To will** is not enough for running; the **do** must also be worked in me. Lord give me eyes, hands, and feet that I may run after Christ.

“Draw me: we will **run** after Thee.” When we are conscious of the drawing, we will experience the running. When our souls have eyes the race will be with joy as we run because revealed knowledge will show us **from what** we are running; also, **to Whom** we flee for refuge. If we have the proper **hand of faith** we will run the race with confidence realizing that Jesus holds our souls’ hands in one hand while He grasps the Father’s hand with the other. If we are given feet of **desiring and doing** — **affection and action** — we will run **swiftly** the race set before us. Without revelation we are blind, like Bartimeus. Without faith we are like the man with the withered hand. Without obedience we are lame like Mephibosheth. We are conscious so much of being like all three at once that we frequently cry; Lord, draw me and enable me to run after thee.

My soul is on its knees begging to be drawn out of the horrible pit of infirmities when it feels to be blind, handless, and without feet. These sad experiences of soul-searching come often enough to keep us reminded of our dependence upon His graceful power for strength at all times. Does the Lord horrify our conscience and then continue to leave our souls in these dungeons and prisons??? Does He cast off forever? Does He make us to know how helpless we are without lifting us from this condition?? NO!! Thousands of times we have been made to say, NO, to these questions. Draw me **again** from this dungeon.

“We will run after Thee.” It is a wonderful thing to be drawn **to** Christ and feel His presence; yet, it is more wonderful to run **after** Him in experiencing the leadership of Christ. It gives us joy to be drawn to Him, and happiness when we are blessed to follow Him. Thrilling sensations of the soul cheer us as we are drawn to Him for refuge; and, in being enabled to do His commandments we are happier. The Father draws us to

Christ, and Christ draws us after Him in enabling us to keep His commandments. Jesus, draw us with Thy power that we may run after Thee.

Jesus Christ is the fore-runner Who goes before us. When he leads us we follow Him. He said of His sheep, “They follow me.” We follow Him in the race set before us. We have a record of His suffering, doings, and commandments in the Holy Scriptures. When Christ draws us after Him, we experience running the race which is set before us. Christ is the **mark** that we press after in order to experience gladness of heart and peace of mind. These heavenly gifts are the prizes of the race, the grand prize is a home in Heaven. Christ’s commandments make up the race track in which we should run. We are so burdened with weights and so incapable of running properly the race that we “pray without ceasing,” Lord draw us after Thee.

The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. The warfare is great and we cannot cope with it until we are blessed to take the yoke of Christ upon us. When this is true, the yoke is easy and the burden is light. When Christ goes before us and draws us with Him, we run **swiftly**. We are made to know that we cannot take one step apart from Him. Lord, draw us that we may run in thy commandments. Write the **law of love** in our hearts and our minds, and give us feet to obey this law.

The Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation. The general rule of the race having been indelibly written in our hearts by the Spirit, enables us to learn the specific instructions found in the Holy Scriptures. The Lord has ordained that we have need for these specific instructions. If we want to run the race well, we will be most interested in acquainting ourselves with these specific rules. We may want to discard some of these rules as **non-essentials**; if we do; we cannot finish well the course. Such rules as “confession unto salvation,” professing belief in Jesus Christ — the perfect Saviour — being baptised, and being yoked together with a company of

true believers in church capacity; all these things should not be considered as non-essentials. Meeting often with one another, praying with and for one another, working for peace and unity, as well as doing unto others as we would have them do unto us, should all be considered as essentials in running after Christ. Attending church regularly, caring for the sick and poor, bearing personal wrong, bringing up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: all this should be attended to with diligence in constant prayer to God for proper guidance. Lord, draw me into a daily study of Thy specific rules found only in the Bible.

We will run after Thee. The local church consists of a company of baptized believers who have covenanted with one another to run the Christian race. The members of a local church choose a leader when they choose a pastor. The local church is careful to choose one whom they deem to be endowed with wisdom and understanding of the rules of the race to sufficiently lead them — looking to Jesus, the **great leader** of the flock. The church chooses deacons, minister-helpers, to assist. Each member of the Church cooperates with others in striving to run after Christ.

We shall run after Thee. We repeat a sentence from the 2nd. paragraph of this article: Constant contact with the loadstone would empower these small similar objects for a very short time to draw tiny pieces of steel to them. The Lord infuses an individual with eternal Life, faith, humility, repentance, hope, godly love, and other special gifts of the Spirit. This individual who is so highly favored of God is empowered to attract and draw others in whom God has begun the work of grace. A church which is blessed to continue in close communion with God exercises such drawing power that the poor in spirit rush to it for comfort. We who feel so little and insignificant are drawn to the company of believers in our sovereign God and our Lord, Jesus Christ. We so highly esteem the church that we consider her the

bride of Christ whom He hath chosen. We so much desire to be a part of His bride that we are made willing to put off the old man with his deeds and cleave to the church. Our minds are flooded with a multitude of thoughts upon how we can please our Lord. We trust the Lord has placed the spirit of **Holy Fear** in the tower of our souls which seldom sleeps. We fear that we may not please Him. How anxious we are to be numbered with those whom the Lord has blessed! We are made willing to forsake all and follow Him with them. Our minds are where our pleasures are; our hearts are where our treasures are; our love is where our lives are; none but the Lord is the pleasure, treasure, and life of God's people. God shines the perfection of beauty out of Zion. The church is the fairest among women. She is altogether lovely. No other organization is given such glorious and wonderful name as the church. It pleases God to shine forth His majesty and mercy through Jesus Christ and the church. His majesty shines in His Son, Christ; His mercy shines through Christ's bride, the church. Draw us that we may run as a unit after Thee.

James said, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you . . ." James 4:8. This is a certain principle containing and affirming a rich promise of God. All who have known and experienced the infusion of God's love in their souls know that it is good to draw nigh unto God. These words of James comfort those who have this desire. The result of the magnetic power of the drawing of the Lord gives a vehement desire to draw nigh unto God. It is sure that if our desires be toward Him, His desires is toward us. We love God because He first loved us. We draw nigh unto Him because He first drew nigh unto us. What wonderous love is this! What a wonderful promise! Our lusts is the loadstone that draws all natural men because since the transgression of Adam we have had infused in us the spirit of evil. The attraction to evil has wielded such influence over us that we have all sinned.

We have been drawn away of our own lusts and enticed. We have so often agreed with our lusts and followed its powerful drawings that sin is mixed with all we do. If we see this to be true, it is evident, that something besides our lusts has been planted in us, which has more power than the evil we naturally possess. All human beings are given natural life. God gives His people Eternal Life. If Eternal Life be in you, you hate the carnality and vanity of your natural life. You are not at home in your own body. If God has given you some of His own qualities, then you do not feel at ease and fully enjoy the things of this world which are evil. Thanks be to God that the magnetic power of Him that has translated you out of darkness into His light, is more powerful than the power of evil. The treasure is greater. The pleasures are more certain. The life is more glorious. Even though these glorious experiences are but fleeting moments and we are so long in the valley of despondency, they are rather to be desired than the treasures, pleasures, and life experienced in carnality.

“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; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (See Hebrews 12: 1-2) Jesus endured bitter words and bitter wounds without retaliation, which made manifest His humility, meekness, and patience. Pride is a terrible weight. Pride is the mother of contention and impatience. Let us lay aside the weight of pride that we may not be contentious with those who walk with us. Let us lay aside selfishness, carnal ambitions, and even our reputation in this world that we might be freed from the weights of carnality in running this race. May we come boldly to the throne of God’s grace. Let us suffer patiently the persecutions realizing that the world persecuted

Jesus Christ. Let us endure the wounds received even in the house of our friends as Jesus also suffered the rejection even of those for whom He died. What joy is set before us? We receive tastes of it now and then while we live in the world. This foretaste is soul-satisfying. It quenches our hunger and thirst for a passing moment. Much more glorious and lasting will be the reality in Heaven! The suffering in this present world is so insignificant when we think of the Glory which shall be realized in Heaven. Should we constantly suffer from now until death of our mortal bodies how little this suffering would be in contrast to the eternal joy, peace, and happiness which await patient pilgrims beyond the grave! May the joy that is set before us inspire us to be patient in tribulations. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Let us look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Let us pray constantly, “**Draw me, we will run after Thee.**” May God bless you.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
“He being dead yet speaketh”

VOICES OF THE PAST

A NEW YEAR’S GREETING

It is the desire of every spiritual mind at all times that all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, might be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; and such earnest desires will seek to find expression from time to time. But it seems in a special manner appropriate that at the beginning of a new year, we should recall the mercies of the past, and also call to mind the hopes, fears, triumphs, temptations, victories and conflicts, which may be anticipated in the future. At least, as we pass the boundary line which marks the close of one period of time, and the beginning of another, we do find our minds especially impressed with these things. It seems but natural that it should be so. There comes to all the

people of God seasons when they, as it were, feel impelled to sit down and recall the way in which they have been led, and then look forward to what may be before them in the time yet to be given them. They remember the past, and from it gather some anticipations for the future. How often was Israel reminded of all the way in which the Lord their God had led them, and how often were they also reminded that he who had done so much for them was a faithful and unchangeable Friend, who in the future would not forsake them. So also the apostles in the New Testament often speak of the time past, and from it drew lessons for the time to come. All along the way of our travel have stones of memorial been set up which mark some special season of goodness and mercy from the Lord toward his chosen ones.

For our ownself, as we write these things, we would say there has arisen many solemn memories. We recall our own natural enmity to God, and then the grace which sought us out, and called us to a knowledge of the way of salvation, as we hope and believe. We are reminded that goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life thus far. We have been unbelieving, doubtful, fearful, halting, unstable, full of worldly-mindedness, ungrateful to the best of all friends, full of stumbling, fretful, peevish, guilty of denying the blessed Lord, coming short in all things, and in many things openly a transgressor against God, and all the time unworthy of the least of all the favor that has been bestowed upon us. But how great has been the goodness of the Lord to us in showing us such long forbearance; in continuing to us the hope of everlasting life; in giving us a name among the children of God for so many years; in suffering us to continue in the ministry of the word, and not cutting us down as a barren tree; in visiting us with some tokens of his blessings upon our ministry, and from time to time giving us renewed assurance of hope; and in keeping alive that faith and love that we trust has been given us, among the fruits of

the Spirit.

It is a continual wonder to us that we are ever blessed with any comfort, with any time of assurance, with any visits from the blessed Lord, with any evidences of the love or fellowship of those who love God, with any joy in the Lord, with any opening up of the Scriptures to our understanding, and with any light at all, either in our preaching or writing. It is, we say, a continual wonder to us that so rich blessings should be bestowed upon such a great sinner. It was said under the law of ceremonies, "Ye must be clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." And of ourself we must confess that we are not clean. This is our constant feeling. The best service that we have ever rendered has been marred by some secret selfishness. In and of ourself we could not be permitted to serve in the sanctuary, but we have hoped, and do still hope, that in the imputed righteousness of the Lord we do have a right to serve in the sanctuary. Surely it can be upon no other grounds.

One of the sweetest expressions in all the word of God to us is the sentence, "And his servants shall serve him." How much is involved in this. What a preparation through grace must be made ere any sinner can serve God. One must be cut off from the oldness of the letter, and come into the newness of the Spirit; must have the fear of the Lord, which is clean, in the heart, ere such service as will be acceptable to God can be rendered. And this cleanness in the fear of the Lord must include the cutting off of every fleshly, selfish motive. And this means the putting away of all legal service, of all thought of reward for the service, except such as is found in the service itself. How solemnly has it been borne in upon our mind, again and again in the past, that our service has been polluted many times, because afterward we could see that some self-seeking was in it, and that our eye had not been single to the glory of God. Our best work needs the cleansing of the blood of Christ to make it acceptable to God. It is recorded in Exodus 28: 38, that Aaron

should bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel should hallow in all their holy gifts. What great reason for rejoicing we have that our spiritual High Priest has made provision for the iniquity of our holy things which we hallow before the Lord. In this provision alone can the best offerings that we bring ever be accepted. Sin is mixed with all our service. Our hope is that Jesus, our great High Priest, has borne all that iniquity, as well as all the sins of our heart and life. But as we think of the word service, a solemn feeling is with us that we have never served him at all. It seems so little and so imperfect that we cannot speak of our service; and if any one should ask, When did we begin to serve the Lord? we should have to say that we never did begin to serve him, but it has been many years since he began to serve us. Yea, we have been cast upon his care and bounty from our birth. All these years the blessed Lord has been serving us, and of this we would make mention at all times. When what he has done for us is in our heart and mind, we can never feel to even mention the best work that we ever did and dignify it with the name of service. Before the glory of the sun the light of the moon fades away, and does not appear. So before the work of the Lord, our work cannot be seen. We cannot think of it when we are given to behold all that the Lord has done for us. Yet how sweet to remember that because he lives in us, and works through us, we do bear fruit to his glory, and to his glory alone. Our names are not magnified in all the obedience that we may render, but his name is magnified in it all.

Thus far we have been speaking of the feeling of our own heart, as we stand upon the threshold of a new year. We doubt not that to many who may read this similiar thoughts have come. Toward us all how great have been the mercies of the Lord all our life long. How manifold have been his favors to us during the past year. Are we not all under solemn obligations to render to

God some faint measure of praise for all that he has done for us? What marvelous loving-kindness, what long-suffering, what kind forbearance, what infinite compassion and what unbounded love have been poured out upon us in all the year that is past. Are we not under continually increasing and renewed obligations to call upon our souls to praise and adore the riches of his grace? Grace has truly abounded toward the chief of sinners, each one of us must say. Not one of all the blessings of God have we deserved; for not one of them have we rendered the praise we ought. We are at the close of the old year and the beginning of this new year, still cast upon the bounty of God, and must still come to him without one plea, but that his blood was shed for us. Others may talk of obedience rendered, and of blessings secured to themselves as the result of their obedience, but we are sure that all the humble-hearted followers of the Lamb will be found simply saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."

Through the mercy of God also we are permitted to still send out the **Signs** to those who love the truth which has been, and is still, dear to those who have the care and labor of publishing it. God has been merciful to the editors. We have labored in weakness, and with much fear and trembling, and have not been able to set forth the truth as we could have wished to do, and in that worthy manner that it deserves, but still we have had some evidences that the Lord has owned it, even during the year just past to the good of some of his chosen ones. Wherein it has proven a blessing to any of the people of God, we are sure that they will join in the praise of God with us that it has been so, and we trust that there might be a spirit of prayer in all our brethren that we may be substained during the coming year, and that we may be kept from all error, and every false way, and that we may have nothing in view but the glory of God and the good of his people. If God shall be glorified in this coming year

through the **Signs**, we are sure also that his people will find a blessing in it.

As regards the doctrine which we have maintained in the past we can say that we have no disposition to depart therefrom now. This we can say for both of us. And speaking for ourself personally, we desire to say that we feel great reason to think and praise God for our association with brother Benton Beebe in the conduct of the **Signs**. To him has come most of the burden and anxiety connected with the publication of the **Signs**, and we desire also to add, that from a most intimate acquaintance with him for the past ten years, we have learned that his chief desire has been to contend for the truth, although it might be to his great loss in a pecuniary sense. It is our testimony, which we bear with great pleasure, that he has in all our association together, shown that his chief anxiety has been to maintain the truth at all times. We are glad to say this, and trust that the spirit which has been manifest in him may also control ourself. We have both desired to strive for the things that make for peace, and for edification among the churches. But we do feel sure that nothing will tend to lasting peace but the truth as it is in Jesus. The wisdom which is from above is first pure, and only as it is pure, can it be peaceable afterwards. We have desired to present the truth also in love. Paul had not become the enemy of his brethren, because he had told them the truth, among which were some things which were not pleasant for them to hear. Yea, he loved them, and said these things to them because he loved them. Had he been their enemy, he would not said the things to them that he did. If one is in danger of stepping astray, and of destruction from it, he who warns him is his friend, while an enemy would rejoice to see him fall. We have no unkind words to use toward any one, and we have not been conscious of any hard feeling toward any one, even though we may have thought them mistaken in the course which they have pursued. We desire, during the coming year, that we

may know nothing among the people, save Christ and him crucified. We desire that we may have an eye single to the glory of God. And we desire to keep on presenting the truth in the fear of God, and in love to the brethren.

And now, as we consider all the mercies of the past, and all the hope which is set before us in the gospel, it seems fitting that we should remember, as did the apostle, the manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness. We have heard it intimated that we did not any longer believe in exhortation to the people of God, in our ministry and in our writing. Concerning this, we only desire to say that we are sure that no one who has any knowledge of our ministry will assert such a thing. Much of our ministry in the pulpit has been in the way of exhortation, warning, reproof and admonition in all the years of the past, and it still continues to be so. If we have anything to change in that respect, it would be to urge the things which belong to right living upon the people of God with still stronger and more forcible language, if it were possible for us to do so. We have not changed in that regard. We still believe firmly in the use of exhortation and admonition. We do desire that we ourself, and all our brethren may know how we ought to behave ourselves in the house of God. Like the apostle, we think it meet as long as we are in his tabernacle, that we should stir up the pure minds of the children of God to a remembrance of what becomes a believer, in faith, and in all godliness. But we do not believe that it is a requirement of the gospel, or that it is in harmony with the exhortations and admonitions of the word of God, to say to the children of God, "You may have as much religion as you live for," or "Be good and you will be happy," or "If you will be obedient to all the commandments of the Lord, you shall have peace and happiness."

It simply is not true that the obedient are always the happiest. Our observation is to the contrary. Some of the most careful and steadfast in all that belongs

to the obedience of a believer, in our knowledge, have at the same time walked nearly all the time in the dark, and have almost constantly complained of darkness of mind, and of little enjoyment in the things of the kingdom of God. Should we promise to some humble child of God, that if he or she would take the yoke upon them, in the ordinance of baptism for instance, then that one would have joy and peace; and that one, instead, be plunged into gross darkness and doubt and fear immediately afterward, what could such as one say, but that we had deceived them, or else that they were not the children of God indeed? We have known of some who have followed their Lord, and have had no comfort or rest for months afterward. Immediately after our own baptism, the same day in fact, we fell into complete darkness, and during the most of the following year we felt that we ought to say to the church, We have deceived our ownself, and have deceived you also.

But when the mind is stirred up to desire the ways of the Lord, there is comfort in it. To have the mind thus stirred up is a witness to the soul that the work of the Lord has been wrought there. Such desires do not grow in nature's barren soil. That man who thinks that by some work of his he has deserved the favor of God, or that by that work he has introduced himself into a happy frame of mind from the Lord, has a very unworthy idea of what the law of God does require. He who knows the true spirituality of the law of God will always feel that he has not obeyed it, only as the Lord has wrought a love to that law in his soul; and his complaint will be that he cannot do the things that he would. But what a favor from God it is to come to desire to do these things. to hunger and thirst after righteousness is the great token of the blessing of the Lord.

Brethren, is there in our hearts any earnest longing for obedience in heart and life? Then are we favored indeed, and where such longings are found,

there will also be a great carefulness in speech, in conduct and in all that the hands find to do. Such as these will welcome all exhortation, and reproof, and admonition, and warning, because all these things will stir up their pure minds by way of remembering what they desire above all things to remember. If a man wants to steal, to urge upon him the sin and the results of stealing, will be to him an unwelcome effort; but if a man have an honest heart in him, and yet knows that temptation to steal will lie in his path, he will welcome all that will cause him to remember the sin of stealing, and the consequences of it. So with every other evil to which the people of God are subjected; they want to shun that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.

It has been our experience often when speaking from the pulpit in the way of warning and admonition, that members who are already in the sight of their brethren walking blamelessly, and who do fill their place most carefully in the house of God, would come to us afterwards and say, "I was glad to hear that, and I feel as though I desire to walk more carefully, and to do still more than I have been doing; while those who were in the sight of their brethren very far in the background, would never, so far as we knew, give the slightest heed to what had been said. But when the mind was stirred up to love and desire all obedience, then the exhortation which pointed it out, was welcomed and rejoiced over, and the servants of God are to give attention to exhortation, and warning, and reproof as need may require, and as the Lord leads their minds into it.

Now in conclusion, we would say to all our readers that we desire of you, and for all who love the Lord, that you may be blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. May the new year be fraught with tokens of the goodness of God to you all. In all the trials of this life may we all have the witness that the Lord is near, and that he sanctifies every distress to the good of his chosen. The sure and abiding hope is given that

we shall be satisfied when we awake with his likeness, and we shall be like him then, for we shall see him as he is.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Chick January 1, 1902. He expressed so many things that find lodging in our own feelings, we felt the brethren would be interested in it also.

- J. D. W.)

MINUTES OF THE WORK
OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., a presbytery met June 12, 1966, at 2 o'clock P.M. for the examination of Brother Donald E. Smith, and if found fit and qualified in accordance with the written word of God, and to their satisfaction and discretion, ordain him to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The solemnity was begun by singing hymn number 534, and prayer by Elder O. K. Tench. All the Elders of our faith and order were requested to sit in the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders W. C. King, D. V. Spangler, Wallis Smith, Kenneth Key, Haygood Wray, L. J. Brammer, E. F. Oakley, O. K. Tench, P. L. Ingram, and James Hollandsworth.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder W. C. King as Moderator, and Elder P. E. Ingram as Clerk. Elder James Hollandsworth was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate for ordination.

Deacon A. C. Byrd, having been duly appointed to be spokesman for Bush Arbor Church, presented Donald E. Smith before the Presbytery for examination by Elder James Hollandsworth, using the Scripture references I Timothy 3: 1-7 The Presbytery, being satisfied with the examination and answers given by Brother Smith, requested him to kneel, and the Elders laid their hands on him, as the ordination prayer was delivered by Elder L. J. Brammer. Elder D. V. Spangler delivered the charge to Brother Smith. The Moderator asked Deacon Byrd if the church approved the work of the Presbytery; which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Elder Donald E. Smith by the Moderator, and the right hand of fellowship was given by all the Elders present, as a token of brotherhood, and wishing him success in the field wherein God had placed him. Brother Smith was delivered back to the church at Bush Arbor by Deacon A. C. Byrd, as an ordained minister of the Old School Baptist Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted; then dismissed with prayer.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. BETTIE CLESTA ALDRIDGE

Sister Aldridge was born August 6, 1882, the daughter of the late James S. and Mary E. Rascoe and departed this life on May 11, 1966, making her stay on earth 83 years, 9 months, and 5 days. She was married to James L. Aldridge on December 18, 1901. To this union three daughters were born to mourn her departure, Mrs. Lacy Shaw, Miss Fannie Lee Aldridge, and Mrs. Roy Underwood, all of Route 3, Burlington, N. C.

Sister Aldridge united with the church at Bush Arbor at her December meeting 1913, and remained active and able to attend her meetings until just a few months before her death. She was blessed with a fruitful mind and often talked of how good God had been to her, blessing her with a long and active life. She realized the time of her departure was near, yet she seemed to have renewed strength to fight the last battle knowing that the victory was in the Lord Jesus Christ. "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?"

Sister Aldridge's funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder E. F. Oakley at Bush Arbor Church. A large number of members, neighbors, and friends came to pay respects to her and her family. Her body was laid beside that of her husband in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dead to arise and be made like unto His Own Body to be gathered home where sickness, sorrow and death shall never come.

May God's richest blessing be upon the children, grandchildren, and all who mourn her departure, feeling that our loss is her gain.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference, July 9, 1966.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Clerk

ANNIE MARIA BRUMFIELD

Sister Annie Maria Brumfield passed away at the age of seventy-seven years. She united with Mt. Ararat Primitive Baptist Church May 27, 1950.

Sister Brumfield was a good and faithful member, and attended church as long as her health permitted. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. She is greatly missed by the church, and all who knew her.

She is survived by one son, four daughters, twenty-seven grandchildren, and twenty-five great grandchildren.

May God comfort and bless her family and loved ones.

Written by order of the church in conference by S. A. Clark.

Elder Wallace Smith, Moderator
Raymond Payne, Clerk

BESSIE BROOKS GAY

On the night of July 28, 1965, my dear sister, Mrs. Bessie Brooks Gay, was summoned from the tumultuous cares of earth to the blissful realities of immortal glory. We have sufficient evidence and reason to believe that she is "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

She was born October 7, 1886, the daughter of John and Lizzie Fields Brooks. She was married January 20, 1926. Surviving are husband, Zeb R. Gay; three sisters, six brothers, and several nieces and nephews.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Red Banks in 1904, and was baptized by Elder George Stokes. She served as Clerk there for many, many years.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder C. L. Coker and Elder Joe Sawyer, and she was laid to rest beside her mother in the family cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead.

She suffered for five years with a lingering illness, and bore it with much patience. She received every kindness and the best medical aid, but all the tender nursing availed nothing. Her course on earth was finished: she had fought a good fight and kept the faith, and now the dear Master called her home, to inherit the kingdom prepared for her. We loved her dearly, but God loved her best. It was so heart piercing to give her up. She was so good and kind. Her love was great for her people and husband, to whom she was so faithful. Her sweet smile manifested that Christlike spirit that dwelt within her heart. She enjoyed having her friends and brethren and sisters visit in her home, and converse of God's love and mercy.

Written by her sister.

Helen G. Brooks

VIRGINIA PAYNE JONES

Sister Virginia Payne Jones was born June 19, 1884, and passed away June 28, 1966, at the age of eighty-two years. She was married to Jacob Jones December 27, 1905, and to them four children were born: three of which survive: Bennie Lee Jones, Lorraine Jones, and Genevia Payne. Also surviving are three grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

Her husband passed away March 4, 1963.

Sister Virginia joined Bannister Springs Primitive Baptist Church, of the Staunton River Association, April 17, 1954; where she remained a faithful member until death. She was a lover of the truth and of her church. We feel our loss is her eternal gain: her suffering is over, and she is resting in the paradise of God, waiting the coming of her Saviour to resurrect her body, and fashion it like his own glorious body; to praise Him forever in that world which has no end.

Her funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne. She was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park.

Done by order of Bannister Springs Church in conference. Written by Mable Butcher.

Elder Raymond Payne, Moderator
W. J. Oakes, Clerk

QUINCY J. WALTON

We at Mt. Ararat Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who in his divine wisdom and mercy removed from our midst our dearly beloved and esteemed deacon and brother, Quincy J. Walton, who was taken August 6, 1966.

Brother Walton was married to Sarah Harward; unto this union were born six children: Albert, Florence, Nancy, Geary, Darlene and Elizabeth. I feel that the closeness of this family was noticed by those who knew them, and when you saw Brother Walton at church his children, (those that were at home,) were with him; and this was admired very much by our people.

Brother Walton received a hope, and was baptized into the fellowship of Mt. Ararat Church by Elder R. S. Payne August 24, 1957. The church recognized a gift, and called for the ordination of Brother Walton as deacon, May 27, 1961.

I feel that by the grace of God he was blessed to fill the office of a deacon in all humility, loving his church and having the desire to attend to such things that were necessary for the upkeep and well being of the church.

His funeral was attended by many brethren and friends and conducted by his pastor, Wallis Smith, assisted by Elders D. V. Spangler, R. S. Payne, and R. A. May at Mt. Ararat Church. His body was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He will be missed by those who knew him. May his dear companion and children be given reconciliation to feel, "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, blessed be his holy name."

Done in church conference September 17, 1966.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy be put on the church record.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Elder R. S. Payne, Clerk

WILLIAM FRANKLIN CHEEK

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from the shores of time the spirit of our highly esteemed and respected brother, William Franklin Cheek, on July 24, 1966, at the age of 88 years. He was the son of the late John and Susan Rudd Cheek and had spent his entire life in Caswell County, North Carolina.

Brother Cheek united with the church at Bush Arbor at her November meeting 1926. A faithful soldier has laid down his armour and has gone on to be with his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, which Paul says is far better. He leaves to mourn his departure: one son, Hughes Cheek; three grandchildren, three great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and many friends.

May the Lord grant such grace as needed for the church and his family to say, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, and Mr. Martin L. Fogleman. His body was laid in the church cemetery to await the resurrection. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Done by Bush Arbor Church in conference November, 1966.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

CARRIE MARTIN CARROLL

According to the providence of a merciful God, death has removed from our midst our dear Sister in the Lord, Carrie Martin Carroll. Sister Carroll was born April 22, 1894, and died August 24, 1966, at the age of seventy-two. She is survived by the following children: Mrs. Elbert C. Griffen, Mrs. Coley Strader, Charlie W. Carroll, Eugene P. Carroll, David H. Carroll, Robert A. Carroll, and Everette S. Carroll.

Sister Carroll was a faithful member of Dan River for over 40 years; attending meeting often when physically not well. We extend to the family and loved ones our sympathy and desire that God will strengthen them in their sorrow.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this

obituary be placed in the Church record, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy to the family.

Done by the order of Dan River Church.

Humbly,
Harold D. Weatherford

MRS. ROBERT SEXTON

Sister Sexton, whose age was 70, departed this life on October 7, 1966. She is survived by her husband, five daughters, two sons, three sisters and two brothers. The Old Baptists in East Texas, North Louisiana, and Arkansas are well acquainted with one of her sisters — Sister Pearl Fuller.

Sister Sexton united with New Hope Church near Patmos, Arkansas, during August of 1931, and was baptized by the late Elder G. R. Hathcock.

Sister Sexton and her husband had lived in La Porte, Texas, for the past several years. Even though she was not able to attend church in Texas, the love of this doctrine stayed with her, and she really rejoiced during the few times she had the opportunity to come back to New Hope Church.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer, and her body was laid to rest at Union Grove Cemetery, which is about 15 miles north of Hope, Arkansas.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

By order of Providence Primitive Baptist Church in regular session September 24, 1966, it has fallen my lot to write a Resolution of Respect for our beloved brother, Deacon Benjamin Bernard Bird, whom God in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to call from our midst in death.

A son of the late Deacon Creed M. Bird and Sarah A. Bird, he was born in Putnam County, W. Va., December 23, 1890; and departed this life August 29, 1966. His survivors include his widow, Mrs. Winnie Runyon Bird, of 4790 Spring Road, Huntington, W. Va.; eight children: four daughters, four sons, one step-daughter, two step-sons, and a host of grandchildren. Also by one brother, Elder Harvey J. Bird, and one sister, Lelia Edwards, both of Hurricane, W. Va.

Brother Ben united with Providence Church early in life, and was later ordained to the office of deacon. He served the church well and faithfully for many years. A firm believer in Salvation by Grace, he was always ready to proclaim the truths of Holy Writ, and that every good gift and every perfect gift is from

above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness neither the shadow of turning. He looked toward that eternal home prepared for the redeemed of the Lord.

His funeral was at the First Baptist Church of Hurricane, August 31st, by Elder J. S. Hunnicutt. A large congregation, and a large array of flowers bespoke his high standing. Interment was in Ridgelawn Cemetery.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our God in the passing of our brother. We feel that God has but called his own. And

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family, and to all that mourn his passing. We would say, "Weep not, for our loss is his eternal gain." And that we extend our appreciation to the family for so faithfully caring for our brother in his last illness, until the Lord saw fit to call him home. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be given to the family; one to be spread on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by Bernard G. Bird.

Elder H. J. Bird, Moderator
V. L. Burnside, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M.

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 11 A. M.

WRIGHTS' CREEK CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

NEW PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., six miles SE. of Sulligent, Alabama.

MACEDONIA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located one and one-half miles Southwest of Sulligent, Alabama, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor

967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each Saturday before the fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Alabama.

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles SW. of Fayette, Alabama.

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Pike County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

LITTLE HOPE CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before.

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pratt City, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. Meeting place at Alder Street at top of hill, first car going into Pratt City from Birmingham.

H. C. MOON, Pastor

LIBERTY CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., eight miles South of Gordo, Alabama.

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

MT. CARMEL CHURCH, Coffee Springs, Alabama, meets each first Sunday 11 A. M.

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

ZION ROCK OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, twenty-two miles South of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every first Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA McLEOD, Acting Clerk

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, ten miles South of Jay, Santa Rosa County, Florida, meets every second Sunday

and Saturday before at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
GRACE UTLEY, Clerk

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M., six miles South of McKenzie, Alabama.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 50-B,
Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama, meets every fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

ELDER M. I. McLEOD, Pastor
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Rt. 3,
Red Level, Ala.

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located about one mile Northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Stockton, California, meets second Sundays, 10:30 A. M., at 5620 E. Marsh Street. All lovers of the truth invited.

T. R. JEFFERSON, PASTOR
Myrtle Tipton, Clerk
733 7th St. Hallister, Calif. 95023

SECLUSIA OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Compton, California, meets each fourth Sunday at the home of L. W. Langwell, 12812 S. Williams Street.

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located

one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH, Miami, Florida, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before, SW. 29th Avenue and 6th Street. We extend an invitation to any interested to visit us.

MRS. J. M. FUTCH,
7005 SW. 21st Street,
Miami, Florida

NEW HARMONY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Hiram, Ga., meets every 1st Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
J. F. JORDAN, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE LOST CREEK CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, meets first Sunday in each month and Saturday before, near Denton, Carver County, Kentucky, ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton, on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins; take gravel road to church.

NEW HOPE CHURCH (better known as Lick Creek) meets every third Sunday and Saturday before at 11 A. M., five miles north of Dawson Springs, Kentucky.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., on South 7th Street.

J. N. DARNELL, Pastor

EBENEZER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Baltimore, Maryland, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison Street, near Calvert.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first

Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

HOPEWELL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Hopewell, N. J., meets each first Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
MARY L. HELLINGS, Clerk
4 Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

The **WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH**, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

EBENEZER OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, New York City, meets every first and third Sundays at McBurney Branch Y. W. C. A. 215 W. 23rd Street, corner of 7th Ave. (Elevator to 2nd floor.) 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M. All visitors are welcome.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second 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
MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAGGOOD, Pastor
NINA STALLINGS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54
Altus, Okla.

BIG SPRING CHURCH, Elgin, Oregon, meets each first Sunday at the home of Sister Elva Spikes. Address communications to Lloyd Spikes, Elgin, Oregon.

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, meets each first Sunday at 10:30. The meeting house is located on highway 222, about one-quarter mile of the Maryland-Pennsylvania State line.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk
McConnellsburg, Pa.

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday morning at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday night before the second Sunday each month at 7:30 P. M. The church is located on Andrews Road one block north of Hiway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson St., Memphis
H. R. PRINCE Asst. Pastor
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

CANE CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and is located nine miles Southwest of Martin, Tennessee. All lovers of the truth are invited.

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

BORDEAUX PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., meets each first Sunday at 10:30 A. M. The church is located on the old Hydes Ferry Road in Bordeaux, in Nashville. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The **WALNUT FORK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**, near Cottage Grove, Tennessee, meets on the second Sunday of each month.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor
R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:00 P. M., at their new location: seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

SARDIS CHURCH, Amarillo, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 10:30, in the home of E. J. Parsons, 1711 Lincoln Street.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Fort Worth, Texas, has moved their meeting place to 3629 8th Avenue. They meet each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Take College Ave. bus to Butler and Ryon; go one block West, then half block North to church.

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

THE ORIGINAL PILGRIM REST CHURCH, Lawn, Texas, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
MRS. NOLA STEWART, Clerk

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

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
A. A. CHAMBERS, Clerk

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth 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

THE OLD SALEM CHURCH OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS, four miles South of Teague, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before. MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first and third Sunday at 11 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30. And second Sundays at 11:00.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

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

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

H. H. FAULK, Clerk
Hawkins, Texas

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N Eldorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
Eldorado. Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE Eldorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
804 W. Main
Eldorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

FRYING PAN CHURCH, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located on Route 28, between Herndon and Chantilly, Virginia.

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

The brethren and friends will please note that the meetings at Broad Run Church, near Poolesville Maryland, have been discontinued; and that the meetings are now held each third Sunday at New Valley, as shown above.

L. L. DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

MT. ZION CHURCH, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and is located about one and one-half miles East of Aldie, Virginia, on Route 50, between Washington and Winchester,

Virginia.

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, 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, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 10 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER C. N. BUNN, Pastor
LILLIE WEIDER, Clerk
2560 Elliham Ave.,
Richmond 34, Va.

DAN RIVER CHURCH, between Danville, Va. and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on Bradley Road.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,

Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
PEARL DUDLEY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 282,
Hardy, Va.

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday morning before at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
G. M. MARTIN, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Bassett, Va.

GREEN HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located five miles north of Stuart, Virginia, just off highway 58. All lovers of truth are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
MRS. S. L. WALKER, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 207,
Stuart, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, N a c h e s , Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MARGUERITE SIMPSON, Clerk
1306 Fairview Ave.
Yakima, Wash. 98901

HARMONY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, about four miles East of Huntington, W. Va., near Route 60 at Russell Creek, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

J. R. LANE, Moderator
MILDRED STANLEY, Clerk
Rt. 2, Huntington, W. Va.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1967

NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

FLOWERS WHILE LIVING

A few more months, a few more days
Are left for me my God to praise:
O, may I loud hosannas raise
To Him who rules on high
Yea, to the Father and the Son
And Holy Spirit — three in one,
Who merely spake and it was done,
Let me no praise deny.

To Him who sent his only Son
To die for crimes that I had done,
Who conquered death: and life He won
For those condemned to die;
Who laid aside his riches great,
And left his exalted state
To die for them who him did hate;
Let nothing with him vie.

O, may his praise be always sung
In every land, by every tongue;
And through eternal ages rung
Throughout the earth and sky.
And may these feeble lips of mine
Join in the song — the theme divine,
And in eternity and time
His praise shall never die.

O, that my thoughts I could control,
And that I always could be bold:
That Satan could not cajole;
That I could him resist.
Then from me he would swiftly flee:
From doubts and fears I would be free
That have so often pestered me;
What fellowship I've missed.

But gracious God thou didst ordain
That I should suffer grief and pain,
To honor Him who once was slain:
Who died upon the tree.
Then let it be my awful shame,
Should I, to bear his cross complain,
And seek in life for ease or fame:
Let me a soldier be.

Let me endure the scorn of man,
And for Him always take my stand:
Whether it be on sea or land
Lord let me face the foe.
And when the smoke of battle clears,
O may His plaudit reach my ears,
"Come home, I'll wipe away thy tears;
Hang up thy shield and bow."

Then, O what rapture, what delight
To dwell forever in His sight:
No more with sin and lusts to fight;
No more to doubt and fear.
But with the blessed of every age
Eternal praise to him engage,
Who saves us from the Devil's rage.
O, when will He appear?

No more with brethren false contend;
No more with foe disguised as friend,
Who for my welfare did pretend:
No more on sorrows fed;
But always to behold his face
Who saved me by redeeming grace:
His blood alone could reach My case;
And this He freely shed.

For seven now, and fourscore years
I've traveled in this vale of tears;
Have preached for more than forty years
Christ's wondrous power to save.
Four precious helpmeets I have had:
All taken from me; O how sad;
But I, with Job, confessed He had
Took only what He gave.

I am now nearing Jordan's shore —
I clearly hear the billows roar;
But, friends, they frighten me no more,
Since I by faith can see
My loved ones on the other side,
Beyond swift Jordan's chilling tide,
Where there with them I shall abide
Throughout Eternity.

So haste, my swiftly setting sun,
My fight is fought, my course is run:
I kept the faith: I did not shun
God's counsel to declare.

Henceforth within those pearly gates
My crown of righteousness awaits;
And there my warfare terminates:
With Christ I'm owned an heir.

I wish to dedicate this to Elder J. T.
Everett, an able minister and a father

in Israel; one who has proved his faith by his works, and has let his light so shine that others seeing his good works, have glorified his Father in heaven. One once said of him, "I just despise the doctrine that John Everett preaches, but he is one of the best men I ever knew in my life." May it please God that more of us may earn this reputation. Brother Everett has had many trials and afflictions, having lost four very sweet wives, and some children, I believe, but has taken it all very patiently. He is now spending his last days in the Dallas County Nursing Home, Fordyce, Arkansas, awaiting the call of Jesus to depart this life of trials and sorrows, and hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of the Lord."

While the above is dedicated to Brother Everett, whom we delight to honor, our main theme, we hope, is, was, and ever shall be the glory of Jesus our Saviour; and to comfort His little ones in their travels here in this vale of tears. I feel that the first eight stanzas of the above will apply to many of the saints also. It can be sung to the tune Kingwood, or, "A few more days on earth to spend."

Since, if I live until January 2, next, I will have reached my three score and ten years, which, though lacking in many respects, I hope have been to the honor and praise of our Lord; and hope, if He sees fit to give me more days, that they will all be spent in His service, and that by and through grace and grace alone, I may enter into the rest that is eternal. Although, to save a rebel like me will be one of God's greatest miracles; for which I hope to praise him forever. Amen. Will appreciate the prayers of everyone.

In hope,
C. B. Britt
Rt. 6, Box 282,
ElDorado, Arkansas 71730

"AND GOD MADE A WIND
TO PASS OVER THE EARTH"
(GENESIS 8:1)

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

In these years that are passing so swiftly for those of us who are termed "Senior Citizens" by our Government, and who are taught by the Lord to constantly watch for His second coming, much of our time is given to reading of the Scriptures and to thinking and studying on the great mysteries of God, especially of his wondrous works. Going back to the record of the creation of all things, we find in Genesis 8:1 that He made a wind to pass over the earth. It was non-existent up to that time. We find that there was no reference as to what use He was to put the wind to, but like all the mysterious things He created, it was to be used wherever and whenever He so purposed to use it. As we find by further searching the Scriptures, He did use it — the wind — in many ways.

Examining this subject carefully, it seems certain that the air and the wind are one, for there is no record of the creation of the air. Too, we see that the wind was to pass over the earth, which could only mean that it would entirely envelop it. Also, we see that it is singular and all of one kind and has many uses, primarily for containing the oxygen necessary for man's life. We see that God has used the wind, which is termed a current of air, to perform wondrous miracles, in addition to its use in bearing the clouds. And He has used it for man's destruction; and for the good of His chosen ones. I firmly believe that the wind is synonymous with the Holy Spirit. Both are invisible to the eyes of man, as witnessed by our seeing things up to some 100 miles distant on clear days, for there is no liquid, solids or organic substance in the air; and it is only when it is given force to pick up foreign particles, that we see being carried about; and not the wind. The Holy Spirit

moves man inwardly, entirely unseen but felt by man. The wind moves man outwardly, even to picking man up and carrying him a distance, yet he cannot see the wind of itself, nor can he grasp it in his hands. Man cannot commercialize on the wind as to use it for barter. Neither can he do so with the Holy Spirit, in truth and in fact; but we daily see about us the thousands who blindly do just that, claiming great results.

Since I started writing this writing, our local paper's weekly page devoted to Churches, carried the special one Church's argument for "tithing" which, they state, is God's plan taught in the Bible. Now the crux — "Tithing one's income makes him a partner with God the Father, which in turn makes the Heavenly Father responsible to take care of his children." Imagine for a moment just what kind of a God is theirs; then read Isaiah 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Then verse 2: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread," etc. Are not these thousands buying something that is not bread?

Continuing with comparisons, we know that man cannot impede or destroy the effects of the wind, generally speaking. He may construct a wind-break, veering off the wind slightly, but the prevailing storm will continue unabated. Neither can man thwart the will or commands of God. Jonah tried it, and came out the loser, and much wiser. The wind can rage at great heights and also can reach down into, and below, the surface of the water, driving great areas of it with great force into what the Scriptures term "Tempestuous Storms," as recorded in Jonah 1:11 and Acts 27:14. The power of the Holy Spirit cannot be restricted by either height or depth, for He shakes the depths of the earth

mightily and causes the falling of the stars at His will and pleasure. Many more comparisons could be written about, but would be repetitious. It can be added, however, that the wind comes at times in great and terrible force; and again in the most gentle and comforting way to ease the discomfort of man in terrific heat or sweltering under the sun's rays. So does God work his wondrous designs thru the Holy Spirit. His voice can thunder, and His power is demonstrated most beyond description; and then again, "That small still voice."

Now to a few of the miracles God performed with the wind. In Exodus 14:21 thru 27, we find the Israelites closed in against the Sea and the Egyptian forces hard behind them. It is written, "Then the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night and made the sea dry land and the waters were divided." The Egyptian forces were, in due time, all destroyed after the Israelites went safely across on dry land in the bottom of the sea. Then read Numbers 11:31, where it is written, "And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea and let them fall by the camp." The hungry Israelites gathered up the quails some two days and a night, many, many tons of them. God performed these wondrous acts, with the wind being used to convey His power. Some might wonder how quails, a land bird, could be brought from the sea. It would seem more likely to have been some kind of water fowl, but be it as it was, they were for food; and his miraculous power is shown therein.

One of the first recorded uses of the wind, that of carrying the rain clouds, is found in I Kings 18:45, in the days of Elijah. It is written, "The heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Again, another use of the wind is found in I Kings 19:11, to wreak havoc with the mountains. It is written, "And be-

hold, the Lord passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord." Then followed the earthquake, and then a fire and after the fire, (verse 12) "A STILL SMALL VOICE." Tho it is not so recorded, it would seem that Elijah was the one that heard that voice, coming after such a demonstration of the power of the Lord. Does not our Lord still speak to us in a similiar voice, when it is His will to do so; and is that voice not heard after some great inward feeling of his power? If not mistaken, it has been thus with me.

I have referred to the wind as being singular in it's creation and form, but we do find reference to "winds," or plural, in both the Old and New Testaments. I hold to the original reference, "And God made a wind to pass over the earth," regardless of the plural references.

A still different use of the wind by the Lord is shown in the several references to the "Whirlwind" and "Whirlwinds" found in the Old Testament. In 2 Kings 2:1, we find that "The Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind." By man's learning, this would be impossible, for the wind, or air, would change and lose its effect and state of existence, so-to-speak, after rising into upper space. The whirlwind, I believe, was a form of God's Spiritual power which neither depth nor height can impede or resist. One other interesting reference is found in Job 40:6, "Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind . . ." Many more are of record, but space prevents further mention of them.

In the New Testament we find, what I believe to be the strongest evidence that the wind and the Holy Spirit are synonymous, or one and the same. Christ's words as recorded in St. John 3:8, likens the birth by the Holy Ghost to the wind. It is written — "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not

tell whence it cometh and wither it goeth." Then in Acts 2:2, it is written — "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, (and the next verse), and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

In this present day when we see the great increase in the devastating wind storms or tornadoes, etc., and recorded velocities of wind higher than ever before known, the worldly people give it no particular thought. I believe God's disciples, his chosen ones, pay great heed thereto, and see in these occurrences signs that the end of this time world is near. Those of us who believe in the ONE AND ONLY TRUE AND LIVING GOD, must heed the admonition of God: "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD," as found in Psalm 46:10. Even tho we may be buffeted at times by great blowing of the wind, we must not be carried about WITH EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE, as the Apostle warned in Ephesians 4:14. Oh how these "ILL WINDS OF DOCTRINE" are blowing today, carrying millions upon millions about with such force that they become totally oblivious to the TRUTH AND DIVINE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE which they lay aside in favor of the more palatable teachings and doctrines of men.

Concluding, I am mindful of the old hymn in which the writer referred to God's love coming in the form of wind, quote:

"Like a ship, see the Church, thru the ocean
she rolls;
Her ballast is grace and she's manned with
life's souls.
She's rapidly sailing with the strong gales of
love,
And soon will strike shore on the fair coast
above.
"She's hated by the world, despised by fools,
Who'll sail the black seas until their ship
wrecks their souls."

May the "Strong Gales of God's Love" ever be the source of all His lit-

tle ones' movements in these frightening times, is the prayer of this poor sinner, saved by Grace, and not by the payment of tithes, if saved at all.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595,
Mt. Vernon, Wash. 98273

"DOUBTING THE LORD'S WORD"

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y. 12401

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston,
Beloved in the Lord:

The other day, while walking on the street, the thought forcibly came into my mind, and something seemed to say to me, that in my feeling so doubtful and fearful of my salvation before God, I was doubting the Lord's word: for He has said that whosoever believed and was baptized should be saved; and again, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Phillip told the man that if he believed with all his heart, he could be baptized. In other words, he had passed from death unto life: a fit subject to be a follower of Jesus, the meek and lowly Lamb of God. And John said that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Something said to me, "You are doubting the Lord's word," the same as Peter did. How quickly the Lord put him in the class with the evil, fleshly, or wicked spirit, for not believing the Lord. So something told me that I was doing the same thing; for He has told us that if we believed we would be saved: and God knows that I do believe with all my heart, and have prayed to him times without number with a broken heart and contrite spirit — and such ones God has said he will not despise.

I believe the Lord showed me in those few minutes what a terrible sin it is not to believe the Lord's word, which he has spoken: and I just had a good cry. Poor Peter has to be shown so many times that he was wrong, but the Lord loved him and put him in his place. The Lord surely was good to him, giving him to understand that the words of Jesus were "law and gospel," and not what Peter or any puny man might set up. Peter had to learn on the Mount that Jesus was the one now to be heard: the day of the law and the day of prophecy was past, and Jesus was the one to be heard. Peter also had to learn that Jews and Gentiles were to be fellowshipped alike, no matter who they are, nor how unclean they have been, if they have been with Jesus and learned of him. What God has cleansed we are not to call common or unclean.

God surely has been good to poor me; instead of casting me off, I feel he is showing me the truth, and at the same time showing me the error of my ways, as he did Peter; which was good for Peter, and I feel good for me.

With much love,
Amasa J. Slauson

THE REST OF THE WAY

Oh, fathomless mercy; Oh, infinite grace:
With humble thanksgiving the road we retrace,
Thou never hast failed us, our strength and our stay,
To whom shall we turn for the rest of the way?

Thru dangers, thru darkness, by day and by night,
Thou ever has guided, and guided us right;
In thee we have trusted, and prayerfully say,
Lead us by thy hand the rest of the way.

Thy cross all our refuge; thy blood all our plea:
None other we want, Lord Jesus, but thee.
We fear not the shadows at the close of life's day,
For thou wilt be with us the rest of the way:

WE HUMBLY TRUST AND PRAY

— Selected by A. J. S.

"GOD THUNDERED
MARVELLOUSLY WITH
HIS VOICE"

1718 Champagnolle Road,
Eldorado, Ark. 71730

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

If the Lord is pleased to bless me, I would like to express a few of my thoughts I have enjoyed on the writings concerning Job, where he says, "God thundered marvelously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend." (Job 37:5)

The thought that presented itself to me a few days after reading the above, was, Who is it that is made to think upon the spiritual meaning of God thundering marvelously with his voice? It is not the sinful, carnal mind. It is the Holy Spirit giving a hearing ear and understanding heart to the children of God, who hear and rejoice when the Lord thundered marvelously with his voice. The scientists of this world do not comprehend the great things that He doeth. They give themselves credit for the things they are doing, or will do. In the accomplishments they achieve, their minds do not comprehend the marvellous voice of God.

But not so with the children of God: his sheep hear his voice and follow him. Jesus Christ the Son of God thundered marvelously with his voice when he rose from the dead; when he made the blind to see; the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk. Instead of hearing the marvellous voice, many sought to destroy him: and would have many times, but the appointed time had not come for him to depart this world; to die, and to be raised from the dead: another great thing he did.

The world in all of its glory of sinfulness could not comprehend it. I don't believe Job could hear the marvellous voice of his God in his fleshly mind, for in the next chapter the Lord told Job, "Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and

answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth? declare, if thou has understanding." (Job 38:3, 4) In the 42nd chapter Job acknowledged that he comprehended not, for he said, "Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." (Job 42:3)

In his fleshly mind Job could not answer; but when the Lord gave him spiritual understanding, then he comprehended the great things that He doeth. "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." (42:2) The carnal mind cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit; neither can it worship the Lord: for God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. (John 4:24) His people do not worship Him with worldly goods and the treasures of this world, such as silver and gold: they do not put these things first and foremost, but rather strive to mortify worldly lust and desire.

The inward man is fed spiritual food to the extent of hearing the thundering marvellous voice of God. It is fed in a measure daily to worship him in spirit and in truth. His love and relationship he manifests in the heart, and upholds and directs according to His will. God is honored and glorified in all that he does. When He is pleased to open the deaf ears and strengthen their poor hearts with spiritual understanding, they comprehend the great things that he doeth.

Oh, may the Lord give us an understanding heart, that we may say with David, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me

behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." (Psalm 139:1-5)

Enclosed you will find \$5.00 to extend my subscription for two more years. May His loving kindness and tender mercy be and remain with us. May this unworthy one be included in your prayers.

J. J. Davis

Rt. 6, Box 282
Eldorado, Arkansas

ENCOURAGEMENT

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Since I have a couple of subscriptions to the Signs to enclose, I will write a few lines of encouragement: as I feel you possibly need some while contending for the true faith once delivered to the saints; which seemingly is so scarce in these days of apostasy, in which men not only will not contend for, but will not endure sound doctrine.

As far as I am able to determine, you are still contending for this wonderful faith, and have not departed from the original points of doctrine set forth by Elder Gilbert Beebe when he founded the paper. No doubt he prayed often that the paper should endure long after his decease, and contend for the wonderful truths which he so ably expounded and contended for. And I feel that God is using the Signs, its editors and contributors, as well as all who help in any way its welfare, in answering Brother Beebe's prayers; and the prayers of all of us who pray and work for its welfare. May He continue to bless and direct you, and sanctify your efforts to the edification of his little children, and comfort them while traveling through the thorny maze in this troublesome world, is my prayer.

Six years ago this morning, I suffered a stroke which rendered me unable to do gainful work — could not walk for quite a while, and poorly yet, and since

I was a bonded circulation newspaper representative, and could not resign for three months, my future looked black indeed; but God came to my rescue and sent me help to where I not only did not loose, but came out with a little profit. I have now recovered to where I can work a big garden, drive the car and attend meetings, Where I try to preach Jesus in my very limited way. But where there is little given, there is little required: even the little finger is important so long as it does not try to be the whole arm, which I hope God has and will continue to forbid me to do.

(Elder) C. B. Britt

(Thanks, Brother Britt, for the subscriptions and your encouragement — Editors.)

Henry, Virginia 24102

EXPERIENCE

To the Strangers:

Sometime ago I had a dream in which someone handed me a folded paper to read; and when I unfolded it, I saw no words thereon. Knowing I was expected to read; I began to speak: I know not what I said, but I awoke saying, "All things rest in the mighty power of our God."

I pondered over this dream, and sometimes have desired to write something of the mighty power of God as experienced in my life; and especially after reading so many comforting writings from the household of faith. It makes me want to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith I have been comforted; but, knowing my inability to express myself as I would, and my ignorance, I have hesitated. So it is with many misgivings I have penned the following to be used by the editors as they see fit.

I think I have always had some fear of God: and sometimes it seems to me that I have always known I was a sinner — even when a child. But, whereas I was a little sinner then, I have grown to a disproportionate size. Many times I have to bow my head in sorrow, and say with

dear old Paul, "I am the chief of sinners."

I grew up as most do, thoughtless, careless, and unconcerned over my condition, until, after about five years of marriage, my husband was suddenly taken sick, and after a short illness, died, leaving me with three little girls, one yet unborn. No one except those who have gone through this trial, knows the sorrows and anxieties I passed through at that time.

But during this time of trouble I had a dream. I dreamed I was lying beside my husband's grave; and I looked toward the west, and saw a great number of people going in that direction. I got up and started to follow after those people; but, after going a short distance, I met the Lord, and he smiled at me. Instead of going on, I turned around to follow after the Lord. After going a short distance, he disappeared from my sight. I looked, and saw a great storm approaching: the clouds were very black and ominous looking. I became fearful and looked around for a shelter to get out of the storm. A short distance away, I saw a very old, weatherbeaten building, and I went into this building. There were a number of people in this house, and they were wondering what the terrible storm meant. And I said, I can tell you what it means — it means that the end of the world has come.

This dream never left me, and I meditated much on it; but didn't know what it meant. It was years later that I came to believe that the Lord was leading me to the church. I was tied down with my little family; and went very little, but if possible, I would always go to Knob Church when meeting day rolled around. I had a desire to go, but felt that I would never be fit to join; nor any urgent need to do so.

Around ten years later there came a great stirring up: the storm was upon me, and it beat fiercely on my head. I wanted to flee, but I knew not where to go. I became greatly troubled over my condition: I had suddenly become a terrible sinner; and I went mourning and

crying for mercy. Also there came a great feeling of necessity to unite with the church. But, how could I go! I was such a sinner. But the words, "Take up your cross and follow me," seemed to be pushing from every side and urging me faster on. So, it was with much misgiving and with felt necessity that I offered to the church; and was received and baptized. I didn't feel the joy that I had read of others having when baptized; but I did feel to be at peace with all mankind, or as a calm after a great storm.

But this calm lasted only a short while. There came another storm upon me, which seemingly beat harder than the one before: I was a deceiver, and had deceived the church. For several days I went so burdened and troubled, I could find no rest. I was such a miserable, stupid, sinful wretch — I went with bowed down head, crying for mercy, but felt there could be no mercy for such a wretch as I. Where could I go? What must I do? What have I done? such terrible, perplexing thoughts! Surely there had never been such a wretch as I.

I gave up all hope, and lay down one night it seemed to die: I turned my face to the wall and said in my heart, Lord, I've got nothing: everything is gone. Then, all at once, a small, still voice spoke and said, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

And, brethren, I was still: such a peace and calmness came over me that I can't describe; and all my troubles rolled away. I slept the sleep of the just that night.

I have often gone back to examine that place, and am fully persuaded that the Lord delivered me there just as he did the children of Israel when crossing the Red Sea. For, like them, I could neither go forward nor backward, but was ready to perish. But after such a great deliverance, I could sing the Song of Moses and the children of Israel.

While many times since I have had to mourn because of my sinfulness, yet I have never felt that awful condemnation of being a deceiver. The church has been such a resting place for me

through the years; and I have gone in and out finding pasture.

Although I sorrowfully feel to be a sinner of enormous size, yet sin has become exceedingly sinful to me; and many times I am made to hate myself. But seeing myself so vile, so corrupt, and so indebted — having a great hope that the Lord has paid my debt and set me free, I hope has made me to be more compassionate towards my fellow-men. I want to crush this old stubborn nature of mine; I want to be more understanding; I want to be more kind; I want to be more humble; I want to have an eye of pity; I want to be more forgiving; and I want to be more merciful, for

“Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue.”

“Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here,
Sin soon would reduce me to utter despair.”

I humbly hope I have grown some in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour; and while growing in the knowledge of the greatness, and the goodness, and the everlasting longsuffering of our Lord and Saviour, I have grown smaller and smaller in my estimation, until now I have to say again with the Apostle Paul that I am less than the least of all saints. Many and varied have been the trials that the Lord has led me through: and many times I have bowed under the rod. Many times I have felt to be walking right along with the children of Israel: and as I have gone grumbling and stumbling along, sometimes rebellious and chafing at the bit, I have seemed to hear Him say, “Ye are a rebellious and stiff-necked people,” and I have felt his correcting rod upon me. But, just as He fought their battles when the enemy raged thick about them, I feel he is still fighting mine, as I have come to the end of my strength, and can no longer fight.

God has not changed, but the children have waxed fat, and are serving the many gods around about us. We hear His words, “I am God, I change not.” And, just as he has always known what it takes to turn the hearts of his chil-

dren to repentance, he still knows. He says, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction;” and it is in afflictions they will come.

Sometimes my days are spent in sighing because of the sins in the land; and I mourn for the sinfulness of our youth. Our only rest lies in the assurance that all things rest in God’s mighty power; and He makes no mistakes. I am, I hope,

A little sister who fears God,
Martha C. Crawford

(After reading the above, and hoping that I know something of that way, I remembered one of Hart’s hymns; which I quote:

“How strange is the course that a Christian
must steer;

How perplexed is the path he must tread!
The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
And his life he receives from the dead.

“His fairest pretensions must wholly be
waived,

And his best resolutions crossed;
Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
Till he finds himself utterly lost.

“When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins,
When his pardon is signed and his peace is
procured,

From that moment his conflict begins.”

J.D.W.)

“ONE LORD, ONE FAITH,
ONE BAPTISM”

Rt. 1, Box 36
Berlin, Md.

Dear Household of Faith:

As I attempt to write this letter there is a fear within this heart of mine but hoping that the Lord may be pleased to direct my mind that I may be enabled to write to your comfort, and if so then it will be a comfort to this poor worm of the dust, that we may be comforted together with that mutual faith that was once delivered to the saints.

The Bible says “One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” (Ephesians 4:5) I have believed for a long time and cannot go back to the time when I believed any

different, that the Eternal God that spoke all things in existence did fore-know all things and knew his chosen people before the beginning of time, He (God) not only knew all things that have come to pass and will come to pass, but decreed it that way and had a purpose in such for the good of his chosen people, and to his own honor and glory. As we journey in this life, we are confronted with many trials and tribulations, that we would not have if we could have our own way; but, dear child of God, they are necessary to keep us humble, and to realize from day to day that we are not our own keepers but dependant on the grace and mercy of our eternal God, who doeth all things well.

Yes, as I mentioned above, one Lord who was with the father in the beginning for the Bible says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Genesis 1: 26) Therefore our blessed Saviour was with the Father in the beginning and is with him now, having come in this world at the appointed time to bear in his body the sins of his elect, being made a curse for us: for it is written, "Cursed is every one hangeth on a tree." (Galatians 3: 13) It is a wonderful blessing when the Lord is pleased to give unto us poor sinful creatures, as this writer feels to be, a mind to behold a little now and a little then of his love toward a people who are undeserving of the least of his mercies. Are you not glad, dear reader, that you feel to know that you are a sinner, for Jesus said that the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. (Matthew 9: 12)

Jesus is the great Shepherd of his sheep; and I like the word "his," for it denotes in my mind a possession. I do not know that I am one of that number, but am hoping that I am. I have never been able to get any further than hope, for we are told that hope that is seen is not hope.

Now just a few remarks about the second part of the scripture as quoted above, the word **faith**. The Bible says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17) There is a natural hearing and

a spiritual hearing. I do not believe that one can tell another to have faith and it will cause that person to have faith, I believe to have faith in God is a work of God in the heart of the person, and not something that one can pass to one another. There is a mutual faith wherein each have been taught the same thing and can see eye to eye; but that, too, is the work of God in their hearts.

I would like now to mention the latter part of the scripture as quoted in the beginning of this letter, and that is **baptism**. I do not believe that Baptism by water has ever saved one, it is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. (1 Peter 3:21) I believe that there are many of God's chosen people that have never heard with their natural ear the audible voice of man speak of the grace and mercies of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but have heard the still small voice of the Lord speaking in their heart, revealing what they are by nature, and causing them to cry out for mercy like the poor publican of old, when he said, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." Thus when one has been brought to see his need of the grace and mercy of the Lord, I feel he, though perhaps not a member of the visible Church, knows something about the Baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. I am thinking of you today of like faith, though I may never see many of you in the flesh, I am hoping that we may meet in that land of rest beyond the trials of this world. I feel to say however, that without free grace I know I'm lost.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

EXPERIENCE

77016 Hartley Road,
Houston, Texas

Dear Brother Spangler
and Brother Wood:

I enclose \$5.00 to renew my subscription to the **Signs**. I read so many good letters in the **Signs** that I wish at times

that God would give me the wisdom and knowledge to write also. I only wish to write a little of my experience — what the Lord has done for me. The Lord took me in hand, and showed me what he could do with me.

I have thought a great deal about the wonderful scripture, “The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.”

On August 26, 1966, the Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association was held here at Houston with the Shepherd Fold Church. Little did I think that I was soon to be a member of this dear church. I knew that all the people of the church were good people, and I liked them all. Some of them I had known for a great many years. As I thought of the coming association here, and my desire to help all I could, I knew I was always wanting to go there to hear the preaching and singing, so I felt to do all I could. The association came to a close on Sunday August 28th, with the singing of **How Firm a Foundation**; and all told each other goodbye. But everything was not over as I had thought. It seemed to me like a dark cloud had come over me, which I could not explain; or I might have felt I was in a different world.

When we lose our loved ones here on earth, we gather around that body, and sometimes grieve and shed many tears. But little is ever thought about this old worldly body that dies in us, while yet the flesh and bones are still alive, except by the dear brother or sister who looses it: and I believe I shed many tears when I lost mine.

When Saul went to Damascus, and was struck down, we have no record in the Bible that Paul ever again persecuted the people of God. In Acts 9:6, we note that Paul does not say what he is going to do, but he called upon the Lord. How I did cry, “Oh, Lord, where will I go now; Oh, Lord, what will become of me? The old home I had will never be home again, and there is no place I can

ever be satisfied.” And it did not look like there would ever be any more sleep or rest for me. I did consider offering to the church, but I felt I was not fit for the church; neither did I think the church would have me. But the next meeting day, I had made up my mind to give in to the church. I thought surely to goodness I can’t be hurt any worse, if the church tells me, No.

In I Corinthians 15:9, Paul says it was not meet that he should be called an apostle, for he had persecuted the church of God. And this is the way I felt when I went before the church; for it seemed to me that I had tried hard for so long a time, to stay away from them all. After several questions, the church took me in, and on Sunday September 4th, Brother Haygood baptized me. It was a joyful occasion for me. As we walked down, I thought how blessed it is that I can be put under the water as Jesus was. All my life I have been in a hurry to get something done, but this was one thing I was in no hurry about, nor did I care how long it lasted. As we came on to the house from the water I remembered that on September 10th I would be sixty-eight years old. I had often forgotten birthdays, but not this one, for I thought this was the best birthday present I ever received.

When we returned to the church house, they sang a song and gave me the hand of fellowship. When all this was finished, none but the Lord and I will ever know what a burden had been taken off of me. We have no knowledge of our first birth, and we do not have any say-so concerning our spiritual birth, or when it is coming. I believe when the Lord’s time comes to send us before the church, we have no choice then, anymore than we have when His time comes to call us out of this world. It may seem strange to the world to see an old man sixty-eight years of age join the church and be baptized; but all Primitive Baptists understand it. His enemies sought many times to destroy Jesus Christ, but could not take him

until the right hour came — and Jesus told them that his hour had come. I believe this was my appointed hour to go before the church.

There were seven states represented at the association by messengers and minutes. It was a wonderful gathering for God's people, and I know I enjoyed all the sermons. Dear old Elder Rhodes preached from Luke 18: 10-13, concerning the two who went into the temple to pray; and this was the scripture that I had longed to hear some minister preach on. I have long believed they represented two classes of people that we have on earth: one, a people who feel very low and sinful, hoping that the Lord will have mercy on them, and living in hope of eternal life; the other, people who have done all these good things, and expect to go to heaven for all the good deeds they have done.

I had a sister, Mrs. J. F. Gaines, who died the same day I went before the church. She was buried at Lawn, Texas, near Pilgrim's Rest Church. I had been with her several days, and had come to the association, expecting to go back to see her soon. I was much grieved, but have been reconciled to it all by God's tender mercy. I feel sure she is in safe keeping, to await the second coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

There have been a number of things that seemed strange to me from my childhood about Primitive Baptists: such as going a long way in covered wagons to associations, and going to a lot of expense. I wondered why they could not hold their meetings closer home. These things were strange to me, for the reason had not been revealed to me. I saw Brother Kilgore come a long way to our house in Coleman County, in a buggy, for a great number of years; and I saw Brother Greathouse come down from New Mexico by train for a good many years; and Brother Bowden come a long ways in a covered wagon to our house, for many years.

I said all these things were strange to me, but now all has been made so plain to me that it seems a child could see it.

There is but one answer, the Primitive Baptist Church is not going to be destroyed: it was put here on earth to stay. "And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18) The church is in God's hands till the end of time.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

C. L. Berry

Rt. 1, Box 111
Gustene, Texas

To the Editors
and Readers of the Signs:

Oh, why should I feel so sad and alone? My needs are well supplied; my children and friends are good and kind. Still, as that dear old hymn says, "Oh, is there anyone like me?" As one dear sister once remarked, "I hope there isn't."

I have had many heartaches, griefs and afflictions. I have felt assured at times that I was sustained by a higher power, else this frail body could not have endured.

"Where is the blessedness I felt, when first I knew the Lord?" It seems definitely absent, gone forever. I wonder, Did I know Him indeed and in truth? Did I really know that He died for me? Have I ever felt His blessed nearness; did He ever appear with healing in his wings for me? Were my pleasant meditations; my, to me, wonderful dreams; and the times I have felt to praise His holy name even in the darkest hours of the night, the result of an over-burdened mind.

All these, and so many questions arise in my mind, causing doubts and fears: though not for an instant do I doubt that God is able to do, and will do everything he has purposed to do. For he is of one mind, and none can change him. He doeth his will in the heavens and among the inhabitants of the earth, and

none can stay his hand; and he needs not the help of any.

One occasion I can never forego when bowed down with grief and the burden of guilt and unworthiness before God, when it seemed I would sink to rise no more, the words dropped sweetly into my mind, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." I arose and felt comforted, though not elated as some express themselves to be. I was at this time deeply grieved over the loss of our darling little girl as well, but there was a change I had never experienced: the love for earthly things was gone. I cared not for socials or other worldly pleasures as I once had. Although that has been more than fifty years, my mind often goes back in retrospect to this occasion, which always affords at least a degree of comfort.

Not many years later my husband and I united with the church at Lawn, Texas, where my membership still remains; but he passed on in 1951. My fondest memories are of our visits to this dear little church, and the sweet fellowship, love and unity we enjoyed among them. And now, as my evening sun is sinking low, I pray that I will be given grace to endure with patience whatsoever afflictions the dear Lord has destined for me; and to say, "Thy will, blessed Lord, not mine, be done."

Enclosed you will find a check for my renewal to the **Signs**, which has been coming as a welcome visitor, and a cherished one, for more than seventy years. Please renew for one year; the balance is for the Indigent Fund. . .

May the dear Lord grant the readers and everyone who love the dear paper for the doctrine it advocates, many years to come, for the comfort, encouragement, and edification of the dear saints of God. We know from reading the reprints of articles written more than a century ago, that the **Signs** is still contending for the same truth once delivered to the saints.

With the deepest love and fellowship my poor heart is capable of giving, I bid you farewell.

Ida Bowers

Pheba, Miss. 39755

Dear Editors:

I see that my subscription is up, and I don't feel that I can do without the **Signs**. I usually sit up and read it through the first night I receive it. Nothing is spiritual food to me except this doctrine. Every piece in it was grand this month.

I did not get to go to our Hopewell Association this year, as my husband was taken to a sanatorium in August, and will be there sometime yet. He missed getting to go too. We both are members, and are past seventy-five years old.

Enclosed is check for \$3.00 to renew our subscription.

Mrs. Sam Moore

SONG OF SOLOMON 1:4

Draw me, Lord, I humbly pray,
By the tender cords of love;
Draw me by thy cords of mercy
To thy mercy seat above.

Draw me out of all my weakness,
Give me strength to come to thee;
Draw me by thy loving kindness
Nearer to thyself to be.

Draw me far from human boasting,
From the busy courts of pride;
Draw me by thy gentle teaching
To my Saviour's loving side.

Draw me off from self-deception,
From my sinful self and ways;
Draw me into close communion
With thy heavenly mysteries.

Draw me into closer feeling
With thy sorrowing members here;
May there not for them be wanting
Once the sympathizing tear.

Draw me to the path of suffering,
Jesus crucified to see;
Draw me, Lord, in wisdom's pleading,
Wheresoever it please thee.

(Selected by Elder Slauson from the *Signs* of 1889.)

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hill Church, Edgecombe County, N. C., just off Highway 43, between Pinetops and Rocky Mount, N. C., the fifth Sunday in January, 1967.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

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(To December 1, 1966)

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EDITORIAL

One of our readers has requested our views on the third verse of the only chapter of the book of Jude. It reads as follows:

"Beloved when I gave 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 to the saints."

It appears from the inquiry of our reader, that he is concerned with the expression, "the common salvation." There are various meanings of the word common, and by referring to the Scriptures, we find some of the meaning brought to view.

In the text the common salvation that Jude gave all diligence to write about, refers to salvation that flows to all the children of God, who have been, "Sanctified by God the Father (chosen and set apart), and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." In this first verse of the chapter, Jude gives the reason for this salvation being referred to as the *common salvation*: because all receive it from the same source. In Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, the same thought is presented in reference to the things of God belonging to all alike, because all receive them through electing love, surety in Christ, redeeming grace, and effectual calling.

In Acts 2:43-47, we read, "And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Here Peter, in his wonderful sermon preached with

the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, shows that this salvation when received, causes God's humble poor to feel a heavenly tie with all the redeemed of the Lord. None can call their possessions their own, because this relationship brings to light their union with Christ their Lord.

It is no wonder that Jude was constrained by the effect of this common salvation, to exhort the brethren to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. The contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints, also embraced warnings that certain men had crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout the Book of Jude, the line is drawn between *professors* and *possessors* of godliness. The same is true today: as in that day, "By their fruit ye shall know them."

The common salvation of the text does not refer to a separate salvation for the people of God, apart from salvation given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. I have failed to find the word *salvations* mentioned in the Word of God. The word is in the singular, showing that the same grace that saves the sinner in time, saves him eternally.

How comforting it is to read the summation of the whole matter in the closing of this chapter: "Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." If Jesus is able to keep his people from falling, can they ever fall? If they cannot fall, it is because they, "Are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Before Peter had been sifted as wheat, wherein all his self-confidence was removed, he was probably one who believed that part of his salvation was of God: the eternal part; but when left to self and turned over to Satan for the destruction of this self-confidence, he could testify that he was kept by the power of God.

Is it not a mark of grace in the lives of His people, when they realize how weak they are; and are made daily to look to Him who is able to keep them from falling? These precious ones often cry, "Lord help me," and realize that there is salvation in no other.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

"Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shalt thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded." (Ezekiel 24:15, 18)

Many things crowd into my mind as I contemplate the wisdom of the eternal God as he sends forth the truth to the nations. What parables and allegories and mysterious workings are brought forward in bringing to our attention the things that He has in store for us. It will be well for us to note that God's words to the impenitent are more concise and straightforward than are His words to believers. This may come as an astonishment to my readers, but, nevertheless, it is true. It will be heard at times that the Lord's people know more than unbe-

lievers. This is true. They know the legal dispensation; they know what it is to believe in salvation by works, but that is not all that they know. They know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven by reason of gift. There is not any intimation of the Saviour talking to the unbelieving world in parables *so that the believer would not find out what He was talking about.* They already know what it means for the Lord to deal with unbelievers. No reason for Him to speak in parables and allegories, for they learned all about what is in store for the impenitent. But He does speak in deep mysteries when talking to those *that know* the things of the kingdom, lest the impenitent find out things that are hid from them.

Perhaps I had read this Scripture in days past and gone, but I am sure that it did not make any impression on my mind. When it was brought to my attention by a brother, I was amazed at the language. I have delayed attempting to comply with his request that I write on it, because I have not felt to have any light on it. Again and again my mind has been brought back to it, and as often I have tried to shy away from it. This has been going on for weeks, and now I am brought to the place that I feel an inclination of mind to inquire of the Lord wisdom that we might explore the deep mine of gospel truth that is hid here from prying eyes, but spoken in the allegorical style for enlightened eyes. As I venture forth, I am not blind to the fact that eyes can not be gotten nor given by earthly men, be they priests or ministers or any other ecclesiastical talent; nor am I blind to think that the recipient of opened eyes *can* keep them open. Thus, I am in steady need of His divine work in giving and anointing my eyes that I might be blessed to see.

There have not been more than a half dozen times when I have called off an appointment for the sake of my wife and children, but whatever the number, it has been that many times

too many. I may have many readers that will not agree with me, but I am going to say that there is not one excuse that will justify us in doing wrong. The least excusable excuse that can be rendered, is that the wrong was in the purpose of God. How pitiful the case that loves sin in such a manner as to hide behind God's purposes to cover it up. If the Lord ever told a transgressor that "I know I left you in a questionable surrounding and that you are not altogether to blame," I have failed to find it after forty years reading. Sometimes it would appear that the Lord's people have such a weak conception of Him, that sweeping things under the carpet works as well in dealing with God as it does one another.

In nature and in serving God, it is indisputable that two masters can not be served at the same time. To think that two people can be loved equally, is to court disaster; and it is even more so to think that we can love the world and the Lord, and serve each of them. We have a number of cases in the Bible of those that served God alone, even though it was disastrous to them in gaining the favor of the world. Among these faithful people will be found Joseph, Moses, Daniel, the Hebrew brethren, Job, Paul, John and many others. The life of each character proves conclusively that it is not true that our welfare comes to us by our obedience. Then we have a number that tried to divide the glory; that tried to be a follower of the Lord and to carry a torch for the world, and in each case it ended in disaster. To assert that salvation in time from trouble and sorrow came to Joseph and Daniel and the others by their obedience, is to dispute Bible history. It was *not* disobedience that sent Joseph to prison; it was not disobedience that sent the Hebrews into the fiery furnace. To assert that salvation in time was removed from Jacob by his disobedience, (who is the inheritance of the Lord), is to

show a lamentable ignorance of the Scriptures. To assert that disobedience brings peace and satisfaction to God's children is to subvert the Scriptures. To assert that God winks at the disobedience of his servants, is to flout God and his written testimony.

We will never be able to take the things of Christ as our own until the Spirit or Guide or Comforter takes them and shows them unto us. Perhaps they do not mean to suggest such a thing, but it does seem sometimes that it is thought that the children of God could have gotten along very well without the third Person in the Trinity. It is blasphemy to charge weakness or failure in the effectual workings of God's Spirit. His work is to call, to qualify, to teach, to lead, and none of these wonderful works are followed by "at," for the Comforter was not left with the people of God to *expose* them to the things of Christ, but to teach them; to guide them into all truth; to take the things of Christ and show them to the people of God; to bring to their remembrance all things. Christ filled His mission while here in the flesh, and as far as the office work of our Saviour, it is the most harmonious doctrine set forth in the Bible, but it will not do us any good until the Holy Spirit (which is the Comforter) brings it to us. It is His work to bring those things of the risen Christ to us. We will neglect what the Saviour said while He was here in the flesh. We may be an avid reader of the Scriptures and yet pass by very lightly what He said; but when the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Christ and presents them to us, *we will always obey*. Remember, dear reader, I am not making three Gods, but I am declaring unto you the three-in-one God, and that the third Person, which is the Spirit of God, even the Spirit of Christ, is effectual in His work among the children of God.

Let us remind ourselves once again of the office work of God the Father in election, God the Son in redemption,

and God the Spirit in saving and preserving that which the Son left in His care. As God did not make a mistake, or surrender to some unknown god, or fail in giving a single vessel of electing grace to the Son, just so did Christ not fail in the work that He came to do; and just so, no more, no less, does the Holy Spirit effectually work in the children redeemed. His commandments are obeyed. As the sheep hear the voice of the Saviour and follow him, just so, no less, no more, does the children of the kingdom learn, and hear, and remember, and *do* the things that the Comforter brings to them.

We are accused of preaching a hard doctrine. The hardest thing about it is to get around the truthfulness of it. How nature would charge God with harshness in dealing with Ezekiel. The approach is not marked by preliminaries in preparation for what is to come. Nature would say that the Lord bluntly told him that he was going to take his wife away suddenly. It is not clear whether the Lord meant that she would die by a stroke, or that her passing suddenly would be a stroke to the prophet. Be that as it may, it would be a stroke indeed to Ezekiel to suddenly lose his desirable wife. Did the prophet have a time of mourning? Did he have permission to call off his prophetic announcements for a season? Did he have permission to indulge in the things that usually accompanied mourners? How many of my readers have stayed away from their services because your son was home from the service? O dear child of God, please do not deal harshly with me, for I tell you that according to the examples given us, we are not permitted to serve self for any reason, if it means foregoing the service of the Lord. People in general were permitted this and that indulgence at the time of mourning, and even the priests were permitted to join in mourning at some times, but this is a time that all of these privileges must be left off. Ezekiel was not to

show by word or act that his wife was going to die.

We think that we can not bear this or that, or the other. Often we worry about whether we could continue faithful at the fiery stake. We do not, at this time, need that kind of grace. I do not feel any inclination, yea, I do not feel any need, to pray for grace to enable me to face death by the burning fagots of a frenzied religious world. I do feel the need, and I do hope that I pray for enabling grace for whatever comes my way. As I contemplate the exercises of my mind under strain, I do not seem to be able to think that I could preach if I was facing the loss of my companion. Ezekiel was blessed to do just that. He spake to the people in the morning, and in the evening his wife died. Again, let me ask, was he permitted any grief? No, and I desire that you notice the effectiveness of God's command. The next morning he also spoke to the people. If I could be blessed with such overcoming power of the Spirit I would do as he did.

But is the faithfulness of Ezekiel the only matter under consideration? I do not desire to pass over that, for that is important to remember, but often God leads his servants in a particular direction in order to bring forward something still greater, something that this deed here will throw light on some future deed.

What would be the reaction of the Old School Baptist family to a minister that went to his appointment while his wife's body was in the morgue? The same consternation that would come to them, also came to Ezekiel's people. They said unto him, "Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us." While we are left in conjecture about this, it would seem that had they known what their inquiry would have brought, that they, too, would have said, "Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things." Ezekiel had been chosen to endure this affliction to set before Israel a pattern of what was

coming to them. God said, "Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, *the desire of your eyes*, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword." What are they to do? They shall follow the sign; they shall do as Ezekiel did in his sorrow. Ah, it is not any idle tale to talk about the ravages of sin. What inroads it has made in the midst of Israel. They shall not show any weeping for that which they lose, but they shall pine away for their iniquities, and they shall mourn one towards another. What a difference is here; they shall not mourn for what they have lost, but they shall mourn *for* one another.

All that Ezekiel had to do, they had to do, and when they were brought through it, they were to learn a good lesson. They shall come to know the Lord, to know that he is the God that demands obedience of his people. They were to find this lesson in the day when their strength was removed from them; in the day when the desire of their eyes was gone; in the day when the joy of their glory was vanished. They learned, as Jeremiah and Jonah and Peter, and you and I, that God's command is not given loosely, that it is given with all power in heaven and earth in His hands, to bring obedience. It is well for us to note that not a few thought to do differently than what God said, that picked out a route of evasion to the commandment. What was the outcome of it? It ended with them, as it has ended, *or will end*, with you and me, in being brought to do that which we did not intend to do.

In all of the scattering of the children of Israel there was always a remnant left. A few have been preserved against destruction in all of Israel's calamities. This few has not been limited to what we ordinarily call it. There was a remnant in Elijah's day, and yet it was seven thousand; there was a remnant in Paul's day that was preserved in the

same way, and there is a remnant today (and they are more than our fears would suggest or our enemies would allow) that God is keeping as a special monument to his saving power. In the ninth chapter of this same book there is a vivid description of the one that is left. According to the word that came to Ezekiel, there would be escapees in the bringing to pass of this momentous event.

These that escaped were exercised in such a divine way that they came to Ezekiel. At this time, the order for non-weeping was abrogated. The talking and acting as one that was not grief stricken would be over. His mouth would be opened to commune with his brethren, to seek their mutual sympathy in the sudden death of his wife. Thus, he was in this, as in all the other part of this miracle, a sign to Israel.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Roxboro, N. C.
Sept. 6, 1897

Dear Brother Chick:

When on my way home from the Warwick Association, Sister Shepherd, of Trenton, N. J., requested me to write my views upon the resurrection, and send them to the *Signs* for publication. Brother I. H. Harris, of Tar River, N. C., has also made the same request. You remember that this was my subject on the last day of the Warwick Association, and many seemed much stirred up, and yourself among the rest. This has been the cause that I have not written up to this time, but I now feel to pen a few thoughts upon this subject, and give them to the *Signs*, hoping that our God will give the hearing ear, and understanding heart.

This subject seems to me to be embraced in the sentence, "I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11:25) Lazarus and his two sisters were friends to our Lord, He makes special mention of this in the eleventh verse. This man was sick, and Jesus was sent for, but he did not go to heal him, and neither did he manifest his power in healing him, as he did the servant of the centurion, as recorded in Matthew 8. He had another purpose in view. His power over death, as well as over diseases, must be made manifest. The power of God which was in our Lord, was not made manifest in saying only, but doing as well. He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This power must be made known in deed also. Therefore he said, "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intend that you may believe."

The sisters of the dead were yet weeping, and as soon as Martha had heard that Jesus was coming, she went forth to meet him; and then said unto him, "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died." Jesus said unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again." Here is the turning point. Martha believed in the resurrection, but she viewed it as being so far away that she knew not the great comfort there was in it. She had felt nothing of that to which she was looking forward. She was looking in expectation to some far off day or time unspecified, when her brother should rise from the dead. She calls this the last day. Little did she think that the joy which she hoped to embrace in that far off day, was so very near her, looking upon her as the beautiful morning sun looks in at the window upon the unconscious sleeper, and awakes him to see that it is now beautiful daylight.

The word comes immediately back to her, "I am the resurrection and the life." That for which thou art looking in the great distance is here now; this

is the day of joy. This was more than she could realize, until her brother was raised from the dead, and she had seen him alive and loosed from his grave clothes. How many of the little ones of our Lord's brethren are today looking so far away from this present time, to a day that they have never experienced, and know nothing of, only as a hope. How good when one can feel that Jesus is our resurrection, and that he is now present with us. Jesus died for us, was buried for us, and rose again for us. When he died for us, all the body died; when he arose, all the body arose with him, every member of it. They are victors over death and the grave, in his victory. As we journey on in our pilgrimage here, the Holy Spirit reveals this wonderful resurrection in us. We have trouble and sorrow often, finding ourselves down deep in the horrible pit, crying to God for deliverance. The Lord inclines his ear and hears our cry. His everlasting arm is revealed underneath us, and he shows that he has brought us up. At once our hearts are filled with praise, and we find ourselves standing firmly upon the Rock, and singing the song of deliverance.

Now what is this? Is it not a revelation of the resurrection (of Jesus, who is the resurrection) in our hearts? This was what caused the burning in the hearts of two of his followers, as they journeyed from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They were in trouble, and were conversing together of their sadness, and the things that caused it. A man who appeared to them as a stranger, walked with them. He soon entered into their conversation, and soon became chief speaker. And more than this, his wisdom began to so fill them that there was a heart-burning within them. But they knew not the cause. When they had gotten to the end of their journey, as they sat at meat, this man broke bread, and immediately the resurrection was before them. They now see him who was dead, sitting before them. Certain women had told them of this,

but now they are witnesses for themselves.

As soon as they knew him, he was gone, but his peace remains, and their conversation changes. He is no longer a dead leader, but their living Lord. His power over death is seen. They realize that it was his presence and conversation with them that caused their hearts to burn within them, as he talked with them by the way. It was when Abraham viewed Isaac released from death that he said, Jehova Jireh. It was in waving the first sheaf that the evidence came to Israel that the harvest should be good, for as was the sheaf, so should all the harvest be. As the Lord accepted that sheaf, so should he pour out all his blessings upon Israel. Thus the resurrection of Christ, the first sheaf is revealed in us; taking away our sins, removing our troubles, showing us that he has borne them all, and that he, our life, is the end of our troubles, even in death. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has already shined in our hearts, in the light of his power over death, and has given us this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. (2 Cor. 4:6, 7)

This treasure shall not go down in death, for it is the subject of the resurrection which is already revealed in us, and in which we look forward to the hope of the eternal glory of God. Thus this blessed grace of our God is continually revealed in us, and it is that which will continually deliver us from every sorrow and pain, as long as we have an earthly existence. With the Christian there is here two men, the old and the new, the inner and the outer man. These are joined in battle. The old man is carnal, and is changed in the new birth only as he is bound, or made a bond servant. He is just as carnal as he was before. Baptism does not put away his filth, either in the burial, or the resurrection. This every baptized child of God knows, for he is

a sinner still. Both the old and the new man must dwell together in the same house (this earthen vessel) until death shall prey upon this mortal body. Then the old man, this carnality, this troubler of our Christian life, shall be no more forever. But what of this body, this earthen vessel? Water was put in the waterpots, but it was drawn out wine: the best wine. There had never been any like before. All that is of Adam shall go down in death, and we shall not live any more in Adam. But this body shall live again, not in Adam, not like Adam, but in Christ, and like Christ. When this shall be we do not know, and what the image shall be we do not know, but we do receive the earnest of these things, as we go on here, and this is a blessed assurance that we shall receive the whole of the inheritance.

I suppose that all Old School Baptists are established in the fact that the same body that was nailed to the cross, pierced with the spear, and laid in the grave, was that body that arose from the dead, and was seen of the disciples, and received up into glory. This was the first sheaf of the harvest, and as that was, so shall all the harvest be. That body which endured the contradiction of sinners, which suffered for our sins, and made an end of them, is the same body that is heir of eternal glory. While here it was an earthly body, just like the body of any other Jew, for he was a Jew naturally. Now it is a heavenly body, a spiritual body, just as all the saints shall be when in glory. We all die in Adam, but we live in Christ. The same body, but not the same nature. It (the body) is sown in corruption; it (the same body) is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. (1 Cor. 15:42-44) It is not raised and then changed, but it comes forth in the resurrection a changed body. A beautiful difference

between that which is, and that which shall be, is seen in the body of our Lord as he appeared among men as a man, and then as he appeared upon the mount of transfiguration before his disciples. Here he showed himself as a man, but there his face did outshine the sun, and his raiment was whiter than the light. So shall all the children of God be in the resurrection. One said, "When I awake in thy likeness then shall I be satisfied."

So will all the family of God be satisfied then, but not one of them will ever be satisfied short of that glory. Thus the end of every sorrow is joy, and the end of every trouble is peace, and the end of the death of the body will be life from the dead, and the end of our mortality will be the glory of our God fully revealed in us. I shall not try to designate the time when we shall be raised up, for God has reserved that knowledge to himself alone, and will reveal it unto us as he does all the blessings of his grace, in the manifestation of it to us in him.

I have written hastily, but hope that lovers of the truth will be able to gather my meaning.

Your brother in this blessed hope.

L. H. Hardy

[It was our privilege to hear the sermon which our brother makes mention, at the Warwick Association last June, and we desire to say here, as we did then to him, that we greatly delighted in it, and, as we trust, were edified by it. It seems to us that the whole matter, as Brother Hardy has presented it and as he presented it in the sermon alluded to, is summed up in the words of our Lord, recorded in John 5:25, 28, 29. Verse twenty-five reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Verses twenty-eight and twenty-nine read, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth. they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

The words in verse twenty-five, present the first resurrection work, which we commonly

speak of as the new birth, and the Saviour says of it, that it is not only coming, but now is; while in verse twenty-eight, he says simply that the hour is coming, and does not say that it now is. Thus these three verses contain the full subject of our brother's letter and sermon. Verse twenty-five presents the quickening of a dead sinner into life, while verse twenty-nine presents the resurrection of the body. When that shall be, we are not told, as Brother Hardy well says, except that it is future, and shall be at the end of all that is earthly. When the body is raised up, then will the consummation of redemption be experienced by all the saints; and our redemption is not experimentally completed without the resurrection of the bodies of the saints.

We have said these things not to add to what Brother Hardy has said, but to express our approval of the burden of his letter. — Editor (Elder Chick)]

OBITUARIES

CORA HALES POWELL

The subject of this sketch was born April 24, 1891, the daughter of William F. Hales and Lucinda Townsend Hales, of Wicomico, Maryland. She was married to Harold W. Powell October 6, 1909, by Elder Thomas Polson.

She was received into the fellowship of Nassaonga Old School Baptist Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, April 28, 1918.

After an illness of several years, she passed away October 28, 1966, in the Peninsular General Hospital, Salisbury, Maryland. She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Evelyn Washburn and Dorothy P. Twilley, of Salisbury; and by several grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, who read and commented on the 19th chapter, 8th verse of Revelation, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

It was my pleasure to be Sister Powell's pastor for almost twenty-five years. She adorned her profession with an orderly walk and a godly conversation, being blessed with faithfulness in the things of the Lord. She had a pleasant disposition, and often composed poetry that beautifully expressed the things of God, and his work in nature. She left evidence that she died in the triumph of that faith which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. Our grief should not be as for those who have no hope, for, "If we believe that Jesus bled and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Her spirit is now

in the paradise of God, waiting that blessed day when He shall come again without sin unto salvation, and to raise the bodies of all who sleep in him, and fashion them like unto his glorious body.

Our sympathy is extended to the family, and all who feel their loss.

D. V. Spangler

LINDA M. JUDGE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Sister Linda Judge, a beloved and highly esteemed member of the church at Kehukee.

She was born in Nash County, N. C., June 3, 1886, and died August 7, 1966, at the age of eighty. She was married to Samuel D. Judge in June, 1905, who passed away October 17, 1960. They were parents of ten children: nine of whom survive.

Sister Judge united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Hopeland the first Sunday in September, 1933. Having moved to near Hobgood, N. C. to live, she moved her membership to the church at Kehukee in July, 1936, and was a loving and faithful member until death.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor Elder S. R. Boykin, and interment was in the cemetery near Scotland Neck.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family, and bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Kate Bradley, Clerk

ROY B. WILLIAMS

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Roy B. Williams. He was the son of Mrs. Sarah Stocks Williams and the late Walter D. Williams, Sr.

Brother Roy had been in failing health for years, and critically so for the last few months that he lived. He passed from this life December 3, 1965, at the age of sixty-three. He is survived by his wife, the former Annie Mae Hill; and their daughter Mrs. Edna Lee Wingate and her two children. All was done for Brother Roy that loving hands could do.

Brother Williams was a gentle, quiet person: a man of honor and integrity. He was an asset to his family, to his church and to his community. He was a strong believer in salvation by grace — a faith manifested by his walk in life. He united with the church at Hancock in March, 1949, and was a true and faithful member, always filling his seat unless providentially hindered. He was ordained a deacon of the church in August,

1956, and he faithfully discharged the duties of this office as long as he lived.

We miss this dear brother, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. We extend our deepest sympathy to the beveaved family, and pray that God's richest blessings will be theirs.

Written by order of conference while in regular session.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

BROTHER CLARENCE DELOUS GREEN

Clarence Delous Green was born May 14, 1897, to the late Elder W. N. Green and Mary (Tate) Green, as Moran, Texas; and passed from this life at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, July 24, 1966, making his stay over sixty-nine years. He was united in marriage to Miss Mayme Leona Robinson September 17, 1916, at Lawton, Oklahoma. To this union were born two daughters.

Brother Clarence came asking for a home with Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Okla., in October, 1950, and was received a candidate for baptism; and in May, 1951, he, together with his dear companion, was baptized by Elder E. J. Lambert.

Since I came to be pastor of the church of his membership, I found him to be a very lovely, faithful and devoted member. Surely I, together with the others of the church, have suffered a great loss in Brother Clarence being taken from us. But we surely believe that our loss is his great eternal gain. We shall never forget the last day of his life, ing services were finished, singing, "How how he raised from his seat as soon as preach-sweet the name of Jesus sounds;" and as he came to the last verse, his voice faltered, and tears dimmed his eyes — not knowing it would be only a matter of about seven hours before he would close his eyes in death.

He is survived by his wife; two daughters: Mrs. Delores Alexander and Mrs. Margaret Newell, both of Oklahoma City; one sister, Mrs. Willie Foster, of California; and three grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Services were conducted by the writer, and he was laid to rest in the Memorial Park Cemetery, Oklahoma City, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Written by request of the family.

Elder C. M. Haygood

JAMES BETHEL ALUMBAUGH

James Bethel Alumbaugh, of Wellington,

Mo., was born February 27, 1887, and passed from this life October 27, 1966, at the North Plaza Hotel, at the age of seventy-nine years and eight months. On May 13, 1909, he was married to Eve Dade Adams, of Odessa, Mo., and they made their home near Independence, Mo., until they retired; from then on their home was at Oak Grove, Mo. To this union five children were born: Joy, Mrs. Elliott Smith, Independence, Mo.; Garnett, Mrs. J. C. Jury, Granada Hills, California; Margaret, Mrs. Robert Winkle, Truman Road, near Independence, Mo.; Lois Jean, Mrs. John Ruksnaitis, Northridge, California; and one son, Frank, who with his wife were constant in their help and care during his father's illness, which was internal cancer. He also leaves one brother, Forest Alumbaugh, Houston, Texas.

On June 21, 1921, he united with the Old School Baptist Church called Big Sin-a-bar, near Wellington, Mo., and was baptized by the late Elder W. C. Hall. They soon recognized the qualities of a deacon in him, and he was so ordained; and faithfully filled that office as long as he was able.

His dear wife died in June, 1957, and on November 19, 1961, he married Mrs. Bessie Egan, of Marshall, Mo., who was a faithful and loving companion; and who, with his children and brother, survives.

His funeral was preached by Elder Paul Brown in the Baptist Church at Oak Grove, on October 29, 1966, and he was laid to rest in the cemetery at Odessa, Mo. We can truly say, "Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord; Yea, sayeth the Spirit, that they may rest from their labor, and their works do follow them." Written by request.

Mrs. J. W. Taylor

BROTHER ROBERT GEORGE

Brother George was born in 1888, and died September 27, 1966. He joined Springfield Church September 11, 1966. He attended Church regularly for a number of years, which causes us to feel He had a hope in Christ for some time before joining the Church. He was a firm believer in salvation by Grace.

We, the Church at Springfield, bow in humble submission to the Lord, who doeth all things well.

Brother George is survived by one sister, Mrs. Tiny Pulliam, Culpeper, Virginia. His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his Pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. Adams. His body was carried to Culpepper for burial to await the second coming of our Lord.

Written by L. R. Willis, by order of the Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. R. Willis, Clerk

HARVEY FOREST CATE

Harvey Forest Cate was born near Moravia, Iowa, August 26, 1889, and departed this world July 4, 1966, at Wichita, Kansas. He was a school teacher in the Mullinville, Kansas, area for over thirty years; and principal for the past several years. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church in Kingman, Kansas, and served as deacon for many years.

He is survived by his widow, Mercedes; two daughters: Mrs. Margaret Coder, Lakin, Kansas; and Mrs. Marketa Price, Wichita, Kansas; one son, James, of Kansas City, Missouri; and ten grandchildren. Also surviving are a sister, Mrs. Lola Fisher, Blakesburg, Iowa; and two brothers; S. R., of Winfield, Kansas, and W. E. Cate, Whittier, California.

Brother Cate, by the grace of God, was a believer of true doctrine, and frowned heavily on any part of praise of man by man. So we desire to give God the glory for the presence of this dear brother with us for a little while. The little church at Kingman, feels that God blessed us by sending Brother Cate our way, that we could worship in truth, and in communion one with another in complete harmony. He was one of our "leaning posts." He never grew tired of talking on the Scriptures, and praising God, in whom was all his trust; but he tired quickly of unsound doctrine, and made it known in a sure, but kind manner. God gave him a kind and forbearing nature.

Two services were conducted by the writer: one in the chapel in Wichita, for his friends and brethren; and one in Mullinville, Kansas, for his friends and former neighbors in that vicinity. He was laid to rest in the cemetery in Mullinville, to await the glorious resurrection.

May God bless the sad ones left behind, with the same spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus that he bestowed upon Brother Cate, and all sound believers in the faith.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Sister Louvenia Wynn, the daughter of the late John Henry Dawson Peel, and Nellie Clark Peel, was born April 5, 1883, and departed this life August 3, 1966. She was married to Henry Wynn, who died in 1960.

Sister Wynn united with the church at Bear Grass Saturday before the third Sunday in December 1952, and was baptized on

Sunday by her pastor, Elder A. B. Ayers. She was a faithful and devoted member, very humble in spirit, strong in faith, and a believer in salvation by the Grace of God.

While we mourn her passing, we realize there is a time to be born, and a time to die. "The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

"He that liveth, and believeth in me though he be dead, he shall live again. There is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh who walk after the spirit." "As many as are led by the Spirit are the sons of God." We have evidence this dear Sister was taught and led by the Spirit of God.

Sister Wynn leaves to mourn her passing, two daughters, Mrs. Stephen Ketchum and Mrs. Howard Newberry, of Norfolk, Va.; one sister, Mrs. Beulah Mobley, of Williamston, N. C.; and one brother, Henry Peel, of Stokes, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted in the Primitive Baptist Church at Bear Grass, by her pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, and Elder W. E. Grimes. Interment was in Martin Memorial Gardens on Highway #64.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in August 1966.

Beulah Mobley,
E. C. Harrison,
Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write of our dear brother, Charlie B. Stancil. It was God's will to remove him from this world September 13, 1966; making his stay here seventy-four years.

Brother Stancil came to Tarboro Church December 6, 1952, by letter, and was received in full fellowship. He was a faithful deacon also, and we felt free to ask him for advice at any time. He was faithful in attending until afflictions kept him away. He was a full believer in Salvation by Grace, and loved to talk about the blessings God had bestowed upon him.

THEREFORE, WE RESOLVE, First, that four copies of this Resolution be made: one for the church record, one for the family, and one be published in the *Landmark* and the *Signs of the Times*. Second, that we, the church at Tarboro, extend our sympathy to the family. We feel our loss is his eternal gain.

This done by order of Conference at our November, 1966, meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1967

NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

O when the darkness fills the soul,
Bring all my doubts in thy control;
And when the storm is raging wild,
O hear, O hear thy pleading child.

I need thy presence every hour,
Be thou my strength and living power;
For thee I live, for thee I die,
O hear, O hear my mournful cry.

Keep me, dear Lord, while life shall last,
And grant thy grace as in the past,
That I may live in thy blest ways,
And give thee all the glorious praise.

I am so weak, so prone to stray,
Lead me thru all the trying day;
And in the darkness of the night
Be thou my never failing light.

So shall thy praise we'll ever sing,
And all the glory to thee bring,
For thou dost guide us every hour:
Leave not, but be our living power.

Elder D. L. Topping — 1944

ENJOYS THE SIGNS A BROTHER
SENDS THEM

Doctor's Nursing Center,
9009 White Rock Trail,
Dallas, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

We want to express our thanks through the *Signs* to a good friend of ours, Brother Howell, of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, our home town, for sending us the *Signs of the Times*. Our health got bad and we came to our son's in Dallas. We do not get to hear any Prim-

itive Baptist preaching now. I joined Zion Church, Gordo, Alabama, in July, 1923.

We were on a vacation last September and attended church in Alabama, when one joined at Bethlehem Church. It was so wonderful to be where we could hear some good Primitive Baptist preaching, and good singing, and to see so many of the good Old Baptist brethren. We know Elder Griffin, and have heard him preach many times, and enjoyed it.

We are enjoying the *Signs of the Times* Brother Howell sends us. We used to read his when we lived in the same town with him. There is nothing we enjoy more than to meet the Old Baptist folks.

When all is well with you, pray for a lonely brother and sister in Christian fellowship, we hope.

Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Hill

HAS DECLARED SOVEREIGNTY
OF GOD FIFTY-THREE YEARS

I see it is time for me to renew for another year, so am enclosing check for \$3.00.

I have been a reader of the *Signs* for some forty years. One reason I like the *Signs* is that it agrees with the doctrine of salvation by grace the way I have been made to see it. It once seemed silly to me for one to say that all things were forordained of God. I see that some are now in just the same shape I was. I have to say that God leads his children by a way they know not. It wasn't my fault that I couldn't see the things I see now: those things were kept back until the proper time, or the appointed time.

I see that the church, or the elect, or the chosen generation, was given to or in Christ before the foundation of the world. That being the case, it is the Father's will that things are just the way they are now, and he is performing all his will. Some say to me, you must be an old absoluter. I myself like the word. As for me and my house, we believe only in one God. He says that he has conquered death, hell, and the grave; and has all power in heaven and in earth. The powers that be are ordained of God. The reason so many of the children don't see God in his strength, is that God has not manifested it to them. I say that the child that doesn't believe in absolute predestination, can't help it. That was my experience: it has to be shown him from the Lord. He is the storehouse of wisdom, and I am sure that God knows just what is best for his children. Remember this church belongs to Christ — to him and him alone; he bought it, and has a clear title to it.

I spoke concerning the **Signs**, I have found the Signs giving God all the praise; only a few times have I seen some weakness in some writers. I hope I won't be looked upon as a crank: I only try to be just what I am. Paul said that by the grace of God I am what I am. I trust that I am honest. I have been fought all my life over the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that God is sovereign over everything there is on earth and in heaven. He made all things for his own glory.

I have been trying to declare this sovereign God for about fifty-three years. I like to stand on the wall when I am blessed, and tell Israel that her warfare is accomplished, and it is a finished work. I say if there hasn't been a work wrought in man, more than he received from his natural birth, he is still in the world, and has no experience of a spiritual birth. We can only know and judge by their fruits, for by their fruits they are known.

Please overlook my weakness, for I am unlearned, but I feel God has shaped

me just as he wanted me to be. I am on my journey: I am going back to where I came from, but the hope that God gives all his elect, is an anchor to their souls, and is a manifestation to them that they were his children before the world was. They are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible which lives and abides forever. I sometimes say that I know my Redeemer liveth. Christ said that he would pray the Father, and He would send us another Comforter who would guide us in the way of all truth, and testify of him. So God is our keeper. I know I will die naturally, but Christ has conquered death, hell, and the grave, and we shall be conformed to his image, and the just shall go to the place prepared for them before the word was; but the wicked shall be cast into outer darkness, to everlasting punishment, as the Bible says.

May God bless all of his elect; and the good writers and editors, may God bless you to keep up the good work. May you have a prosperous New Year.

Your unworthy brother, in hope,
C. S. Parsons
Box 253,
Wheelersburg, Ohio

IS JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY, AND FOREVER AND EVER?

Is Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever? As an inquirer to whom shall I go? Does intelligence have the answer?

When inquiry is made of the learned by the unlearned, and the answer (if any) does not harmonize Jesus Christ today with Jesus Christ yesterday, of what effectiveness will Jesus Christ forever and ever be?

Obviously, to the inquirer there are isms and schisms in the body, or there would not be so many groups saying, "Lo here, or Lo there," (forbidden by Jesus Christ yesterday.)

Does it not behoove us to analyze the

Jesus Christ yesterday, that we might use the essence of that analysis as a light to our feet, that we might see clearly how to walk in His trodden path?

Yesterday indicates the past — today indicates the present — tomorrow (forever and ever) the future: thus we know that Jesus Christ came yesterday, and established his church here on earth. Is it recorded anywhere that he required any help to maintain order, or discipline his disciples? Did he not reprove John for forbidding one to cast out devils in His name? Did he not reprove his disciples James and John for wanting to call down fire from heaven and consume those that received Him not in Samaria, where he had sent messengers to make ready when he was going to Jerusalem? Did he not reprove Peter (after Judas had betrayed Him) when Peter inquired, "Lord, what shall this man do?" His words were, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee: follow thou me." Did he not reprove Peter again when Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest;

Seeing the displeasure of "the other ten" with the sons of Zebedee, when he was asked that one sit on His right hand and the other on His left, did he not call them over to Him and, speaking to them as a group, forbade the exercise of lordship and authority,

Did he not specifically single out the individual, when He said, "Thou art Peter," and gave him specific instructions in discipline? Did he at any time or place request help of the people in case of discipline?

There was an occasion where He left them to themselves, and went down into the ship, and went to sleep; and disaster (trouble) struck, and the people could do nothing about it — they were totally and wholly dependent on Him. Did they not wake him, and say, "Lord save or we perish"? Are not his words, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" as significant today as they were yesterday? If not, what makes the difference? If not, has

He, or we, changed?

Do we not negate the Jesus Christ yesterday, when we attach the traditions and customs of men to Jesus Christ today? Can we avoid the above questions as being foolish and unlearned, because intelligence does not have the answer?

Please answer in the next issue of the "Signs of the Times".

A Concerned Inquirer
(see Editorial reply)

ONE IS NO STRONGER THAN THE OTHER

209 Taylor Road,
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Elder Spangler:

Since reading your Circular Letter of the Salisbury Association, my mind is carried back to some scriptures on predestination and election: as you say one is no stronger than the other, including the foreknowledge of God.

In Hebrews 8:10-12, we read, "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 minds and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." This to me is the predestination of God.

In John 6:37, we read, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This is the doctrine of election which is a link in the chain. In Isaiah 42:8, we read, "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." And in his 46th chapter, 9th verse, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there

is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This is absolute predestination.

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: grace unto you, and peace be multiplied." This is another link in the chain. God speaks to his children through his apostles, prophets, his ministers, and through his Spirit. I have heard it preached over the radio that the doctrine of predestination is a doctrine of the Devil; which is the same as saying that God and his Son, the apostles, prophets and ministering servants are of the Devil — which would mean God is a devil.

But we read differently from this. In John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." And we also read in Matthew 7:22, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

As Elder Wood said in his editorial, "We are delighted to be in the company of those who know and love the truth." Old School or Primitive Baptists, and all who have been taught of God, are convicted of sin, and see and feel their vileness and nothingness; and being brought to the end of their strength, are made to cry to God for mercy — not for justice. And hearing him speak, Thy sins are forgiven thee, they rejoice in God their Saviour, and give him all honor, glory and praise for his great love and mercy to sinners.

Those who deny the doctrine of truth, are not disciples of Christ, and cannot baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. They are not in communion with His disciples, and are not eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

Lord be merciful to thy people everywhere, and deliver them from evil for thy name's sake.

Yours in Him,
Mattie Underwood

STILL ABLE TO ATTEND HIS MEETINGS

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y. 12401

Dear Brother and Sister Merigold:

It was very kind and thoughtful of you dear ones to write this poor one such a nice letter. Though received a month ago, I have just re-read it. It made my heart to rejoice to learn that you received some crumbs or enjoyment from my Circular Letter. It is one of my greatest joys to learn that some of my labors in the Gospel have fed or given some comfort and courage to the brethren and friends.

I see so little in myself that I need my hands to be lifted up, and my knees confirmed much of the time. I have a church called the Middleburg Church of which I am pastor, and we often hold meetings on fifth Sundays at Deacon Bellinger's home, he being the only member. It is seventy-six miles from here. We usually have about eight to attend. I had such a rejoicing season the fifth Sunday in July, when two ladies came forward and asked for a name with the church. They were received, and were baptized during the August meeting of the Olive and Hurley Church in Temple's Pond a short distance from the church. It was the first time that two have come at the same time since I have been a pastor.

So far, at my age of eighty-three last May, God has given me strength to at-

tend my appointments . . . I gave up driving a year ago last February, as I have poor eyesight, and have to use flashlight to read hymns and texts at church. I go by bus 90 miles one way to the New York meetings on 1st and 3rd Sundays; and for the Middleburg meeting, I go by bus to Albany, where Brother Bellinger meets me; and Sister DuBois takes me to Shokan and to Warwick for those meetings.

. . . You are greatly blessed to have each other for company. I lived with my first companion not quite thirty years, and with my second a little over thirty years. I have some very lonely hours, so you may know that it is a good lift when I get letters from my dear brethren. I have very sweet memories of being entertained in your Christian and sweet fellowship home. God has blessed me more than words can convey: both of my dear companions were members of the Old School Baptist Church. I know God had a perfect right to take them home, but no one knows how hard it is to give them up, until it comes home to us; but I have been made to say as Job did, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

The word of God tells that in days gone by, "Those that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord harkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." (Malachi 3:16, 17) We must notice that it was those that feared the Lord who are mentioned here. We doubt if there is any other people that speak rightly to one another of the Lord, except those that fear him; and we doubt if there is any people who think rightly upon the name of the Lord, except those that fear him, for we are told that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

We are also told that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. And we are told not to fear what man can do unto us, but to fear him who can cast both soul and body into Hell. Do we not feel fearful that the Lord will be displeased with us who desire to be followers of Christ, but feel we come so far short if it? We know we cannot live as Christ-like as we desire, and it causes us to feel as one of old, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." But the Lord told this one that his grace was sufficient for him.

Dear ones, this is what we have for our comfort: Christ's imputed righteousness; so that Paul could say, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect." Yet our concern is that we cannot live as godly as we desire; we fear that our life and walk will not be pleasing in His sight; fear that we cannot love him enough; fear that we cannot fully trust him as we should, nor pray, think or speak as we should as being followers of Christ. Many times like Peter, we feel we are sinking, and cannot walk alone; and we cry, "Lord, save or I perish." And the Lord stretches forth his hand of love and mercy, and holds us up. And though we are lame and halt with weakness and unworthiness, yet in Jesus the lame walk; and sing, Praise God from whom all blessings flow. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear."

Again, I enjoyed your letter, and am very glad to hear from you at any time. Much love.

A. J. Slauson

HIS PEOPLE KNOW SOME WONDERFUL THINGS

Patrick Springs, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

I would like to write some of my thoughts on two or three verses of the Sermon on the Mount. I get down as low as any one can, and the Devil tries to make me an unbeliever, as if there were

no God.

"And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." I get much comfort from this scripture. I feel so poor within myself that I know that if the Lord leaves me for a moment, I go astray: I must look to the Lord for all my help.

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." I hope this is applied to me, for much of my time is spent mourning, even groans which cannot be uttered, but sometimes I feel the Lord is talking to me.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Dear child of God, did you ever feel so humble that you felt a dumb brute better than you? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Surely this is to me. I hunger for the gospel, and want to know more about the one who died for me. The gospel is good news from a far country, a country to which I have longed to go: the world has no charms for me, except a few moments at a time.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." But for mercy I would have been gone long ago. I once saw myself so vile — my sins came up before me as a mountain. I had heard this expression before, but did not know its meaning. I went to read the ten commandments; but they only condemned me. I saw death staring me in the face, and I was lost and ruined. O, what agony of soul! I felt forsaken — no friends on earth or in heaven. I fell on my face to die, bidding all farewell. I truly thought I was dying, and I believe I did: to the world. I lost all my strength, and I could not move as much as one finger to help myself. But, bless the Lord, he gave me strength to ask for mercy. I saw that justice could not help, for I rightly deserved Hell: I had broken His holy law.

Then I heard the voice of my Saviour, though some might say I was beyond hope. In John 10:4 we read, "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he

goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." The voice said to me, "Arise and take your Bible, for you shall find relief today." I was given my strength, and I arose and took my Bible and let it open: my eyes fell on where Daniel had been thrown into the den of lions; and how the Lord kept him safe. Then the same voice said, "If I can go through the den of lions with Daniel, surely I can help you in your little troubles." Then I felt a great springing up in my soul, such as I had never felt before. I went about praising God for the first time in my life. I had always given honor to man for living a good life; and at one time I thought I was a mite better than most folks. No wonder the prophet Jeremiah said that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. A change like this, to love the things you once hated, makes you know you have a Spirit you once did not have.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Is not this a great comfort to Primitive Baptists? I shall never forget that once one of another denomination moved next door, and she noticed I did not send my children to Sunday School, and asked me, Why? I told her I was a Primitive Baptist. She threw up her hands, and said that can't be true: you are too good a woman; and said they were the meanest people in the world. I truly hope that she has learned the truth. I can only say, "Lord forgive them for they know not what they do."

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." Is it not for the sake of Jesus that we forsake our friends to follow him, because he commanded it so? "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." The church has been persecuted all down through time, and will be until the end of time.

Now let us see a little of what we

know while we journey in this life. Paul said, "For I know whom I have believed." "We know in part, and understand in part." We read, "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Do we not love the brethren? When we see one of the little ones coming with tears streaming down his face, telling what good things the Lord has done for them, do we not know we love them in the Spirit? In I John 5:13, we read, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true. This is the true God, and eternal life." (verses 19 and 20) Did not Job say, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eye shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." Job knew some wonderful things in his day, and God said that he changes not. And truly his people know some wonderful things while they journey in this life.

I asked the Lord one time to show me the true church in a dream. Afterwards I dreamed of seeing all the people in the world together, and a large arm and hand came into view. It took people and put them into a ring, and called them Primitive Baptists. I was put in this ring; and when the work was finished, we all looked toward heaven, and saw Jesus coming in the clouds, and felt a power drawing us up in the air. When we were half way to heaven I awoke. I believe my prayer was answered.

From one who is earnestly looking for the return of Jesus.

Minnie Foley

EXPERIENCE

144 Oaklawn Street,
Malvern, Arkansas 72104

"But if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; 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." (I Peter 3:1b,15)

I have been requested, and often impressed, to try to write of the times and ways of the Lord, I hope, has dealt with me from time to time, beginning when I was about eight years old. At that age something took place with me then that shows me I didn't know, or hadn't learned what it was to tell a story, or slip something and lie about it. Further, I remember soon after that age I did learn what it was to fib and even steal things that my mother forbid me to have: and she whipped me very hard for it; but her punishment didn't stop me, or put any fear in me of the result of my meanness. But something else got after me that did.

I got to where when I lay down at night and closed my eyes to sleep, I would see great mountains of pure gold it seemed, coming out of the heavens and rolling right over my bed to crush my life out of me. That put some kind of fear in me; and later for this fear I got to be called a pretty good, truthful boy. Then later at about sixteen years of age, I took up the habit of swearing, using the Lord's name in vain. My mother heard me, and thrashed me for it several times; but, as before, her punishment did not stop me. But again some other power got after me.

I got to where everytime I cursed, I would be made to feel I was about to be smitten off the face of the earth — and several times I was made to look around to see if there wasn't someone there to do just that. I felt that it was the Lord, and that he was able to do it, and that I certainly deserved it. About one year later I had the only dream I

have to tell. I dreamed I was in the woods close to a large oak tree about ten o'clock in the morning, bright and sunny; but there was another light brighter than the sunlight that shined around me.

This dream left a burden or dread on my mind that never entirely left me for ten years. Lots took place with me that I felt if the Lord had dealt justly with me, He would have, as I said before, smitten me and cast me off. But only for the reason of his purposed mercy for me, I feel I was allowed to go on. In 1909 that burden on my mind, with other circumstances beyond my control, caused me to move to a place I had vowed I would never move to — and close to an Old Baptist Church. I was then twenty-six years old.

In May that spring I was plowing, and all at once it seemed every sin I had ever committed, was presented before my eyes. Though it was a bright sunny morning everything went dark before me; and I was made to feel that I would surely be taken out of the world, and to Hell at that. I could plow no longer: I took my horse out and left work that needed doing, and went home and to bed. It seemed I must die, and go to a devil's hell. I was in the bed three days and nights without food or sleep, until the last eighteen hours I slept; and during that time all of the burden of sin and guilt was taken away. I awoke ready to eat and go to work, I was so happy: except I wanted to join the church so greatly I didn't feel I could wait until meeting day in June came, and felt sure I would offer my case to the church; but just couldn't or didn't. July meeting came and the burden to join was so heavy I just knew I couldn't put it off any longer; but couldn't or didn't again. Before meeting in August the burden to join the church left me, and I thanked the Lord, for I was not fit to belong to the good old church anyway. At that meeting on Saturday I had no impression to join; but when the opportunity was offered, I went, not realizing what I was doing. One

thing I told the church was, that when I wanted to join, I couldn't; and when I didn't want to, I couldn't help it.

If I have any experience, this is it: and above all, the fact that the Lord has let me, a sinful creature like I am live to be eighty-three years old, is evidence that He has been, and is still being merciful to me: and I feel to hope for continued mercy.

J. B. Wetherington

Rt. 7, Box 200,
Carthage, Miss. 39051

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Dear friends, I must tell you that I enjoy the **Signs** every month more than words can express. I hope and trust that you will be blessed of the Lord to keep the good news coming my way.

Many of the good writings are worth more than the price of the paper: some are so uplifting. I trust this will be another year filled with such good reading as has been in the years gone by.

I am renewing my subscription for another year.

Your truly,
Mrs. Lillian Faulkner

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

Mrs. Olive Hall, daughter of Elder George L. Weaver, desires that we express through the *Signs of the Times*, their deep appreciation of the many cards and letters, etc. which the brethren and friends sent on the occasion of Elder Weaver's 94th birthday. Mrs. Hall read them to her father, and he appreciated them more than many can know. He is now getting weaker day by day, and sleeps much of the time. — J. D. W.

(Since the above was written Elder Weaver finished his course in this world. An obituary will appear shortly.)

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EDITORIAL

REPLY TO

'A CONCERNED INQUIRER'

If we understand the request of our "Inquirer", whose letter appears elsewhere in this issue under the heading, "Is Jesus Christ the Same Yesterday, and Today, and Forever and Ever?" he is concerned as to whether Jesus, that

is his doctrine, is subject to change; or whether all that he and his disciples taught, remain the truth in all ages, and must be maintained in order to identify the church of God.

Or, to put it another way, he is asking whether the teaching of Jesus is rightly subject to the changes or modifications which are taught when "intelligence" gives the answers. His inquiry evidences a stirring up, and a "good work" is at least begun in him, and he is earnestly seeking the answers.

As to whether Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, our reply can only be, Yes: emphatically, Yes. And our reason is, that nothing, including men, is able to change the eternal purposes of God. The preaching of His doctrine, since it is what he has revealed of himself and his decrees, must be the same in all time, where Truth is maintained. When anything else is preached in his name, it is a fabrication, and not truth. Jesus in all he did and taught, was fulfilling this purpose. So, should other things be attributed to him which are contrary to his doctrine, though his name be used, it is not preaching his gospel.

When Jesus gave them the "keys" of the kingdom, they were to "unlock" the things of the kingdom which they had received — not to formulate new things, and teach them. The Apostles were taught the things they preached in their calling. The things they preached, and the things Jesus preached were all of the same piece. Note that just before he had finished his work here, Jesus, in announcing that he would send the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, was specific in saying, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All the things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, he shall take of mine, and shew it unto you." (John 16:14, 15) This Spirit of Truth, which without question is God himself, has not changed, and is yet showing the things of Jesus to all the elect of God, until Jesus comes again.

We are correct, therefore, in saying that any doctrines or practices which men may maintain in the name of Jesus, that are contrary to the plain import of His teachings, are not things which the Spirit of Truth shows unto them; but those who hold such contrary doctrines must rightly be considered to be of the same company with those who, "Give heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth."

No, Inquirer, your questions are not foolish or unlearned; but, rather, they show at least the beginning of wisdom: for, "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom:" This fear, in the sense in which it is used here, is manifested by an inquiring mind; for other wise you would never have noticed the difference.

Our Inquirer has found that the answers of the "learned" do not harmonize the Jesus Christ of today with Jesus Christ of yesterday; that is, the Jesus Christ they preach today. Here he puts his finger on a great imposture: he takes the finger of John and points it straight — "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Many false prophets are found in sheep's clothing, being of those who, ". . . turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ;" that is, deny his doctrine. For this reason Jude exhorted, ". . . that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

"Intelligence" of which our Inquirer speaks, limited as it is to the "spirit of man", is but another name for rationalism, or philosophy: it deals with things within the realm of natural things. As such, it cannot rightfully concern itself with things beyond nature: for **all other things are matters of revelation**. In meddling with those things beyond their sphere, Intelligence always comes up with natural answers to "spiritual things", which are not true; and therefore not accepted by the

church.

Using reason as their guide, (for they had nothing else,) many did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, when he was here on earth. Using their reasoning, great multitudes are unable to present Jesus in the same light as he was presented "yesterday". The Jesus of "yesterday" is known only in the same revelation which was given Peter and the brethren. He and his doctrine are known only in this manner — with an ear given to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

One will not find the Jesus Christ which is on the lips of most "christians" today, to harmonize in doctrine with the Jesus Christ who walked the country about Jerusalem, speaking as never man spoke. This Jesus has not changed; nor is his doctrine changed. The changes which are apparent, are of men, and are the result of the best that men can produce in doctrine acceptable to themselves. And, having done so, are drowned in heresies so far removed, that the name Christian is a misnomer.

The way of salvation cannot change: it was ordained of God. But men have sought out many inventions. Jesus is the very embodiment of truth; and truth has the attribute of being unchangeable under any and all circumstances. But what is accepted as truth today (which men ascribe to Jesus) outrivals a chameleon in changing colors to suit particular notions. Like the Pharisees of old, more reverence is attached to traditions and customs, than to the things of God.

No one can read the things Jesus taught as recorded in the Bible, with any degree of attention, and compare them with the teachings of various churches today, and pronounce them the same. The understanding of what they think the gospel ought to be, is different from the gospel of Jesus. We think it is evident that even one change in doctrine by anyone claiming to be a follower of Jesus, is sufficient to discredit him as being His follower. Such a change would indicate his belief that

Jesus was wrong; and other changes necessarily follow.

There are many points of difference in the two. The advocates of the Jesus of today are mostly of the camp of Arminius, advocates of free-willism; while others have been described as of Calvin's camp, or predestinarians. These, of course, are names in history, and do not give the real significance of the differences.

Briefly, these differences revolve around the following:

Who are the ones Jesus saved by his death? Were they the whole of mankind with a proposition offered for their salvation? Or were they a chosen people out of mankind, with a sure salvation provided?

Were they a people who had a choice of accepting a proffered salvation (free-will)? Or a people dead in sins, and unable to move spiritually until moved upon by the powerful Spirit of God?

To many these differences seem insignificant. But what was the faith once delivered unto the saints? What was it that Jesus Christ "of yesterday" preached?

Our Inquirer has indicated that he has not found the answers to his satisfaction, as he has inquired of the "learned". Nor will he find the answers except with those who have been experimentally brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God: those whose strength is not in themselves, but in their Lord; whose faith is that fruit of the Spirit of which they are born, which makes them jealous of the doctrine of God their Saviour.

There is one more question that is indicated in the inquiry, which we will answer by saying that everything in the doctrine of Jesus Christ that is necessary for the full worshiping of God by the church (or individuals), is laid out in the New Testament of Jesus Christ. This includes all teaching pertaining to any subject relative to church or individual: admonition, discipline, etc. So that any other thing picked up by anyone along the way, is not to be tolerated in the church. The Spirit

which caused these things to be recorded and preserved, is the same which reveals them in the hearts of the Lord's people, and makes them precious to them.

We believe that our inquirer will find the whole answer when those things, which are perhaps now but faintly arising in his experience, are brought to his full view; and it is proved to him that, "He which has begun a good work in him will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Yes, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 65:9, 10

"And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place to lie down in, for my people that have sought me."

It has been requested that we write on the above Scripture, especially upon the valley of Achor, which is also mentioned by the prophet Hosea. It is always well to remember that much of the Old Testament is made up of types and shadows of better things to come; that is, of New Testament realities; in fact, the whole of the seed of Israel was a type of spiritual Israel, which is spoken of as the seed of the Lord. Not only are they the seed of the Lord, but they are also the seed of Jacob. This seed was to be blessed far above anything that literal Israel enjoyed. They were to serve the Lord with one consent, and the prophet in this chapter declares that they shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble, and before they call God will answer, and while they are yet speaking he will hear. Such a wonderful and peculiar people none could bring forth out of Jacob but God himself, for Jacob him-

self is spoken of as a worm and but small. But God speaks and says, "I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob," and to accomplish this God must be manifest in the flesh, "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but took on him the seed of Abraham." It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, and he must be made under the law to bring forth his children, or seed, condemned by the law. The Lord of hosts knew exactly what this meant, that the demands of justice must be fully met, that he must be made sin who knew no sin, and that he must be spit upon and crowned with thorns, and suffer shameful crucifixion to bring them forth. This seed of the blessed of the Lord could not be brought forth unless Jesus, the grain of wheat, fall unto the ground and die. Jesus died, was buried and rose again. He arose as conqueror over death, and hell and the grave. The prophet Isaiah in another place declares, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Thus this seed is brought forth out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains. The Jews said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Jesus the Son of God, who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, inherits by the will of his Father, the mountains of God. These mountains are where spiritual Israel dwells securely, and from whence much help and comfort comes. It was on a mountain that the ark rested. "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains." The covenant of grace, God's purpose in that covenant, his foreknowledge, predestination, election and the final perseverance of his chosen, determine the security of these "delectable mountains" from whence the saints obtain help and comfort and view their incorruptible inheritance. Literal Israel dwelt much in the hills and mountains, in fact Jerusalem was built upon and surrounded by mountains, and before the mountains of spiritual Israel were manifest literal

Israel must be torn up; as Job says, "He overturneth the mountains by the roots." These roots were chiefly the Levitical priesthood which must be before ever the High Priest of our profession, Jesus the true inheritor, is manifest.

"And mine elect shall inherit it." This elect is the election of grace who inherits it through the head Christ Jesus. The promise was given to Abraham that in him and in his seed, meaning Christ, should all the families of the earth be blessed. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

"And my servants shall dwell there." The prophets were servants of the Most High, so also were the apostles. It was to the apostles that Jesus said, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitation." They were to dwell and reign in the gospel church, sitting on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks." The meaning of the word "Sharon" is "a plain." It was where cattle found abundance of pasture, and where the royal herds of David grazed and the lovely rose of Sharon was found. Here also the Lord showed marked signs of his displeasure by taking away its fertility, and Sharon became like a wilderness. The district which was called Sharon is not exactly known today, but as the desolation of Sharon was a marked disfavor from the Lord to Israel of old, so Sharon becoming a fold of flocks, is a marked favor of God unto his children. Literal Sharon, like literal Israel, has disappeared; in fact, had been lost from sight and was not known to the Jews in the time of Christ, but he came, the true "Rose of Sharon," to gather the flocks into one fold, for he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Thus Jesus gathers the flocks, feeds them and folds

them. So Sharon again becomes a place where pasture is in abundance and where the flocks feed and fold.

"And the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in." As it was upon this portion we were particularly requested to write we shall first consider what the valley of the Achor signifies. Achan, the son of Carmi, took of the spoil of Jericho which was accursed, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and when she went out against the men of Ai she fled before the men of Ai and thirty-six men of Israel were slain. Wherefore the hearts of the people became as water, and Joshua rent his clothes. Achan had taken a wedge of gold, two hundred shekels of silver and a Babylonish garment, and hid them in the earth in the midst of his tent. Achan was taken, his sons and his daughters, and all he possessed to the valley of Achor and Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones, and they raised over them a heap of stones unto this day. The above is the literal account of Achan and the valley of Achor, and while the valley of Achor with its heap of stones has vanished as completely as Sharon, yet it also has its anti-type in the gospel dispensation.

There are also those of whom Achan and his brood are a type, who, professing to be in the Spirit and at war with the flesh, which flesh is under the curse, having hidden in the earth in the midst of their tents, which signifies their hearts, the wedge of gold, the silver and the Babylonish garment. As a consequence the church of God is troubled, their hearts are melted and become as water; that is, they are not strong in the faith, they flee before their enemies and their elders rend their clothes, they go in mourning and lie in the dust of self-abasement. It is impossible for Israel to proceed while Achan is at large. Israel is troubled, Achan is at ease, but judgment must begin at the house of the Lord, and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?

Let us here notice the course taken by Joshua and the elders of Israel. They did not begin to suspect this or that one, rather they felt in some way that the Lord was wroth with them, therefore they fell with their face towards the earth before the ark of the Lord, the elders putting dust upon their heads. It was unto the Lord they looked, for only in his judgments is there life. It seemed as though he had forsaken his people, or that they were cut off from his favor. Only in the valley of Achor was there a door of hope. Today he that loves silver or gold will beget his kind, and he whose eyes covet the Babylonish garment will ever have those around him who will love the garments of Babylon. The valley of Achor, which means "trouble," is the place where all such are stoned.

But we will come more closely to what the gold, silver and garments signify. Jericho with all its substance was cursed. The Israelites had surrounded it, Achan among them, they had seen its walls fall at the blast of the trumpet, and poor Rahab, with all that she had in the house, saved. Yet Achan took of the accursed thing. The children of God have seen the building of hay, wood and stubble destroyed; yea, all their good works, on which they have felt their house secure, overthrown, and they saved by the grace of God. They have seen this, yet some would turn to the weak and beggarly elements. They have begun in the Spirit, have shouted the shout of victory at the voice of their heavenly Joshua, yet they have taken the wedge of gold and two hundred shekels of silver, which represents "duty faith," with its false security, and a Babylonish garment, which signifies the righteousness of the flesh.

From the commencement of the gospel dispensation the church has had times of trouble, when in that very trouble, as in a valley, she has stood and purged herself of Achan and his brood. Even before the destruction of literal Jerusalem, when the sentence of God, as it were, hung over that wicked

generation, the beloved James wrote, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire." This judgment and fire came, and Jerusalem then became a heap and Achan and all his brood perished there. This was a door of hope to the troubled brethren, they were freed from the accursed thing and from those who would draw them under the frown of God. The Judaizing Achans would have the Gentiles practice circumcision, and some others followed their own pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth was evil spoken of. While they promised liberty they themselves were the servants of corruption, for of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. . . . I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. . . . I would they were even cut off which trouble you."

Truly it is an awful thing to be a troubler of Israel. Simon Magus believed and was baptized, yet hid the gold and silver in his heart and desired to buy the power and gift of the Holy Ghost. But Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee. . . . Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God." They that would be under the law must as a consequence be under its curse. The law and its enforcement was a ministration of death, and whenever a person seeks to be justified by works he is fallen from grace. The true Israelites are enabled by God's Spirit to take these troublemakers of Israel and stone them with the word of God, for the power of the Spirit from the mouth of his saints, like a rock, is as solid as God himself; and it is written, "His place of defense

shall be the munitions of rocks." They cast the stones of the law against those who are under its curse. It is death to be under such condemnation, and the law and all its ordinances are heaped upon all such. For he that offendeth in one point is guilty in all.

Then Israel sings as in the days of her youth, and the herd, which represents a body of clean beasts, made clean by the perfect work of a crucified Redeemer, can then lie down; yes, what is more, they can chew the cud and look over all the way the Lord as led them, tracing all their blessings to the root of the true vine, Jesus Christ, who is the stone of Israel.

In the time of Elder Gilbert Beebe there were those who were not satisfied with the word of God. They had surrounded the Arminian walls and blown the trumpet of the gospel, had seen the walls thrown down on the seventh day, the day when the Lord rested from his labor, yes, they had seen lost sinners like Rahab saved with an everlasting salvation, and knew the apostle by the Holy Ghost had written, "For we which have believed do enter into rest;" that is, like the herd we lie down, but that was not enough for them. Achan takes of the accursed thing, duty faith, which is a false faith, carrying with it certain conditions dependent upon the creature: a righteousness, that is, a right-waysness of the creature which can be seen and gloried in before men. These were in the hearts of those Achans, and the brethren stoned them and their missionary zeal under the heap of the law in that day. Then the saints could rest under their own vine and fig-tree, none daring to make them afraid. There have been those who have wanted to be more charitable than God's word requires, who have been inclined to spare Achan as Saul spared Agag, but doing so has always meant destruction and fleeing before the enemy. Others, for the sake of peace, and perhaps under the false idea of loving them all, have visited and preached to such people and have boasted that they have fellowshipped them all. The result of this compromise

in the churches of these men today is that the Achans do not hide their stolen spoil under their own tents, but are with their wedge of duty faith and conditionalism dividing the churches of those who in the past compromised. To these we would say the valley of Achor only is a door of hope. Cut off by the law those who carry legalism into the promised land. When that is done the herd shall lie down in the valley of Achor.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston of October, 1924. We republish it in the absence of a current writing. It deserves a careful reading by everyone. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

(Since Elder Beebe has included in his reply the questions asked by Brother Walker, of Alabama, we feel that the following is sufficiently clear, and will not necessitate the republishing of Brother Walker's letter—J.D.W.)

REPLY TO BROTHER B. A. WALKER

If we had ability to expound all mysteries in regard to the kingdom of Christ and the salvation of sinners, and could with unerring exactness draw the line between truth and error, between mortality and immortality, between flesh and spirit, joints and marrow, thoughts and intents, and if we could analyze the soul and spirit of man we are inclined to believe that all our powers would be called into requisition to meet and solve all the questions submitted to us by our numerous correspondents; but our finite powers are very limited, and all we can say or write on spiritual things can only tend to edification so far as we are led by the Spirit of God, whose work it is to take of the things of Jesus and reveal them unto us. Our views can only be of value to our brethren so far as they are sustained by and are in harmony with the scriptures of truth and the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

It is humiliating, after exhausting our very limited ability in trying to make ourself intelligible to our readers, to find our views misapprehended, and to fear that instead of edifying, we

have darkened counsel by the uttering of words without knowledge. Still we would not shrink from any amount of labor, if to any extent our labor may be blessed of God to the comfort, edification or instruction of the feeblest of the flock of our Redeemer.

Brother Walker seems to comprehend and to agree with us on the most important positions we have taken in the articles to which he refers, and in a very brotherly and candid manner asks us to explain some things which to his mind seem to be involved as inferences or consequences deduced from the premises admitted.

Admitting the truth of our position, that all that is born of the flesh in man, including soul, body, an spirit, is born of corruptible seed, as is fully demonstrated by their having become corrupt, defiled and sinful, and to the extent that they require to be redeemed, washed, cleansed, and purified, in order to be saved, and to be born again of incorruptible seed by the word of God, before they can possibly see the kingdom of God or inherit immortality, the questions are suggested to his mind:

What was man in his created state in the first Adam? Was he a mortal or an immortal being? If mortal, how did he become immortal? Was immortality transmitted to him when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul? And if so, was not that immortality holy and incorruptible, as coming from God?

The solution of this whole cluster of interrogatives may be found in a clearer understanding of the scriptural meaning of the two words, **immortality** and **incorruptible**. The word **immortality** signifies a state of eternal life, in which mortality or death is impossible. And that which, by any possibility, is liable to corruption, though it may be incorrupt, cannot be incorruptible; for incorruptibility absolutely precludes the possibility of becoming corrupt. Hence it is positively declared that he who is the Blessed and only Potentate, our risen and exalted Prince and Savior, "Only

hath immortality, dwelling in the light, which no man can approach unto, which no man hath seen or can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.”—1 Tim. vi. 1, 16. This text alone, we think, effectually settles this matter: for if Adam in his first estate had been immortal, by a transmission of the immortality of God to him, then there would have been at least one man that had it, or that had approached unto it. This word, immortality, in a scriptural sense, means something more than a perpetual and interminable state of existence, for it is equivalent to and synonymous with the words ETERNAL LIFE, which are not applicable to a mere conscious state of vital existence, even though that state should be perpetuated forever and ever; but it is restricted in its application, to that eternal life which was with the Father, and was given to all the election of grace in Christ Jesus, and which is so inseparably identified with Christ that “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” “This is the true God and eternal life.”

That man, in his first and last estate, has an existence that is endless, that can never cease to be, that cannot be annihilated, we fully believe, and to our mind it is fully taught in the scriptures; but that state of interminable existence, continued after death, forever and ever, is nowhere in the bible called immortality nor eternal life. It is a conscious state of never ceasing existence after the dissolution of our mortal bodies, but it is expressed by a term of opposite signification, the **second death**, to all whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life.—Rev. xx. 14, 15. But this state of interminable death is not annihilation, nor is it what the scriptures call immortality, or eternal life. Nor do we understand that the interminable existence of man is the life or breath of God. Where it is said that God breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life, and man became a living soul, it does not seem to us to mean that God from his mouth exhaled into the nostrils of man his

own vitality, or immortality. The scriptures assure us that the breath of man and the breath of beasts are all the same—Eccl. iii. 19 And in this respect the man has no pre-eminence above the beasts. They all breathe the same atmospheric air, and when their corporeal bodies die, they all alike stop breathing. But the spirit of the man goeth upward, and the spirit of the beasts go downward. The breath of the Lord is spoken of in a figurative manner; for God is a Spirit, not revealed to us in a corporeal body of heaving lungs, like his creatures. His breath is figuratively spoken of as giving both life and death. “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth.”Psa. xxxiii. 6. “Then said he unto me, Prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon the slain, that they may live.”—Ezek. xxxvii. .9. “And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.”—Isa. xi. 4. “For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.”—Isa. xxx. 33.

We call attention to these scriptures, to show that the breath of the Lord is used in a figurative way, as the **rod** or power of the words which go forth to give life or to inflict death, or to execute whatever he designs. It was by the word of his power, or the breath of the Lord, the heavens and the earth were created; yet they shall be dissolved and pass away; they are not incorruptible nor immortal; and by the same power that man was animated with vitality, and became a living soul, an animated creature, but not an immortal or incorruptible being. That which is immortal cannot possibly become mortal, for the very word signifies insusceptibility of death or mortality. In the very day of man’s creation, his death was foretold. “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou

shalt surely die." That which is immortal cannot possibly die. But it was not said, In the day thou eatest thereof, or on any other day, thou shalt cease to exist, or be annihilated. It is true that man in his original state, as long as he continued in innocence, was secure from death, for it was by his offence that sin entered into the world, and death by sin: but if he had been an incorruptible being, he could not have sinned. He was incorrupt when he came from the hand of his Creator, and so was everything else that was created, but not incorruptible; for he soon proved his susceptibility to the corrupting power of sin. And his liability to corruption and death was fully implied in the declaration, "For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 17.

Whatever speculative ideas may be cherished as to what Adam was before he sinned, or what he might have been if he had not sinned, all must concede that he did sin, and that death has entered, and passed upon all men, for all have sinned. "And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."—Gen. vi. 12. Now, as all flesh had become corrupt, it seems plain that nothing of an incorruptible or immortal nature could be born of the flesh; consequently all that is born of the flesh is born of corruptible seed. And if Adam possessed a soul, body and spirit, in all of which he was distinguished from the brute creation, and his sons and posterity born of his flesh are begotten and brought forth in his image and in his likeness, then they are in soul, body and spirit contaminated with the same corruption and immortality that rested on him, as a fallen sinner.

Man in all his elementary parts, soul, body and spirit, is a depraved, guilty sinner against God, and if there is anything incorruptible about him it is not in him, for "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores."—Isa. i.

5, 6.

Our Savior has said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."—John iii. 6. We understand him to mean all that is born of the flesh, including all the elementary parts essential to constitute a man. If he were born without a soul, would he be a man? Certainly not. If without a spirit, it would be but dead matter; and if with a spirit, and without a soul, it would be a beast. All men were included by Job when he said, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble."—Job xvi. 1. God commanded his prophet to cry, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."—Isa. xl. 6, 8. But why does the grass wither, and its loveliest flowers fade? Is it not because it is the production of corruptible seed? If it were produced of incorruptible seed, could it wither, and fade and die? An inspired apostle of the Lamb has explained this text. He says, that those who are born again are not born of corruptible seed, (like grass, and like all the glory of man) but they are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23, 24. Will grass seed produce anything that is imperishable? If not, why? Because the seed of grass is itself perishable. Then, if flesh is grass, its seed can only propagate that which, like itself, is destined to fade away and perish. But the life which is born of the Spirit is spiritual and eternal, because it is of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which Isaiah says, "shall stand forever;" and Peter says, "The word of God (by which the children of God are born) endureth forever." Hence they who are begotten of God are born to an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and (unlike the grass) fadeth not away, (because) it is "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."

Brother Walker will perceive that we

do not understand that there was any transmission of immortality, or of the life of God, made to man at his creation. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, only so far as he is the image or type of our Lord Jesus Christ; for there is nothing in all the universe unto which we are permitted to liken God. God is self-existent, independent, immutable and eternal; but of all his creatures there are none like him in any of these respects, by creation. To partake of his immortality or his righteousness, we must be born of him. Jesus, to partake of our fleshly nature, and come under the law that we were under, was born of a virgin, made of a woman; and we, to be partakers of the divine nature, must be born of the Spirit. There is no other way of transmission of either human or divine nature but by birth.

Brother Walker asks, "If man was immortal in his creature state, and that immortality of divinity, and by transgression perverted and corrupted himself, in soul, body and spirit, was not his immortality corrupted, and consequently a corruption of divinity?" We cannot admit the supposition. Immortality cannot become mortal, neither can that which is incorruptible become corrupt, nor can divinity become defiled. If that were admissible, then might we conceive the idea of a child of God, born of his Spirit, falling from grace, and failing of eternal life.

We trust that Brother Walker will perceive from what we have said, in defining our understanding of the words immortality and incorruptible, that our assertion that all that is born of the flesh in man, is corrupt and mortal, and all that is born of God is incorruptible, pure, holy and immortal: and that nothing in us that is born of the flesh is immortal, pure and holy, and nothing in us that is born of God is corrupt, sinful or mortal, does not involve the conclusion that man, only in intellect, differs from the brute. We hold no such sentiment; but as we have said, man has an interminable existence, and must after leaving this time state, suffer the

vengeance of eternal fire, if not redeemed and born again; yet that interminable state is not what the bible calls immortality. It is called **the second death**. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord; but the wages of sin is death. That death to which the ungodly are consigned, though forever enduring, is called death, but it never in the scriptures is called life, or immortality. If devils and ungodly men, to suffer the wrath of God in endless perdition, must be immortal, how could it be said of our glorious potentate, the Son of God, that he only hath immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light? We apprehend that the difficulty with Brother Walker in failing to understand us, arises from his applying the word immortality to an unending state of existence, and a denial of immortality to mean annihilation.

Of course, and in perfect harmony with the foregoing, we do most undoubtedly believe there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, but only the righteous, who are born of God, shall be raised to life everlasting, and the ungodly to a resurrection of damnation, which is called the second death.

The perplexity of our brother in regard to the resurrection of the ungodly, by a transmission of that immortality which only God hath, arises from the supposition that the ungodly are raised from the dead by the same spirit of life and immortality by which the saints shall be raised up. God has given life in nature to all the animal creation. Without bestowing on them his own Spirit, life or immortality. So by his power shall he raise the ungodly at the last day, but not by a transmission of his eternal life or Spirit to them, but by a display of his infinite power and justice, when they shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

Although the incorruptible seed of Immortality is implanted in all who are born of the Spirit, that implantation has not changed our earthly nature from mortal to immortal, but it is a

sealing assurance that in the resurrection of the saints from the dead, God will change our vile body, and fashion it like the glorious body of our risen and exalted Redeemer. Then shall these mortals, in whom now dwells the first fruits of the Spirit, put on immortality, and these corruptibles put on incorruption, and death, which now reigns in our mortal bodies, shall be swallowed up of life. When our Savior took on him our nature, it was that in our flesh he might die, the just for the unjust; but when he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, he destroyed death, and brought immortality to light through the gospel. Hence we are assured that he dieth no more; death hath no more dominion or power over his resurrected body. And as in his resurrection from the dead he is the first fruits of them that slept, we have the assurance that as he in rising from the dead put on immortality, as the first begotten from the dead, and the first born among many brethren, so shall the whole harvest of all his saints be when raised from the dead in his likeness. The resurrection of Christ is called a birth; and in his resurrection, all his saints are begotten to a lively hope, of an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But the ungodly have no part nor lot in the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. They shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, not to life everlasting, but in a resurrection of damnation, to endure the vengeance of eternal fire, with the devil and his angels, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

No doubt the questions of Brother Walker, and our replies, might be greatly condensed, but we have labored to meet his numerous inquiries, in hope that a full ventilation of the subject may afford to others, as well as to him, some light at least on what we hold to be the truth.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 15, 1877. These are profound matters and deserve the prayerful consideration of all of us. Elder Beebe was wonderfully blessed with

deep insight and ability to present what he saw for the edification of his brethren in his day, and to ours as we re-publish them. — J.D.W)

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

While this particular expression does not occur in the Bible, yet it conveys a Bible doctrine. By various expressions the church has always presented the truth contained in these two words as her faith. What do they mean, and by what Scriptures are they supported? They mean that in the fall man became wholly alienated from God, and from good. They mean that not only in outward life and deed, but in the heart, the affections, purposes and desires, man has become altogether a stranger to all that is excellent, and an enemy to God by wicked works. They mean that if man be left to himself, with no restraining influences, either of God's providence or grace, he will always choose self instead of God, vice instead of virtue, wrath instead of love, and evil deeds instead of good works. They mean that man, left wholly to himself, will always exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped. In this let it be remembered that man is regarded as being unrestrained by any consideration, save to carry out his own desires which are of the flesh. Total depravity means that there is nothing good in man by nature, or as considered in himself.

This doctrine has always been denied by nine-tenths of the professing world; it is denied by all save believers in sovereign grace. Conditionalists of every stripe contend as they are bound to do in consistency with conditionalism, that man has not become totally depraved in the fall, that some remnants of his pristine righteousness remain with him, that he is still sufficiently godlike to discern between good and evil in his very nature, and that if man will, he can still cultivate the good, and so at last rise from the ruins of the fall, into his former state of excellency. According to their view, the only difference

between a believer and an unbeliever, between one who serves God and one who does not, between a regenerate and an unregenerate man, is one of cultivation. These claim that man is only in a state of alienation from God, and that he is at enmity against God, and not enmity itself. But while denied by carnal professors, it is yet a doctrine firmly held by all who have come to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the plague of their own heart. Now the question is, Are they justified in holding this doctrine? Is it a doctrine found in the word of God? We do not now appeal to the conviction of this doctrine, wrought in all believers by the facts of experience, or by the revelation which the light of the Spirit of God dwelling in the heart gives of it, but will appeal to the Scriptures, by which all experience, and every sentiment is to be finally judged. Experience confirms the testimony of the word, but after all, the church of God has always required a "Thus saith the Lord" from the Scriptures, for every principle of doctrine to which she has held.

We will refer to several portions of the word as teaching this truth.

First. Paul seems to have been firmly convinced of total depravity in our fallen nature when he said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwells no good thing." If no good thing dwelt in his flesh, certainly all that was there must have been evil. This is surely then, total depravity in the flesh, and as there was nothing but flesh in the apostle before the Spirit of truth came to him, he must have had no good thing in him previous to his call by grace. The flesh as used by Paul here, does not mean our bodies, or the members of our body, such as our hands and feet, or tongues, which shall return to dust again, but he means the whole natural man, including all the thoughts, passions, desires and purposes, which dwelt within him. He means just what a believer means now, when he says, By nature there is no good in me.

Second. Paul says to the brethren at Ephesus, "And you hath he quickened,

who were dead in trespasses and sins." If death means anything, it means entire separation from the thing to which we are dead. To be dead in trespasses and sins, is to be wholly united to them, and wholly separated from righteousness and God, and that which is separated from the source of all good, must be depraved. "Death in sin" is the exact opposite of the language "dead to sin," by which the state of the redeemed is described in the word. Paul says that the people of God were by nature the children of wrath even as others, but now they have been quickened, or made alive, from the dead; they now have become alive unto God. If death in sin means anything, it means wholly swallowed up by sin, and entire separation from righteousness, or total depravity.

Third. The description given of man in the first three chapters of the letter to the Romans, settles the matter so far as this doctrine is concerned. We cannot of course quote all there written, on account of taking up too much space. We will refer to a few expressions. "There is none righteous, no not one." Chapter third, verse ten, then read on to verse eighteen: "There is none that understandeth." "They are all gone out of the way." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." "Their throat is an open sepulchre." "Their feet are swift to shed blood." "The way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." In this same chapter Paul says expressly, that there is no difference, that all have come short. It might be asked very pertinently, If the first three chapters of Romans do not teach the doctrine of total depravity, how would language be so put together as to teach it? Much of all this language is quoted by Paul from the Old Testament, and thus it is shown that every age is the same. One generation is no better nor worse by nature than another.

Fourth. We read in Genesis vi.5, that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually." This

was in the days before the flood. This language does not relate simply to what men do, but to the source of all that they do. It is in the very nature of man to do evil, and so in the first clause of this same verse, it is said that the wickedness of man was great on the earth. It is taught here that men do wickedly because they are wicked. The Bible has to do with what men are, rather than with what they do. The doing is often restrained, but the heart is evil, and out of it proceed all evil things, such as murders, adulteries, thefts, drunkenness, blasphemies, and all other evil things. If every imagination of the thoughts of the heart are evil, and only evil, and that continually, it surely is not doing violence to the text to say that it teaches the doctrine of total depravity.

Fifth. The language in Ephesians ii. 12, teaches the same thing; of all the Gentiles Paul here says, they "were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." This is certainly in full harmony with what he has said in verse five, concerning the death in sin, dwelt upon above. Could a darker picture of the condition of fallen and unregenerate man be drawn than this verse contains? The conclusion of this indictment, with its five counts against man, is that he is without God in the world, and that is only another way of saying man is without good in the world, seeing the Savior expressly says, "There is none good but God." Let it be remembered that these, and other Scriptures, relate to man as he is all over the world, and in every time, and under all conditions. They relate to man in the very essence of his being, when left to himself, and showing out his nature unrestrained either by providence or grace. What a soul-humbling picture is this. Paul had come to know this truth and so he said, as quoted before, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." Paul had not only come to know what the Scriptures say about it, but the light of the

knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, had shown him not only the mystery of godliness, but also the equally deep mystery of iniquity. As grace abounded in him, it revealed still more and more clearly the abounding of sin. There is but one thing, in the view of Paul, that can exceed the vastness of the world of iniquity in man, and that is the super-abounding grace of God. And every child of God in daily experience goes on to know the same things, and at last comes to know that the whole matter of salvation is summed up in this, "A sinner saved by grace."

Many other Scriptures teach the same sad doctrine of total depravity, beside these which we have quoted, but we will forbear any more direct quotations. Beside these direct quotations it may be said that every other principle of doctrine is in full harmony with this doctrine, and, when understood, necessarily imply total depravity. The atonement implies it; the doctrine of the new birth implies it; the doctrine of quickening, implies it: the need of daily grace to keep us, implies it; and so do all Bible principles of truth, when rightly understood. If there be any good in man by nature, then the atonement is not the needful thing which the Scriptures claim it to be, the new birth is not a birth at all, but only a reformation, and the keeping of man by grace, is but the adding of a little help to him, who can do most of the work for himself, Nothing can magnify the grace of God in salvation, as does this doctrine, when understood rightly. How great the grace that can and does save from the lowest pit. David calls it "a horrible pit of miry clay." The depths of iniquity is called elsewhere in the word, a bottomless pit. Since man is such by nature, how infinite the grace that can save him.

Questions arise concerning this doctrine in the minds of the people of God. These are not the cavilings of self-righteous men, but the sincere and honest inquiries of those who desire first of all to know the truth. These questions arise in hearts which confess this doctrine

to be true with themselves, and who sadly say for themselves, as did Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." While confessing this with all their heart, yet questions come up which they do not feel able to solve. Perhaps the chief question which perplexes the mind often is this, If this doctrine be true, (and that it is true, such ones do not doubt,) how is it that there is so much good in the earth, even among those who do not profess godliness? How is it that men are such good citizens, neighbors, husbands and fathers? How is it that men respond so readily to calls for help by their needy fellows? How is it that so many men who do not believe in any future life even, are yet honest, and honorable, and kindly to all? How can all these facts consist with the teachings of the Scripture, concerning the absolutely lost and ungodly conditions of man? How can a man who has been honest in all his relations with others, who has always been kind to the needy, who has always been faithful in all the relations of life which he has been called to fill, when the light of the grace of God shines in his heart, confess himself the chief of sinners, and the vilest of the vile, and acknowledge that in him is to be found no good thing? How is it that not only the thief on the cross, but also the righteous Paul, confesses himself the worst of men? How is it that in our churches all who come and find fellowship there, claim that they are the most unworthy of all, no matter how vile or how upright their former life may have been? These are the facts of Scripture testimony, and these are the facts of christian testimony as well. How then do all these things consist, with the immense amount of love, truth, honesty and kindness there is undeniably in the world?

In reply, we would say that these good things do not at all affect the doctrine of total depravity, in the nature of man, but they do magnify the kind providence and grace of God, which can and does restrain the wickedness of man from outward expression. In the case of

believers, this needs no further exposition. All can see how that grace can and does restrain and constrain its subjects, so that sin is overcome, and righteousness is wrought out in the heart and lives of the subjects of grace. We will say no more about this.

Why do not unregenerate men all of them run to the same excess of evil? Why are not all men on a level in their feelings, passions and outward life, with the most debased savage? That in this there is a difference, does not, as said before, prove that some are not totally depraved in nature but does magnify the mercy and power of God toward men. The very presence in the world of grace and righteousness, dwelling in the hearts and lives of some men, has a leavening effect among the inhabitants of earth. Beside unknown to themselves, God restrains the hearts of men, as well as their actions. Besides this there are also the restraints of shame, and law, and custom, which are in the appointment of God, and all of which must be taken into the account. Take away from men these things, as in time of war, or in the presence of some great crime, and see how soon men become as demons in rage and malice, and how the most civilized of men will manifest all the hellish passions of the most ferocious savage. These moments when God seems for a time to leave men to themselves show what man would be and do at all times if left to himself. It is said of one servant of God that when he saw a man being led to his execution for some ferocious crime, he said, "That would be me, were it not for the grace of God." And all men, even the unregenerate, might well say, "Such would I be, were it not for the restraining providence of God." All this is fully taught in the language, "The wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."

We leave these thoughts for the consideration of our readers. Of one thing we feel fully persuaded, viz: all who know the Lord indeed, will subscribe to the charge of total depravity, so far as they themselves are concerned, and that

if not allowed to run to the same excess of rioting as others, it is because God has shown them special mercy, and they will feel that they desire to magnify the grace which has saved, and daily kept them. Such ones will say in their moments of devotion, "O, how great has thy mercy been to me, who am in no wise better than my fellows." Such ones feel that greater mercy has been shown to them than could possibly be shown to any one else. The blessed part of this doctrine is it exalts the grace that saves.

(Editorial by Elder Chick October 15, 1900.)

OBITUARIES

ROBERT SPOTSWOOD INGRAM

Robert Spotswood Ingram born in Franklin County, Virginia July 23, 1891, passed from this life May 4, 1965.

He was married to Mae Peters, October 10, 1912; who died February 28, 1939. To this union were born eight children: Mrs. Jewell Hagood and Mrs. Marie Hazelwood, Fieldale, Va.; Mrs. Elva Turner, Martinsville, Va.; Mrs. Iva Moran and Guy Ingram, Bassett, Va.; Mrs. Ruby West and Poff Ingram, Ridgeway, Va.; and Lynza Ingram, deceased.

He was married the second time to Doris Ingram Young, December 3, 1942. She passed away November 12, 1946. He married the third time to Victoria Ross, October 18, 1949. Brother and Sister Ingram joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Union, April 23, 1960. He was faithful to his church.

Funeral services were held May 6, 1965, at Union Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Leonard Brammer, assisted by Elder Posey Ingram. He was laid to rest in the Ingram Cemetery.

He lived his entire life in the Cross Road neighborhood as a farmer. There was never a time when he wasn't ready to help his neighbors and friends through kindness and honesty. At the time of his passing he was helping a neighbor get to the doctor. He was loved by all of his neighbors and friends. In return he had love and respect for his community.

We miss Brother Ingram very much, but feel our loss is his gain, and we must bow and be submissive to the will of the Lord. We feel that we shall never forget his love and devotion for the church at Union, and his wife and children, and pastor. May the Lord bless the dear lonely wife and children and us at Union to be reconciled to His will and to our lot and

portion in this life.

His pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

ELDER JOHN ROSCOE LANE

He was born February 12, 1899, and departed this life November 15, 1966, at the age of sixty-seven years, in a Hinton, W. Va. hospital. His residence was at 110 Harrison Court, Huntington, W. Va. He was a native of Summers County, W. Va. and a retired C & O Railroad blacksmith. He was pastor of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, Huntington, W. Va.

Surviving are his widow, Ada Pearl, two sons: Denzil, of Huntington, and John, of South Point, Ohio; one daughter: Geraldine, at home. Surviving also are the following brothers and sisters: K. N., Frank, and James, of Hinton; Estel and Virgil, of Huntington; Robert, of Crickmer; Mrs. Myrtle Meadow and Mrs. Macel Bond, of Hinton; Mrs. Josie Farley, of Pipestem, W. Va.; and Mrs. Belle Martin, of Greenup, Ky.

Funeral services were held at Chapman Funeral Home by Mr. T. R. Sisk. He was laid to rest in Ridgelawn Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

It pleased our heavenly Father to take from our midst our dearly beloved Brother and Pastor. We hope to be most thankful to have been so wonderfully blessed to meet with him in services, we hope, in sweet fellowship with God. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace in Christ Jesus. Brother Lane was sound in doctrine and faithful to the church, and though we will miss him, we feel to say that, our loss is his eternal gain. All the pains, trials, tribulations and sufferings of this time world are over for him. All things, excluding nothing, are to the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is our strength and our salvation, and his mercies endure forever. May we all be blessed to say, Thy will be done, O Lord, for all things come to pass for good to them that love God.

We desire to express our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family, one to the *Signs of the Times*, and one put on our church record.

Done by order of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church in conference January 7, 1967.
Written by

Nancy J. Clay, Clerk

ANNA HUDSON PEACOCK

"God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform," and we are made to wonder

at His hands' work. He does all things well even when He called our beloved. Sister Peacock united with Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1941. She was a devoted and faithful member as long as she was able to attend.

She was an invalid for several years in Nursing homes. She was survived by one son, one daughter and several grandchildren.

Death came to Sister Peacock October 14, 1966, she lived to be 97 years old. Funeral service was conducted by her Pastor Elder Lester E. Lee at her home church, Hickory Grove Primitive Baptist Church near Benson, N. C. Her body was laid to rest to await the resurrection morn in the family cemetery, also near Benson.

Inasmuch as God saw fit to remove her from our midst, may we be blessed to bow in humble submission to His will, and to give thanks for the privilege of having witnessed the reflection of our Saviour in her daily walk and conversation.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy to the family and a copy to be put into the church records.

Done by order of Conference, November 19, 1966.

Committee Sisters
Georgia Hill
Gertrude Royal
Azalee Lee

CORA POWELL JOHNSON

In loving memory of my darling mother Cora Powell Johnson, whom God in his infinite wisdom called away January 22, 1966. She was born in Franklin County, Virginia, June 10, 1884, and united with the church at Bethel March 31, 1917, and baptized by Elder Randolph Perdue.

She loved her church, and was strong in her belief, and was faithful to attend as long as her health permitted: even then she loved to talk of her Saviour, and to hear the beautiful old songs sung. Just a few days before her departure she spoke of being so happy, and it being such a wonderful time.

She is survived by her husband, Irving Johnson, and seven sons and two daughters: Claude, Paul, Hughes, Harry, Troy, Tom, Clyde, Mrs. Harold Boone and Mrs. Posey Poindexter.

Her funeral was held at Lynch's Chapel, Rocky Mount, Virginia, conducted by her beloved pastor Elder Jimmy Hollandsworth and Elder Cecil Turner; with burial in Franklin Memorial Park, to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by her daughter, who sadly misses her.

Mrs. Posey Poindexter

DEACON JAMES WILLIAM HOUSTON

Deacon James William Houston was born June 5, 1900, in Franklin County, Virginia, the son of the late George Henry Houston and Eliza Jane Houston. He passed from this world May 18, 1966; and is survived by his widow, and four daughters, Mrs. Letha Houston Holland, Mrs. Ruby Houston Wray, Mrs. Christeen Houston Altice, and Mrs. Joyce Houston Law.

Brother Houston was united in marriage to Cordie Bell Allman April 1, 1923. He joined the church at Bethel July 5, 1944, and he was ordained to the office of a deacon November 3, 1956.

Brother Houston was a faithful servant until his death, and was loved by his people wherever he was known. He has been greatly missed by the church and his family. He passed away in the Franklin Memorial Hospital, and I have been told that his last words were, "I am too sick to live and I am ready to go." May the blessings of the Heavenly Father be upon the family and reconcile them to his holy will. Written by his pastor.

James R. Hollandsworth

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

The members of Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, desire to bow in humble submission to our heavenly Father's will, who saw fit on the 25th day of October, 1966, to call our dear brother Charles Kelley from our midst, at the age of forty-eight years, eight months and twenty-four days. He was the son of the late Willie and Lillie Kelley, and grandson of Sister M. N. Griffin. He spent most of his life in and around Taylor County, Texas.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we give thanks unto our heavenly Father for having given us a friend as Brother Kelley, who was a true believer of Salvation by Grace. And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy to his dear widow, Sister Linda; also that a copy of these resolutions be given her; a copy be spread on our church record; and a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in November, 1966.

A. M. Haygood, Moderator
Nola Steward, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1967

NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ON THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

(Rom. 8:29; Isa. 14:27; Acts 14:16)

It is noted that much has been written
Concerning predestination,
Which, in Romans also in Ephesians,
Extends solely to salvation.

Yet, I understand from other Scriptures
That God's purpose embraced all things,
But that all were not predestined alike
By the eternal King of kings;

That He purposed to bring about salvation,
While He decreed to suffer sin;
Hence, He's not the author of the latter,
Which by Adam did enter in.

The Bible says God suffered all nations
To walk in their own (sinful) ways;
So the efficient cause of their own sins
Surely wasn't the Ancient of days.

According to the late Elder Beebe,
Who constantly hewed to the line,
Without the permission of Almighty God,
The devil could not drown a swine.

A sparrow falls not without the Father;
All things are under His control,
And His sovereignty will diminish not
While the ages of eternity roll.

Although contrary to His divine nature,
Sin into the world has entered,
But it's taken away by the Lamb of God,
In Whom our salvation centered.

Predestination, a doctrine of grace,
In which a remnant delight,
Is much disliked by a great multitude
That repudiate it outright.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

EASTER

A sister wants to know about Easter: is it the day Christ rose from the grave? Why is it not the same day of the month, and the same month of the year, like Christmas?

Easter is mentioned but once in the Bible, in Acts 12:4. Herod Agrippa the First, father of the Agrippa before whom Paul later made his stirring defense, as told in Acts 24, stretched forth his hands to vex the church of God, killed James, the brother of John, seized Peter and cast him into prison. It being the time of the feast of unleavened bread when Peter was arrested, Herod, though not a Jew himself, was politician enough to know that the Jews would not care to enter into judgment with Peter during their festive season, so kept him in confinement, intending to bring him forth after Easter, or after the pass-over week of unleavened bread. The word here translated Easter is, in the original Greek, *Pascha*, and literally means the passover, not having any reference whatever to the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

The Jewish passover was eaten on the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish year, and, for seven days therefrom, was the feast of unleavened bread. Roughly speaking, this corresponds to the month of April. When Christ ate of the passover with his disciples on the evening of the day before his crucifixion, that day must have been the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, therefore the date of his resurrection would be the first day of the week next following. In other words, Christ rose from the dead on the 17th of *Abib*, or *Nisan*, as it was renamed after the captivity. This is most certainly a fixed date, the same as was the

date of his birth, and not a movable date, as the date of Easter is now observed by the so-called christian sects of the world.

This observance of Easter by the religions of the world as at present engaged in under the pretense of celebrating the resurrection of Christ, is but one of the many glaring inconsistencies of error. The Council of Nice, a Catholic body of over 1500 delegates, called together by the Roman emperor Constantine in the year 325, decreed that Easter should always be observed on the first Sunday following the full moon happening upon or next after the 21st of March. Thus Easter must fall not earlier than March 22nd and not later than April 25th. The Catholics instituted this glaring error, and the Protestant daughters have helped her to perpetuate it. How can any one be so deluded as to believe that a day which moves about from year to year, as does Easter, can be the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? This latter event is as fixed and immovable in the history of the church just as certainly as his birth is fixed and immovable. The date of Jesus' birth is said to have been the 25th of December, but no human being has ever been able to prove that even this date is correct.

The word "Easter" itself is derived from the Anglo-Saxon, and is taken from the name of the old Saxon goddess Ostara, or Eastre, who represented the morning, or east, and the opening year, or spring. This pagan diety flourished in the imaginations of men about the same time that the Council of Nice bound its dictum upon their intellects. Thus, summing up the whole matter, what do we find? That Easter, as currently observed, is a mass of Judaism, Catholicism, paganism, of falsehood and superstition, with not a vestige of real true gospel virtue in it anywhere. For the gospel church of our Lord Jesus Christ to set apart days or weeks, or months, or years, to commemorate anything which the Head of the church has not

definitely enjoined, is to follow after men and their traditions; it is to become entangled again with the yoke of bondage, which never could justify the ungodly. The truth of God as in Christ Jesus is in its very nature eternal and spiritual, and cannot be limited to this or that duration of time. Read Paul's letter to the Galatians, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you."

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This miracle of the new birth wrought in the experience of the children of God, and not the 25th of December, is the living memorial of the birth of Christ, written by the finger of God. In Ephesians, first chapter, we read, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." Belief in Christ is effected by the experimental operation of the same mighty power that brought again the Lord Jesus from the dead. This miracle, and not Easter, is the Spirit's commemoration of the great Shepherd of the sheep, and of his victory over death, hell and the grave. "Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand?" Amen.

H. H. Lefferts

(The above editorial by Elder Lefferts appeared in the Signs August 15, 1914 — J.D.W.)

A REQUEST
9 Circle Drive
Iron Hill Trailer Park
Newark, Delaware 19711

Dear Brethren and
Editors of the "Signs,"

I see that my subscription to the grand old paper, "Signs Of The Times"

has expired; and since I do not want to miss a single copy am renewing for two years. I usually read my copy through without putting it down, because the good articles found therein are food to a hungry soul. I am often made to rejoice as I read the experiences of others, because I find that they are those of my own: and in that I am edified and built up. I have often thought of writing for publication, but then I feel that such an unworthy worm as I could never pen anything that would be of comfort to God's hungry poor.

I am often reminded of what the Apostle said of himself, as recorded in first Timothy, 1-15. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I AM chief." You will notice that Paul did not say, I used to be chief, he said, "am chief." But when Brother Paul made that statement, I had not yet been born. I am often made to loathe myself, when I am made to see what a vile character I am. But I find hope even in this, because a dead man knows nothing of his condition even though he be decaying. So I have hope that I have been made alive in Christ, and that I shall be one among that number which John was permitted to view while on the Isle of Patmos; a throng which no man could number.

I wish to make a small request, if not asking too much. I would like for you to publish in your paper a request, that if anyone has a recorded sermon by the late Elder Louis L. Thomas, of Tennessee, or knows of one, that they please inform me. I doubt very much if one of his sermons was ever recorded, as he passed away in September, 1936. Should any one know of such, please notify me at this address; he was my brother: Roy S. Thomas, Iron Hill Trailer Park, Newark, Delaware 19711 — #9 Circle Drive. This would indeed seem a God sent miracle from Heaven, should I find one of my brother's sermons recorded.

May God see fit to continue to bless the Editors of the "SIGNS" as He has for the past 134 years, that they contin-

ue to contend earnestly for The Faith which was ONCE delivered to the Saints. I desire the prayers of all who have been regenerated and born of the Spirit of God; they are the only ones who CAN pray. We often hear the expression, Just pray the sinner's prayer. Well, sinners are the only ones who pray, but it takes a live sinner to pray and a dead one never did and never will pray in order to live. God bless you all.

A sinner, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ if redeemed at all.

Roy S. Thomas

ADMONITION

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Elder Wood:

These words have been on my mind, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Romans 12: 4,5)

In these days of strife, confusion, and unbecoming actions, how do we appear? Do we each day so convey to the world around us in our every action, and every word, that we live by the Word of God?

We assemble at meeting time eager to hear the glad tidings our pastor is blessed to speak. Then each member goes his way in the work-a-day world. What impressions do our actions and words convey to other people? In this world of confusion, and for many often fear, it is so necessary that our church body, though few or many in number, should in its functions compose one body, as we hope to be one body in Christ; and all members one of another. Every member cannot expound the scriptures as the pastor is gifted to do, but each member should pray to be enabled to so walk and talk that wherever he may be among the people of the world, he would stand out like a sermon from on high. Are we a testimony of God's Word, from whom all the fulness of life precedes?

No church body should glory in wealth or numbers, but rather glory in the hope

that Christ is in their midst, and are given an able ministry to feed the flock with the edifying word and peace that is the light of God's honor and glory. True, not everyone who says, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of the Father. So everyone who made a confession of faith when he was born into the spiritual realm of the Lord Jesus Christ, should be mindful of his walk, and thereby feel indeed happily blessed that the Spirit of Jesus Christ has sought him out, and graciously wrought His miraculous work of regeneration in him, by which he has been made a participant in the divine nature. This divine favor involves him and all others of us who have this engrafted word, under sacred obligation to walk worthy of the high vocation whereunto we have been called.

I pray these crucial days may be an Ebenezer in our life, (a stone of remembrance,) a place of memorial to commemorate the goodness and mercy of the Lord. May it please God to fill all our thoughts with all that is true and fine and gracious, that our presence be an inspiration and strength to those about us, and those who are in confusion and doubt and fear.

May God bless you abundantly in your efforts in publishing the **Signs**, that we have words of comfort to turn to every month.

Sister Mary Hellings

REALIZES GOD'S POWER

609 W. Colonial Ave.,
Elizabeth City, N. C. 27909

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

As I look out this morning and saw the portrayal of God's hand in our first snow of the season. I could not describe the beauty but I felt the warmth so sweetly of God's power which was manifested in one little snow flake. I looked up, and wondered what the reality of heaven and its beauty would be like. I saw it in my dream once, but words can't describe it, not even in part: it is so much better felt than told. Man speaks of his glory and power, but he

can't make even one little snow flake.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We realize we can do nothing except through God who strengtheneth us. We have to be brought by the restraining hand of God: killed and made alive, given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand — which comes only through the revelation of Jesus Christ: for in our flesh dwells no good thing, "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor 1: 29, 30)

As I see the dear ones who truly manifest by orderly walk and godly conversation, that God has smiled upon them, and saved them by his grace, I am made to rejoice, and say of a truth, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." I enclose an obituary of Sister Johnson. Please publish and send a copy to her family.

May God bless you with health and strength. Hope you will visit us after weather conditions become more certain.

In hope I trust
Mrs. C. C. Meads

"MIXTURES OF JOYS AND SORROWS"

218 Shad Point Road,
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

You have been on my mind much lately, and it seemed that about the New Year I was much impressed to write you, but at that time I was very depressed, and when I sought for comfort all I found was condemnation.

One day Sister Maude Truitt and I went out making calls, and we visited six sisters, all over the age of threescore and ten. Each home, nursing home or hospital we visited they were so glad to see us, and wanted to hear about the meetings and the welfare of the brethren and sisters. I came home feeling better than I had for some time. John

tells us that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. As I felt the love of these dear sisters to me, and mine for them, I could again say, Praise the Lord for all his goodness to poor sinners.

I have read and thought much about Hope; and especially in Romans 8: 24, where it says, "For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" To me, this is speaking of our hope of heaven and the resurrection of our bodies. We know the Lord has been gracious to us, and has given us strength for each trial that has befallen us until this time: and most of the time this causes us to have faith that He will continue with us until the end. I know that at times He leaves us to ourselves that we may know from whom our strength comes; and when he does, our faith is very weak. I would like to hear your thoughts on this scripture sometime.

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed the February Signs. It seemed Elder Slauson's letter expressed so well what I had just been feeling. It is so comforting when others can express our travails. I was also very glad to read the article by Elder L. H. Hardy. He told just what I believe, but so much better than I could ever do.

I did feel this Fall that I had a foretaste of heaven. First at the Lesington-Roxbury Association, then the trip to Alabama attending the association in Birmingham, then the Kehukee Association, and then our own Salisbury Association; and being able to have so many dear ones in our home. But no matter how much we enjoy these times, our bodies get tired and we do and say stupid things that we wish we had not. How wonderful to look forward to this body, which is sown in weakness, being raised in power: only then can we praise Him as we ought.

Laurence sends his regards to you both, and we are hoping you can visit us again this Spring.

Yours with love,
Ethel Holloway

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 27 and 28, 1966, sends greetings to the associations and meetings with which we correspond:

Dear Brethren:

Through the mercy of God we have been blessed to meet again in an association. Your correspondence and messengers have been gladly received.

Elder Warren and Elder I. S. Conner preached the gospel as they were directed by the Holy Spirit, giving all honor and praise to His holy name. It is good for brethren to meet together in the worship of God. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) It is also written, "Forsake not the assembling together . . ."

The members of our association are separated by long distance, and owing to transportation, are unable to meet very often. But we do love these meetings when there is love and fellowship, and all proclaiming the same doctrine, Salvation by grace: which is the gift of God.

The Lord willing, our next association will be held August 26 and 27, 1967 (the fourth Sunday in August and Saturday preceeding).

Elder Arthur Warren, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 27 and 28, 1966, sends greetings to the various churches with whom we correspond.

It is once more our privilege to address you in our Circular Letter. Though time passes and all earthly things change, the love of God stands

sure, and we still see the evidences of his grace and mercy to us poor, unworthy sinners: as in 1 John 3:1, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." We have had this wondrous gift given to us without any of our own works, like Saul of Tarsus, who was chosen of God even while he was persecuting the Christians. So it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but in our wise, loving God who showeth mercy.

The people of the world know not what on earth we are doing, because it has not been revealed to them: like poor Saul, though high in worldly talents, knew nothing of God until brought to a stand still by God himself. It is said that when his eyes were opened, he saw no man, but was turned completely around in a moment; and God from that time on laid out his course as one of his loved Apostles. Thus it is that those who love his name, are led; and our lives are guided by his purposes, and destiny of the church is in his hands. Though we are sad with small membership, and hardships on all sides, and our hearts fail us as to our future comfort spiritually, we have the assurance that "his purposes are ripening fast, unfolding every hour."

In verse eleven of 1 John, chapter 3, we are told to love one another, but this we cannot do with a pure heart, unless God gives us the strength to cast out evil fears and hurts toward one another. The grace of God controls our hearts as it does everything else on earth. It is truly spoken in Hymn 293 of the Durand-Lester Hymn book:

"Jesus, the glorious Head of grace
Knows every saint's peculiar case;
What sorrows by their souls are borne,
And how for sin they daily mourn.

He knows how deep their groanings are,
And what their secret sighs declare;

And, for their comfort, has expressed
That all such mourning souls are blessed.

They're blessed on earth; for 'tis by grace
They see and know their mournful case;
Blessed mourners! they shall shortly rise
To endless comfort in the skies.

There all their mourning days shall cease,
And they be filled with joy and peace:
Comfort eternal they shall prove,
And dwell forever in his love."

Though our minds cannot quite grasp what some of the prophecies truly mean, it is comforting to read Isaiah, Chapter 10, verses 20 to 22: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness." This poor creature knows not exactly what this promise really means only that it was reassurance to Isaiah, the prophet of God, in the days long before our Saviour was born, to prove the salvation of the people of God without any question. And it shall reassure those who truly believe upon His name, and look forward only by God given faith; and though it be only the size of a grain of mustard seed, it sustains those who have felt the joy of free grace given by their Heavenly Father and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We are promised that a remnant will always remain, and that God will always have a witness.

Therefore we pray to be kept by the love of God looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus unto eternal life.

Written by
Ruth Clark, of the Whitefield Church

PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

I believe in Predestination of All Things. If we hold to the foreknowledge of all things, and deny the predestina-

tion of all things, we become lost in the fog of Arminianism.

We can't see how the foreknowledge of a thing can exist when it has not been determined that the thing foreknown shall ever exist. Neither can we see how that a thing that will take place, can be foreknown, unless the time for its occurrence be fixed or determined by someone. To fix, establish, determine all events is what I believe to be called predestination, and to me it is the only certain basis of foreknowledge. All things must be determined in order to establish their certainty and to establish the certain foreknowledge of them.

We do not believe that predestination means to cause, force or influence. If predestination is the cause which brings about events, then there was no need for the death of Christ. His people were predestinated to the adoption of children, and to be conformed to the image of Christ. If predestination is the cause which produces the end predestined, then the death of Christ to redeem, and the operation of God's Spirit to change us to the image of Christ, was not necessary at all — predestination would have done the work. Now, if we will find what those wicked men were gathered together to do, then we will know what God's hand and God's counsel had determined before to be done. We do not believe that predestination caused those wicked men to do what they did, and do not believe that predestination would be the cause of any other crime. We also know from reading the Scripture that God did predetermine or predestinate what those men did, and we do confess that they did wickedly. We do acknowledge that God can predestinate a thing and God not be the author of sin, nor his predestination the cause. We know that these men were gathered together to kill the blessed Son of God, and were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and his counsel had determined before to be done. Then we feel sure that God let or allowed sin to enter into the world when he could just as easily have prevented or not allowed it to occur. He either allowed it by purpose or allowed

it without purpose. If by purpose, then the predestination of it is established. If without purpose, then He (God) was surely ignorant of its coming or was powerless to prevent it. We know that God is ALL WISE!

The Bible says, "Every man at his best state is vanity," and also that the creature was made subject to vanity. Job says, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?" We know that when sin is finished it bringeth forth death, for the wages of sin is death. It seems to me that it would be more comforting to God's people to believe He has established the certainty of all things in his determinate counsel. For the Lord God reigneth in Heaven, in earth, in seas, and in all deep places and doth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can say unto Him, What doest thou?

As we stated in the beginning of this article, we believe that God **foreknew** all things and also that God **predestinated** all things. Some who say they are Primitive Baptists, say that God predestinated the good things but not the bad things. They will say that they believe that God foreknew all things. We believe that if God's predestination is limited, then His foreknowledge is also limited. Surely, if we limit one, we must limit the other.

We believe that it is true that all men were not foreknown as His covenant people, nor were all men predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. But, we believe that they were foreknown as his creatures and surely God must have had a purpose in creating them. We believe that every man and every other creature will fulfill the purpose which God has purposed they should, and God has determined the disposition of them all, even before he made them. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." Those that God foreknew as his covenant people, his elect children, those he also did predestinate (or decree, determine) to be conformed to the image of his son. Those

that God has foreknown as his elect people, he has also predestinated to be made like his dear son. When Christ shall come to gather his Bride at the end, He has kept all that the Father has given him.

We believe that God's attitude toward sin is quite different from his attitude toward righteousness. For an example, God was pleased with Solomon's request for an understanding heart to judge his people, who were a chosen and great people. And Solomon felt to be but a little child and knew not how to go out or come in. (1 Kings 3:10) "And the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, behold, I have done according to thy words: lo I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days."

Solomon's understanding and wise heart, also his riches and honour were sure and certain, but the lengthening of his days was based upon Solomon keeping God's statutes and his commandments and walking in his ways. We feel sure that God had foreknown just what Solomon's speech would be and had also predestinated, determined, and fixed every word and the desire of Solomon's heart. We also find in the eleventh chapter of First Kings where Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord. King Solomon loved many strange women and of the nations which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, "Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in

unto you for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clave unto these in love, for it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God.

We see that God was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, and he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, "Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee." We are sure that God had foreknowledge that Solomon would love many strange women and not keep his covenant nor his statutes and commandments and that his heart would be turned away after other gods. And just as surely as God foreknew all these events, he just as surely predestinated them. We can't see how the foreknowledge of these things could have occurred except it had been determined that the thing should exist. We believe that every event foreknown has a fixed time for its occurrence and also must be determined by someone. We say emphatically that we do **not** believe that God's predestination caused Solomon's heart to be turned away after other gods, neither did it cause Solomon not to walk in God's ways, nor did it cause him to not keep the statutes and commandments, but the many strange women Solomon loved, his wives, turned away Solomon's heart after other gods. James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed by his wives.

Did not David say unto God, "I have sinned greatly because I have done this thing?" Was it not David that commanded the people of Israel to be numbered after Satan had provoked him? We are sure that God foreknew that David would command Joab, the cap-

tain of the hosts, to number the people. God had also predestinated that David would do this evil deed. For David said, "Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered, even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed." We believe that God had foreknown and also determined the very number of the people that Joab gave unto David. We are sure that neither God's foreknowledge nor his predestination caused David to sin and do evil indeed in numbering the children of Israel. For it was Satan who stood up against Israel and provoked David to do this thing. Then we can see and must say that it was Satan who caused David to sin and do evil. Sin is an act of the creature. God does not cause us to sin, but neither is he blind to our sins, nor does he approve; yet he knows us for what vain creatures we are, and has known us since before the foundation of the world. When we sin, we are not surprising God, for He has already foreknown or predestinated what we'd do in lust. He knows our every thought before we've thought it.

Primitive Baptists are sometimes called "Can't help its," but I hope no person professing to be a Primitive Baptist would apply this to excuse his sins by saying, "God predestinated it, and I couldn't help it!" Yes, it's true God predestinated or knew we would sin, but the predestination did not **cause** one to, for Satan stands up and provokes one to sin, and the character provoked is drawn away by his own lusts.

Brethren, there are many, many more examples we could recall concerning God's predestination and foreknowledge, but I feel surely that the things we've mentioned here express clearly our views on this great subject and establishes that although God **predestinates** (to ordain or appoint beforehand) and **foreknows** (knowledge of an event to take place beforehand) **all things**, He does not cause men to sin.

May God bless us in the Truth.

Elder R. O. Simmons
Route One
Elora, Tennessee

Rt. 1

Banks, Arkansas 71631

Dear Editors:

Enclosed find \$5.00 for the **Signs** for two years. We (my husband and I) surely enjoy the dear paper each month. The good letters give us so much comfort when our feelings get so low. The experiences of grace of the children of God seem to express my feelings better than I could tell them myself. I go along most of the time doubting, but I believe His guiding hand leads and directs our steps; and I have a blessed hope in Christ Jesus which sustains me when I get so low.

My prayer is that I might be given wisdom to understand the truth taught in the Scriptures. What a blessing to be led into the mysteries of our God. If I am one at all, surely I am the least. If I could be just half as good as my brothers and sisters of this precious faith are, maybe I wouldn't have so many doubts and fears. With love.

A brother and sister in Christ, we hope,

Evan and Helen Landers

Box 693,
Quitman, Texas 75783

Dear Brother Wood:

I am sending a little write-up of the life of my mother-in-law, Mrs. Sallie White, for publication in the **Signs of the Times**. She was a long time subscriber to the paper, and earnestly contended for what it published; and was blessed to have it read to her after her eye sight failed and she could not see to read it herself. We feel she is now enjoying that heavenly rest that awaits the children of God.

May God in his infinite love and mercy enable you to carry on the publication of the **Signs of the Times** for all time to come.

Humbly submitted in love,
Buena White

ELDER RUSTON TO THE LATE
SISTER GOOCH

Dear Sister Gooch:

In looking over my letter I feel I ought not to have finished it without dwelling upon the most important subject that I hope is our mutual concern. The Scripture in Romans 8:17 is on my mind: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Verse 15 says, "for ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear."

As Gentiles, before the knowledge of the truth was revealed to them, the brethren at Rome were without God and without hope in the world. They did not have the law as did the Jews; yet when God wrote the work of the law in their hearts, they found condemnation in the flesh, and being children of Abraham according to the promise, they were experimentally made to know that Jesus Christ had brought them nigh, from afar, through the blood of the everlasting covenant: the Spirit taking the things of Jesus and revealing them unto them.

Well do I remember as a lad in day school, repeating the prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven . . .", and one seemed to say within me, "Ye are of your father the Devil." Oh, how vile and black I saw myself! and for many years I could not say, "Our Father which art in heaven." But when years after, I was so weak and helpless and undone, God said to me, "Thy sins which are many, are all forgiven thee," Oh, the sweet peace and joy that I had; and the whole earth was full of his praise. Then I could say, "My Father." I was in London, England, at the time, and how full of joy and praise I was. This was not the adoption, but the "spirit of adoption", the full adoption will come when our bodies are redeemed from the grave. (Romans 8:23)

Thus, by the spirit of adoption, we are enabled to say, "Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bearing witness with our

spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs." We are told that Abraham received the promise that he would be the father of many nations while he was yet uncircumcised, and he believed God; so that he received the promise not through the law, which was given four hundred and forty years later, but through the righteousness of faith." "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." God gave his only begotten Son, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, it being the will of God that we be new creatures in Christ Jesus. The apostle in Ephesians 2, tells us "by grace are ye saved . . . not of works lest any man should boast," for, saith he, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." These good works are what Christ Jesus of God is made unto us, wisdom righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Those under the law (legalists) are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. The five foolish virgins did not have vessels with their lamps: without this work of Christ they were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; but the wise had vessels with their lamps. They were vessels of mercy which He had afore prepared unto glory: thus in this world "under the sun." We are told in Ecclesiastes, "The labor of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city." The wise men came by the light of the star to the city where the young child was. Jesus is the light from above illuminating His people. He is wisdom unto them. He is their righteousness. That faith which cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, is counted unto the promised seed for righteousness; and only such a righteousness exalts poor sinners. He is our sanctification, for He as our High priest, washes our feet, and we are clean every whit; so He said to his disciples, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." He is our re

demption. He has paid the full price; so that through His obedience and blood we come into fellowship with God in a two-fold sense. We have received at the Lord's hand double for all our sins. We, through our blessed Redeemer, are joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him.

The whole of this blessed creation has groaned and travailed in pain together. There are two together in this chapter, Romans 8: those who **groan and travail together**, will also be **glorified together**. We feel therefore that our cross as well as our crown, are both willed by our God. Our Lord suffered in the flesh; and we are told by our beloved Peter to arm ourselves with the same mind. (1 Peter: 4,1) The flesh is not changed in this life: if it gets in control, it is death; if on the other hand, we **through** the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, it is life. Jesus suffered in the flesh. We who would be led by the Spirit, will also suffer as He suffered; and we will find nothing to rest upon in the flesh. Every Jacob must have his nest stirred up. (Deuteronomy 32:9-12) while foxes have their holes in which to hide, all who are in fellowship with Christ here, must find at times that they have not where to lay their heads.

This creature, created in Christ Jesus, still must wait, for though we have received the Spirit of adoption, spoken of as the firstfruits of the Spirit, "even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body." "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Many have gone before to heaven, but being joint-heirs, they cannot enter into the fulness of that inheritance until we, together with them, are made perfect: when this creature, body, soul and spirit, shall then completely be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Together with Him here we learn of Him, as his yoke is upon us; there we shall be like him, glorified.

May the Lord preserve us unto His glorious Kingdom, is the prayer of your humble brother,

George Ruston

Benton, Kentucky 42025

Signs of the Times:

I enclose a new subscription for two years, and a change of address, as shown.

Our people get much comfort from the Signs: some of them are shut in because of age during the winter season, and it is good news for them.

At the old church (Soldier Creek) the 2nd Sunday in January, we were greatly surprised at the number of our congregation. We had visitors from Bethel Association, sixty and seventy miles away, and from adjoining counties. Elder Paul Poyner, the Moderator, spoke from the text, 2 Corinthinans 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself . . ."

We had good news from Elder R. L. Biggs, of Nashville, a few days ago. He is recovering nicely from an operation he underwent this winter. Elder W. Y. Chandler is filling his appointments for him. Some of our churches in the Soldier Creek Association have cancelled meetings for the winter. We hope to be able, God willing, to meet at Soldier Creek, New Providence, and Zion Churches, however.

May it be God's will to be our shield and hiding place, and gather us together when it seems good to him, for his glory and our comfort; and when we can't meet together in church capacity, be near to comfort us with the truth as Jesus is truth. Let us not be ashamed to own our Lord, or to defend his cause in this world of chaos and destruction, and the different creeds and views religiously speaking.

In hope,
Effie Bowden

Rt. 4, Box 73
Lebanon, Mo.

Dear Brethren:

I would like to put some thoughts on paper, but I know if it is of the flesh it will be of no value to the true child of God.

In the 6th chapter of Ephesians we read, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." When lawmakers get it in their power to make people act by force, is that not spiritual wickedness in high places? The 12th chapter of Daniel shows some wickedness in high places. Where the word of a king is there is power; but the children of God have a King who is supreme. He was King in the days of Daniel, and he still is King today. In the 8th chapter of Daniel it says that the man of sin will work wonderfully, and will destroy the mighty and holy people; but that man of sin can only go so far, and no farther. God is the same God today as he was when he spoke to the wind and the sea. When He commands they obey his voice.

Jesus declared in John 17:4, that he had finished the work his Father gave him to do. Then, is there anything yet to be done by men, to save souls? If they go into all the world, and preach the gospel, they can only preach the power of God sent down. It is not to tell men what they must do. As God wrote the ten commandments on tables of stone, so He writes his laws in his children's hearts. He takes from them the stony heart, and gives them a heart of flesh. He did not give the apostles power to do this, so these men who are going about preaching salvation by the works of men, are condemned already. Read Jeremiah 23:32. Paul asked the Galatians, "This only would I learn

of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

I am not able to get all the spiritual light that is in the text, so I will send it to you to see if I have written the truth.

I hope a brother in Christ,
W. W. Kenoly

A GREAT MESSENGER OF COMFORT

Box 53
Okanagan Centre,
British Columbia, Canada

The Signs of the Times, Inc.
Danville, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

It has come around to the time of renewal of my subscription to the good old **Signs**, so have enclosed money order for \$10.00 in U. S. funds: five dollars for our subscription, and five dollars to help in your efforts to send the **Signs** to loved ones who are unable to pay for it. I recently looked up the word Indigent in two dictionaries, one gave the meaning as, "needy, poor," and the other as, "destitute, needy," and I thought how much of my time is spent in this condition. In my flesh I am destitute of any good thought or action, and am always in need of the loving care of our dear Saviour; for without Him we can do nothing. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being."

My oldest brother, Duncan, of Vancouver, whom you met at the meetings in the state of Washington in 1963, was taken from us suddenly by a stroke on December 6th. He would have been eighty-two this month.

And now may the Lord bless and comfort you all who help in publishing the **Signs**, which is a great messenger of comfort, especially to those of us who live so far from where the preached word is to be heard.

From the least of those who love you,

and all who are made to love the Truth as it is in our Lord Jesus.

James W. Black

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union was appointed to be held with Rosemary Church, Roanoke Rapids, N. C., the 5th Sunday in April and Saturday before. The church is located on 14th Street, between Carolina Avenue and Virginia Avenue. Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

We cordially invite everyone to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2
Williamston, N. C. 27892

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(To February 1, 1967)

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J. W. Black, Can.....	6.00
Miss Minerva Dunlap, Me.....	5.00
W. J. Collier, N. C.....	7.00
Drusiler Gillispie, Md.....	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.....	1.00

Danville, Virginia April, 1967

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Danville, Va. 24541

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Tyson's Church, Pitt County, N. C., the fifth Sunday in April, and Saturday before.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting will convene with Union Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April, 1967. The meeting house is located on State Road 605 in the northern part of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, near Climax School.

All of our correspondents and friends are urged to attend.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

EDITORIAL

'REJOICE EVERMORE'

(1 Thessalonians 5:16)

Heavenly joy on earth can never be understood nor appreciated by anyone other than a child of God. Those who have experienced the sweetness of God's rich and amazing grace can never in this world sing the wonders of it sufficiently to fully express their joy. Great has been the grief and sorrow; much greater, the joy. Our sins have abounded; much more has grace abounded. We have been convinced of our weakness and vanity but His strength has been more wonderfully manifested in us. What a contrast we experience when the sorrows of our minds are banished and heavenly joy floods our souls. Watts wrote, "Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less" (Beebe's Hymn Book — Hymn 676). We read in Proverbs 29:6, "In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice." The wonderful works of God experienced in the souls and lives of the Lord's people cause them to rejoice with exceeding great joy. This great rejoicing is included in the varied experiences of each and every one of his children. The climax of your greatest sorrow because of sin is greater rejoicing in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Godly strength is the climax of your greatest weakness. We do not rejoice in the horrible pit; we rejoice in being brought out of it. We cry out of the depths of hell; we rejoice in the deliverance from it. When we remember from whence we have been lifted, we rejoice evermore.

The first exhortation given the disciples of Christ on the mountain in His great teaching was: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matthew 5:12) This quotation immediately follows the eight declarations of blessedness made by Christ in His sermon on the mountain. The elements of spiritual life is so perfectly and simply given in these eight beatitudes found in Matthew 5:2-10, that any attempt to improve upon it or more simplify it, would do nothing more than confound the reader. In these beatitudes you will find an analysis of perfect spiritual well being. All carnal conceptions of real happiness are left out of these expressions. There is not a single mention of any ordinance in these eight elements of a spiritual life, but they consist of a summary of God-given characteristics which result in a happy life. You will note that all these elements are internal characteristics which beget happiness. The poor in spirit are rich in that they possess the kingdom of Heaven. One who really mourns will certainly be comforted. The earth shall surely be inherited by the meek. Those who really hunger and thirst after righteousness shall surely be filled. The obtaining of mercy is promised to the merciful. The pure in heart shall see God. Peacemakers shall be called the children of God. The kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are persecuted for righteousness sake. You will notice that the first element and the eighth element both agree in the conclusion: "**Theirs IS the kingdom of Heaven.**"

Let us ask Paul to define the Kingdom of God. We find his answer in Romans 14:17: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteous-

ness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Paul adds: "For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost belongs to those who have been given these eight sublime characteristics. This surely gives us a reason to **rejoice evermore.**

The Apostle Paul beseeches us in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." He was not satisfied by just saying it one time so he repeated it again. It was not vain repetition but he said it again to emphasize. He had just finished speaking of some whose names are in the book of life. How good it is to rejoice that your names are written in the Book of Life. Jesus said as recorded in Luke 10:20, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are **written in heaven.**" Even though they were given power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy so that nothing could by any means hurt them, they were rather to rejoice that their names were written in Heaven. This is made clear in Revelations 20:15, "And whosoever was not found written in the **book of life** was cast into the lake of fire." It is further written relative to those who shall enter into the new heaven: "And there shall no wise enter into anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the **Lamb's book of life.**" (Rev. 21:27). Rejoice, brethren, because none of your enemies on earth will ever have access to this heaven; none can ever erase your name. They cannot enter this city, neither can they cause your name to be erased. Jesus only has the authority to blot out a name. He has promised: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and **I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,** but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (Rev. 3:5) When power is giv-

en you to overcome, it is an evidence that your name will not be blotted out. Rejoice not that your name is on a church book, but rather rejoice that your name is written in heaven. No doubt that there were many members of Sardis Church, but only a few names which had not defiled their garments. A majority of the members of a church may not be worthy to walk with Jesus, but this will not keep the few which are worthy from being properly recognized by Him. Many churches have a name that they live but they have left their first love, and have so departed from true doctrine and right practice to such extent that they are dead. Notwithstanding this, a small minority of members are yet owned and blessed by the Lord Jesus. Jesus may spue a church out of His mouth to such extent that it will lose its identity and cease to exist as a church; yet, the few names who are worthy will not be blotted out. Rejoice in the reality that true religion is a personal matter. Rejoice that the defiled garments of others in your church-home will not rub off on you. Rejoice because your dependence of being properly clothed is in Jesus. Rejoice in the white raiment of Jesus' righteousness which cannot be tainted with the unrighteousness of others. Rejoice evermore.

Rejoice in the Lord. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7) Rejoice that the Lord is at hand on every occasion and can be relied upon for everything. There is nothing too insignificant nor unimportant to be below God's care. Rejoice that God hears and answers all whose trust is in Him for everything. Rejoice that He has promised that the peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. We are not to be bowed down with anxiety and torn asunder about anything to the extent of great grief, looking to ourselves for all the answers,

but we are to realize the Lord cares for us. We are to rejoice in that when we fail we have the assurance of the Lord taking care of the situation. Grieving because of loss of wealth, health, friends does us harm instead of good. Grief cannot bring back our loved ones from the dead. Grieving because of poverty cannot bring us riches. It does not help us to grieve over anything but our sins. Grief over our sins prompts supplications to God for strength to overcome and turn away. He promises to hear our cries and give us the peace of God which passeth all understanding. When this is true the result is repentance and strength to overcome temptations. God forbid that we wrongly stress the meaning of, **be careful for nothing**. It certainly does not mean that we are to abandon all thoughts of the future but rather to the contrary; the future is so important to us that we pray to God for guidance in everything. We are not to be anxiously burdened to the extent that we forget God in providing things honest in the sight of all men. Even this is important enough to make our request known to God that we need His guidance and strength. We are to rejoice that we can pour out our hearts in everything to Him for He is at hand. We are to rejoice that in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving we are to make our requests known to Him and He will keep our hearts and minds and give us this peace that even we cannot understand. When the Peace of God keeps our hearts and minds we have great reason to rejoice. Gnawing, biting, burning, and grieving cares are smokes that darkens the mind and shrouds the heart with clouds of doubts and fears of many of the children of God. Such souls are mourning because of unbelief. The faith that pleases God is not only believing that He is, but also believing that **He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him**. See Hebrews 11:6. Dear child of God, rejoice that you have the faith to believe that whatsoever you ask in His name you will receive. Rejoice in knowing that when you ask it is given

you; when you seek you will find; and when you knock it is opened to you. Rejoice in the promises of God for they are yea and amen. Rejoice that He has promised to be with you always even unto the end of the world. Peace flows like a river into the souls of the elect which causes them to rejoice evermore.

Righteous thinking is the result of the peace of God keeping the minds of those who make their requests known unto God. Meditating on truth gives more joy than thinking upon untruths. There are enough honest and just things to occupy our thoughts instead of poisoning our minds with dishonest and unjust things. It is better to think on the pure and lovely rather than cluttering our minds with thoughts of the impure and hateful. There are many good reports that deserve our attention; why waste time on bad reports? I am persuaded there is yet virtue and praise. Even amidst the great confusion that exists, there are people whose minds and hearts are kept by the peace of God. Zion may be troubled by the author of confusion but a few within her borders are kept by the Author of peace. Rejoice, brethren, because our God yet liveth and doth reign in the hearts of men.

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and **rejoice in Christ Jesus**, and have no confidence in the flesh.” (Phil. 3:3) Here are the characteristics of a true worshipper. We are not to worship anything or anyone other than God. We are to worship Him from the heart. We are to do it in Spirit, not just formally. We must adore, praise, and magnify His name. We must have no confidence in the flesh meriting any favor of God. We rejoice in the riches of Christ's gifts to us. We rejoice in Christ who cleanseth from all sin. We rejoice in Christ because He not only justified us but also sanctified us. We rejoice in His wisdom, righteousness, redemption, and sanctification. We rejoice in His riches, strength, person and grace. Our rejoicing and boasting is in Him, not in ourselves. We know that it

is impossible to do anything righteous apart from Him. We rejoice not that we can perform righteousness; we rejoice that Jesus Christ performs righteousness through us. We rejoice that He is born in us the hope of glory. We rejoice in that He supplies sufficient strength in the same hour in which it is needed. Rejoice, brethren, for He has never failed you. Rejoice evermore.

The psalmist said, “This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalms 118:24) Every natural day is the product of the Lord and many of His creatures rejoice in beautiful days; yet this rejoicing is not to be compared with the rejoicing of a poor sinner when the Sun of Righteousness shines in a darkened soul. What gladness! What rapture! What Joy! What a wonderful relief when gross darkness rolls away from the faint-ed soul! Such brightness of heart and mind will result in tears of joy. This is the day of all days when a sinner experiences the great mercy of God in feeling that his sins are forgiven. This spiritual day may come at midnight in the coldest of winter; yet the glow and warmth of it will cause the recipient to forget natural things. It is a sign of good spiritual health when the soul is made to rejoice. “Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.” (Psalms 105:3) Many are the days of rejoicing after this first wonderful experience of mercy and grace. Night time, or darkness, will often come in your experience, and everytime you are enlightened a new day will be enjoyed. The wicked makes the evil day for it is written, “The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea even the wicked for the **day of evil**.” (Prov. 16:4) It needs be that offences come; yet there is a woe pronounced upon those who bring them about. We can rejoice in the fact that the Lord created the wicked for that purpose. None of the Lord's people have any desire to offend, yet this is the life of the wicked. The wicked are so constituted that their joy is in offending, persecuting, and

warring against godly things and people. We can rejoice because we are not to wield the sword that afflicts, but we are objects of these afflictions. David prayed as recorded in Psalms 17:13, "Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword." The wicked were created by Him and for Him according to the Scriptures. We can rejoice that our prayers relative to the deeds against us, are to be directed to God who created them and uses them as His sword. We rejoice that we are not to beg Satan and his followers to be easy on us, but we are to beg God. We are to rejoice that in a mysterious manner all things work together for our good to such a degree that all of our persecutions are not in vain. Rejoice, brethren, that it is not within our authority to destroy or fight a carnal warfare against the wicked. What a comfort and joy to know that the wicked can do no more against us than that which our Father allows. We are so glad to believe that when the Lord uses His sword sufficiently for our good and His praise, it shall be stilled. We rejoice to believe that God made man for His own glory. He did not make man in order to save him or damn him; but God is glorified in either. Rejoice that God glorifies the elect with eternal salvation in such manner that Jesus is to be praised for all its blessings.

Paul thanked God upon every remembrance of the saints always in every prayer **making requests with joy**. See Phil. 1:2-3. We make requests for the saints with joy because we see the marks of the Lord Jesus in their faces, speech, deeds, and walk. We rejoice in the Lord for their fellowship, Christ-like characteristics, faith, hope, and love. We rejoice that when we remember them our souls are filled with joy. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. God hath ordained that we should pray with and for one another, making our requests with joy. We rejoice that we have the confidence that the good work

that has been begun by God will be performed until the day of Jesus Christ. Paul's purpose in visiting the Philipians again, and continuing with them was for their "Furtherance and joy of faith." that their rejoicing might be more abundant in Jesus Christ. (See Phil. 1:25-26).

The great love of eternal life dispels the fear of death. I have known some who seemed to be continuously in bondage in fear of death up to the hour of death. When this hour came the sweet words spoken and the look upon their countenance seemed to indicate that this fear was illfounded.

The last words of our loved ones often are remembered longer and make more lasting impressions upon us than any other words during their lives. Living words of dying christians would fill many books. More joyful statements have been made in the hour of death than at any other time. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." God has proven this many times by inspiring testimonies of rejoicing in the hour of death. We read of one who whispered, "I wish I had the power of writing or speaking, for then I would describe to you how pleasant a thing it is to die." Death will give us complete liberty. Death can cure ills that physicians cannot cure. It is the comforter of those whom time cannot console. Death is the entrance into the celestial eternal city where death can never more come. I am persuaded that brethren rejoice while dying. Brethren, do not look upon death as your enemy, but rather rejoice that Jesus bore its pain and penalty that we might experience complete liberation and joy in death. Rejoice even in death. **Rejoice evermore.**

E. J. L.

EDITORIAL

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record

that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

(Romans 10:1-4)

The Roman brethren were Gentiles. Their fellowship with the Jewish brethren was brought about when Jesus said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I can bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," making it known that God had a people among both the Jews and the Gentiles. In bringing this to light which had been hidden before, Peter was given the wonderful experience of learning not to call "common or unclean that which God had cleansed." It will be remembered that this was done by Peter being sent to the Gentile Centurian to preach the gospel which he had been preaching to the Jews. It is noted, of course, that it was God that prepared both Peter and the Jewish brethren, and the Centurian and his company, for the disclosure that God's mercy was without respect of persons (Jew or Gentile). Peter preached, in the presence of the brethren with him, Jesus and him crucified to the Centurian and those with him: and the "Holy Ghost fell upon all of them," so that the wonderful experience removed all the prejudice the Jews once had, and caused them to say, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts chapters 10 and 11)

In the epistle to the Roman brethren, Paul assured them, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (1st chapter Romans)

The Apostle was greatly concerned

for his kinsmen according to the flesh, because most of them "Stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." And he made it plain that, though they were Israelites, "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever," it did not indicate that all Israelites were of the family of God. For he continued, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, 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."

Thus, though all Israelites could claim Abraham as their father, it did not constitute them children of God: for the children of God are distinctly called the children of promise, which distinguishes them from commonplace natural children, represented by Ishmael, to the effectual working of God's promise, as represented by Isaac; thus making them children of Abraham and Sarah both naturally and in its spiritual significance. Paul shows also that these children of promise were among the Gentiles as well as the Jews, by saying, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." (Romans 9th chapter)

So all the children of promise, the called

both of the Jews and the Gentiles, are counted for the seed, and compose the whole election of grace; and are all saved by the grace of God.

In our text the Apostle tells the Roman brethren of his concern for his Israelite kinsmen, saying that they being ignorant of God's righteousness, were attempting to establish their own righteousness, and were manifesting a zeal of God, which was not according to knowledge. Paul knew all about his brethren in the flesh: his former life exemplified them: for he once had the same ardent zeal they had. He could describe them, and his own former self, for he knew both of the states which a person quickened by the Spirit experiences. This was because the eyes of his understanding had been opened.

Paul bore record that, "They have a zeal of God." It cannot be understood that he was saying their zeal was from God — his own experience taught him better than that; for their zeal was not according to knowledge. Surely, if their zeal were from God it would be according to knowledge, and would be manifested in a godly manner. The meaning is that they had a zeal for God, as the literal translation has it: or a zeal concerning God. They had a zeal alright; but were ignorant, (not having been taught the Spirit of God,) that righteousness or salvation was alone by grace: and not by works of (for) righteousness; so their zeal took a contrary course. To them Jesus was an impostor; and in denying him they felt they were doing God's service: the same that Paul once did.

Paul would describe their condition as being alive without the law, for they were just like he once was. With them, however, the commandment (condemnation) had not come, sin had not "revived", and they had not died. Consequently their ignorance in these things prompted a hatred for the truth, for right and peaceful things, leading to further moral decline and crimes against their fellow men. All that they did, as they thought, was because of their zeal

for God. Many instances of this zeal are recorded against them in the Scriptures, and against those of like zeal in the pages of history.

We mentioned that Paul was familiar with their ignorance, but they were not. Paul's understanding had been enlightened (Ephesians 1:18), and he knew that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believed; and that it was not within the ability of any mortal, "to bring Christ down from heaven, or up again from the dead." But rather, when one was enlightened, it is manifested by those things which are, "In thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach." (Romans 10:6-8)

We are not to suppose that this sort of ignorance disappeared with Paul's generation, for the evidence is to the contrary in recorded history: which shows that there has always been an amazing amount of zeal, often amounting to frenzy, which has resisted and denounced almost every instance where the true followers of Christ maintained the doctrine that salvation is solely by the grace of God, and unto his chosen people only. This is not to say that the exponents of free-willism and the establishing of righteousness by works, decry the name of Jesus, (except the Jews,) for the name of Christian is used by them; but it is to say that they have denied Jesus by ascribing to his gospel many things which were never a tenet of his gospel. And they, we are persuaded, deserve the same censure as those who denied that Jesus was the Christ, and looked to their own works for righteousness. There is no difference in those of today who go about to establish their own righteousness before God by their works, and those who did the same thing in Paul's day. Neither were blessed to have what it takes to "submit themselves to the righteousness of God."

There is no question but that righteousness or salvation will ever remain positive both as to its manner of accomplishment, and to its personal mani-

festation, as it was taught by Jesus and his disciples. Any breach of their gospel in any way, such as it being conditioned on the exercise of personal free-will to accept or reject, or to the deserving of it by the works of the recipient, is contrary to the faith of God's elect; and is truly "another gospel", (and all such Paul denounced,) and rightly belongs to that which opposed "the gospel of the grace of God," which Paul preached. (Acts 2:24)

It is good to have a zeal for God, for such does not go beyond the things of God; but much of the zeal we see or read about goes beyond into things entirely contrary to God. This often takes the form of expressions such as, "God is pleased with our good intentions," or, "If we do the best we know how," (with all else these expressions imply,) as if such could be substituted for the perfect obedience God requires to his laws. It should be known that it is not permissible to substitute decisions of men for the announced decrees of God. When God sent his Son into the world to be the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believed, through the working of his mighty power, He provided the only way that righteousness could ever come to them. Though many do not like to admit it, it is true that **all men** are concluded in sin, and are guilty and under condemnation, and therefore totally unrighteous, and none can possibly redeem themselves.

This is Bible doctrine, believed and rejoiced in by each heir of promise, as he is brought out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, when he sees his own alleged righteousness as nothing but filthy rags. But it is necessary to say that before this he knew nothing of his need of grace, and was either not concerned, or was actively seeking his own righteousness. It is his blessing, however, that though he was dead, the voice of the Son of God penetrated his condition and he heard and lived, being begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ

from the dead. Thereafter he has a righteousness not of himself, but the imputed righteousness of Jesus to sustain him forever.

Now as to those who are not heirs of promise, they shall continue to work at their own righteousness, and expect to stand before God in peace by their works: never knowing the only righteousness that can bring any man before God in peace. We are not given to know just who the children of promise are — except the few we come in contact with, seeing the fruits of the Spirit in them; but we are glad that God knows, and to all that are His, though in their natures they may be the vilest among men, he will give assurance of their redemption by the blood of Jesus.

No wonder the redeemed of the Lord sing

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me:
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see."

As they exclaim with John, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

HEBREWS 12: 16, 17

"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

The birthright of Esau, as the first-born of the patriarch Isaac, was only that which entitled him to a temporal inheritance, which consisted in earthly dominion, and worldly possessions; and in its figurative import, set forth the spiritual privileges of the saints, in the

house of God, under the gospel dispensation, these privileges and rights which belong to them in the gospel organization of the church, by virtue of their spiritual birthright, such as church membership, and the fellowship, and communion of the saints, as belonging to the household of faith. Esau, as we are informed, despised his birthright, and sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage. Of course we are not to understand that the eternal inheritance of the saints in glory can be by them either bought or sold; for that inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away, because it is reserved for them in heaven, and they are kept for the possession and enjoyment of it, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. (1 Peter 1: 4, 5.) The apostle's admonition in our text, implies that there are, or may be, among the saints in the Christian church, while here on earth, some, who, like Esau, will barter away their spiritual privileges in the church, for carnal gratifications. This they can do to a limited extent. Those who are born of God are commanded to take Christ's yoke, and learn of him, to deny themselves of all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously and godly; and they are assured that in this course, they shall find rest to their souls. This is their peculiar birthright, so far as concerns their privileges in the Zion of God, here on earth. But if to gratify the lusts of the flesh, they will walk disorderly, in rioting, drunkenness, or in any other manner of disorder, they sell at a cheap rate, the social, substantial and spiritual privileges of their birthright, for the momentary gratification of the flesh. So also when the children of God forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, they sell a precious birthright privilege, for the accommodation of some worldly lust. It may be their desire to accumulate worldly gain, or to gratify a lazy inclination; but in all cases it is only for pottage. If our carnal natures were, as some have

contended, born again, or made spiritual, there would be in us no such wicked propensities to please; but we find by experience, that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good; while with the mind we serve the law of God, with our flesh we serve the law of sin. There is in our depraved nature, a strong craving something for a certain kind of red pottage, as near as we can describe it, like this: to build up a sort of reputation by magnifying the faults of our brethren, in the gratification of which, we are inclined to make a brother an offender for a word; to thrust with side and shoulder, by disparaging the reputation of our fellows, so that we may be ourselves considered the largest fish in the pond; but the privileges of birthright dictates the better way, to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. We have not time or space now to show in how many ways christians may exchange their most valuable birthright enjoyments for carnal gratifications.

We are requested to dwell more particularly on the seventeenth verse, wherein we are told that Esau could find no place for repentance, though he sought it with tears. The blessing in which Jacob supplanted Esau was pronounced in these words, "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee: and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." — Gen. 27: 28, 29. How diligently Esau sought to rescind the transaction of his foolish bargain will appear by the account given in the same chapter. But his sorrow and tears were unavailing, he could find no place for them, or for repentance; he was held strictly to his bargain; though very much against his will. Isaac said, I have blessed him (Jacob), yea, and he shall be blessed. "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry." But

alas, all was unavailing. His appetite had been gratified with the coveted red pottage, and his birthright was irrecoverably gone.

Is it not even so in the application of the figure to the saints? If they live after the flesh, shall they not die? When christians have been drawn away from the high and holy vocation where-with they are called of God, by their carnal lusts, do they not lose the fellowship of their brethren? That fellowship and confidence is their birthright; but when sold for pottage, how hard it is to be regained. When the adversary has hailed thee to the judge, and the judge has delivered thee to the officer, and thou art cast into prison, thou shalt in no case come out thence until thou hast paid the utmost farthing. The minister, who in preaching, yields to the morbid craving for the red pottage of popular applause, and for a little taste of popularity, keeps back part of his message, or countenances that which is contrary to the word, will sink in the esteem of his faithful brethren, and finally lose the fellowship of the church of God. He may be employed as a preacher for antichrist; but his birthright has gone for red pottage. Paul does not say that the saints shall never find place for repentance, or by repentance, restoration to birthright privileges; for some wicked prodigals have been reinstated in the family; but there have been others, not a few, who have had to mourn with "exceeding bitter crying," that they for the gratification of their carnal propensities, have irrecoverably lost the confidence of their brethren, and birthright privileges in the church of Christ.

May God grant us grace, to keep our bodies under, to walk circumspectly, and to enjoy the blessed privileges of the house of God, until we shall be delivered from the corruptions of the flesh, and awake with the likeness of our glorious and glorified Redeemer.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe August 15, 1855)

OBITUARIES

DAISY MEADS JOHNSON

Sister Johnson died November 27, 1965, at the age of ninety years. She was a daughter of John S. and Mary Delon Meads; and the widow of Walter Latham Johnson.

She was a life long resident of Salem Township, Pasquotauk County, N. C., and a member of Flatty Creek Primitive Baptist Church. She leaves to mourn her departure, four daughters and four sons, who lovingly cared for her, making her as comfortable as possible until the summons came from on high. It is indeed saddening to realize she will not meet with us again here, but we hope to meet in a land that knows no sorrow; where we will be fashioned like unto His glorious body, be like Him and be satisfied: never to part again.

Funeral services were held by her pastor, Elder I. S. Conner; and interment was in Highland Park Cemetery, where many friends were gathered with beautiful floral offerings.

Beadie L. Meads

DEACON DAVID HYATT

In memory of David Hyatt, son of Francis Marion Hyatt and Frances Malinda Briscoe Hyatt. Born August 7, 1898, in Marshall County, Alabama; and was married February 22, 1925, to Fannie Randolph, of Walker County, Alabama.

He joined the Missionary Baptist church at about 15 years of age; later he became dissatisfied and united with Primitive Baptists at Old Zion Church June 10, 1945, and was baptized, together with his wife, the following Sunday by Elder H. M. Brock. He was ordained a deacon on December 8, 1946.

After living in Walker County 32 years, he moved back to Marshall County in 1952, and established a grocery business. Because of convenience, moved his membership to Dorsey Creek Church in Cullman County, May 25, 1963. In October, 1963, he was appointed Chairman of the Marshall County Board of Registrars, and served in that capacity until his death, May 19, 1966.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. C. Moon, his pastor, at Gilliam Springs Church, May 20, and he was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery. He left to mourn his passing, his wife, four sisters and two brothers.

Brother Hyatt is missed among the Old Baptists here, for he went far and near to church meetings. He was gifted in singing and in Scripture understanding, and was a joy to talk with. Always humble and loving peace

and fellowship. We feel our loss is his gain.
Written by the request of his wife.

Ercelle Hand

ROBERT EDWIN (BOB) CARTER

Deacon Robert Edwin Carter was born May 2, 1880, and was called from this life August 13, 1966, making his stay on earth more than eighty-six years. He was the son of the late William and Serena Hale Carter, of Franklin County, Virginia. He was married to Lucy Betty Mullins April 6, 1904; and to their union were born ten children, of which seven are living. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife; two sons: Grover, of Henry, Va., and Lindsey, of Danville, Va.; five daughters: Mrs. Elsie Gilliams, Martinsville; Mrs. Roxie Carter, Ferrum; Mrs. Lessie Via, Henry; Mrs. Mamie Prillaman, Bassett; and Mrs. Martha Johnson, Fieldale. Also, one brother, Henry Carter, Virginia Beach; thirty-five grandchildren, seventy-seven great grandchildren, and three great, great grandchildren.

Brother Carter joined Union Primitive Baptist Church, Henry County, Va., the fourth Sunday in November, 1940, and was baptized the fourth Sunday in December by his pastor, the late Elder Emmitt R. Bryant; and was ordained a deacon October 23, 1943. He faithfully filled that office as long as he was able. He died in Martinsville General Hospital after a long illness.

Brother Carter was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. Union Church has suffered a great loss, for he was a faithful and devoted member; but we feel our loss is his great eternal gain.

His funeral was conducted at Republican Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Va., by his pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, and Elder Amos Hash, in the presence of a great audience of people to pay their respect to one they loved. His body was laid to rest in the Carter family cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family, and bow in humble submission to the will of God. Written by a sister in hope,

Rada L. Rakes

SISTER SALLIE E. WHITE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from this earthly life of toils and sufferings, Sister Sallie E. White on December 7, 1966, at the age of 96 years, 2 months and 20 days. She was born October 17, 1870, in Harris County, Georgia, and moved to Alabama with

her parents in 1885. She was married to Samuel H. White April 4, 1890. To this union seven children were born, four of whom, together with her husband, preceded her in death a number of years.

She united with Cana Primitive Baptist Church, Wood County, Texas, in October 29, 1915 and was baptized by the late Elder R. E. White. She was one of the two remaining charter members of that church. She was tenderly laid to rest beside her husband in Myrtle Springs Cemetery December 9, 1966. Services were conducted by Elder Loyd Wall, who spoke very beautifully and comfortingly to the bereaved. She was loyal to her church and always attended regularly until she became a victim of arthritis and was an invalid for 3 years. She always bore her sufferings with great fortitude, never complaining more than was possible for a mortal to do. She had a great desire to depart and be with her Savior whom she tried to serve and worship.

Mother White was indeed a true mother and never tired of lending a helping hand to those in need, always giving of her substance to those less fortunate than she. She is survived by three daughters: Mrs. Belle Perritt, Mrs. Clara Perritt and Mrs. Avis Browning. She made her home with her oldest daughter, Belle, the last three years of her life, and was tenderly cared for by her three surviving children. She is also survived by 21 grandchildren, 37 great grandchildren, 17 great, great grandchildren.

The floral offering was beautiful and profuse, a large crowd was in attendance to pay tribute to one they knew and loved so well.

Her daughter-in-law,
Buena White

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to call from our midst our beloved, Larry Wood, the son of the late Brother and Sister Melia Wood, who was born August 31, 1918, and died January 18, 1966, making his stay on earth forty-eight years, four months and eighteen days.

He is survived by his wife, one son, two daughters, four sisters, one brother, and a host of other relatives and friends. He united with Hickory Grove Church January 9, 1965, at a called meeting at his home, and was baptized in a bath tub by Elder Lester E. Lee. He had a strong faith and was a faithful member until death, though he was afflicted.

Brother Wood loved his family and was a faithful husband, father and brother. His family loved him, and did all for him that loving hands could do; but God loved him and

has called his spirit to rest with Christ until He comes back and raises his body from the grave, and gives him a perfect body with everlasting life with Him forever. Brother Wood was a veteran of World War II.

Elder Lester E. Lee and Mr. Eason served at his funeral, with a large crowd of relatives and friends present. Let us not sorrow as those who have no hope, but thank God that we believe Brother Wood will live beyond the grave.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the church extends its love and sympathy to Brother Wood's family, and pray that Jesus will comfort and bless each one of them; and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the family, one recorded on the Church Book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Read and approved by the Church in conference Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in March, 1966.

Brother Eldridge McLamb
Sister Vara Johnson
Elder Lester E. Lee and Wife
Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT SISTER DORA TURNER

We the Church of Robersonville have been made very sad at the death of our dear Sister Turner, who passed away after a prolonged illness on July 26, 1966, at the age of 73 years.

Surviving her are her husband Mr. Ruel Turner; four sons, Norman, Ruel Johnson, Ray and Robert all of Oak City; and one daughter, Mrs. Lance Johnson of Williamston. Her funeral was conducted at home by Elder W. E. Grimes and Mr. William Denson. Interment was in the cemetery at Oak City.

She united with this church several years ago and attended regularly until afflictions caused her absence for sometime prior to her death. We have evidence to believe that afflictions worked for her a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory and we feel that "she has entered into that rest which remains to the people of God." God's people are "made perfect through suffering" and when sin is finished it brings forth death.

We the Church of Robersonville hope that God's richest blessings may rest upon all who are near and dear to her, giving them a spirit of reconciliation, for we know that God does all things well and at the right time and none can stay his hand.

Done by order of Conference on Saturday before the first Sunday in August.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
J. R. Gardner, Clerk
Sue Moore, Committee

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT BROTHER JOSEPH J. WILLIAMS

Brother Williams passed away Wednesday, August 3, 1966.

He had been in declining health for some time with a heart condition, but was apparently as well as usual that morning at six o'clock, but died suddenly of a heart attack, which was a shock to his family and neighbors and to all who knew him. He was born in Gold Point September 9, 1894, 71 years ago. Most of his life was spent on his farm, but in 1947 he located in Robersonville, N. C. and was a prominent citizen in his community, giving most of his life to the service of others, and to worthy causes.

He was married to Carrie Everette and they observed their 50th wedding anniversary last January 12. Surviving are Mrs. Williams, three sons — Russell and J. L. Williams of Robersonville, and William Williams of Greenville.

We the Church of Robersonville have sustained a great loss at the passing of our dear Brother, and tongue nor pen can ever be able to express the sorrow we feel at the loss of such an useful and faithful member.

He was our clerk, treasurer, and one of our deacons all of which he served humbly and efficiently when he was physically able to serve. One of the many evidences he manifested that he had passed from death unto life was his sincere love for his Brethren esteeming others better than himself.

He visited churches far and near. All everywhere were held in high esteem and brotherly love. He and his companion were given to hospitality and their house was always open to the Primitive Baptists far and near who chose to visit them.

Brother Williams united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Robersonville in October, 1953, and held out faithfully until the end. God in His infinite wisdom removed him from our midst, and we feel sure that his afflictions worked for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

His funeral was conducted by Elder I. S. Conner of Portsmouth, Va., Elder W. E. Grimes and Elder E. C. Harrison in our church, and interment was in Robersonville Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, one to the family, and one recorded in the church minutes.

Done by order of Conference, first Saturday in August, 1966.

Elder I. S. Conner, Moderator
J. R. Gardner, Clerk
Sue Moore, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1967

NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LETTER OF A NIECE TO SISTER RUSTON

Dear Aunt:

I feel I should love to write to you and tell you a little of my feelings, and how good the Lord is to such an unworthy creature.

In the service a week ago the Lord came over all my fears, and such was his love to me, I lifted up my heart to Him, and could say, "Saved to the utmost now, who can speak my heart-felt joy?" And last night. "His goodness was more than a match for my heart." I felt during the second hymn that if my Saviour had called me home, I should have been as sure of heaven as I was standing there; and I can say, although I feel the chiefest sinner, "For love of me the Son of God drained every drop of vital blood; long time I after idols ran, but now my God's a martyred man." Oh, how I love Him; He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely to my soul. "Withered and barren should I be, if severed from the vine."

I want to be able to cast all my care upon Him, for he careth for me, although I feel such a vile sinner in and of myself. I loathe and abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, but, "If dust and ashes might presume, great God, to talk to thee." He lets me talk to Him sometimes as one talks to his friend. I love to feel nothing in myself, so that Christ is my all in all.

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life and breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

I hope you won't mind me writing these few lines, but I felt I must tell you how much I love Him. I can say with Peter, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." And Oh, to whom else can we go? I love to wash his feet and wipe them with the hairs of my head, in my feelings. I do desire to sit at His feet, clothed in my right mind.

Your loving niece,

(The above was written in 1937 to Sister Ruston by a niece in England.)

DOUBTS AND FEARS; BUT A PRECIOUS HOPE

Tennessee Ridge, Tenn. 37178

Dear Editors:

We are receiving our **Signs** regularly and it is read with much interest and consolation, and would be at a loss without it. I want to thank the editors and associate editors for their contributions, and thank the Lord for making it possible through His sustaining power.

If the Lord has given me any understanding of the Scriptures, (as I feel at times He has,) I completely and heartily indorse the principles which the **Signs** advocate. It is food for such an unworthy creature as I feel to be.

I have made many mistakes down through life, although if the dear Lord died on the cross to save sinners and raised for their justification, I humbly hope I am in that number.

John 1: 11, 12, 13, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God,

even to them that believed on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God."

That power of God given them (spoken of above) is all power both in heaven and earth and is the love and mercy of the Spirit of God. Paul speaks, in 2 Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

We cannot go to Jesus on our own power but must be drawn to Him by His power. He makes us know how helpless we are in our present condition. I like the word "make" because unless we are made we do not even want to do the works of the Lord. If I am not deceived that is my experience. We do not even have the desire without His Spirit in us.

Oh! that mighty power that is above all power, that is able to save and destroy. In Matthew 10: 28, "And 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." Oh! that the Lord will give me power and strength and enable me to put my trust in Him, to guide my weary footsteps and make me submissive to His will. Psalms 32:23 "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord" David said also, "For thou hast delivered my soul from death: Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?"

Although I have doubts and fears, at times I feel that I have a precious hope that the world cannot take from me. I pray that the Lord will keep me from all evil and save this poor sinner from my sins.

My wife and I, both seemingly cannot wait for the time to come for us to go to

our meetings in order to hear and to receive that precious food prepared for His sheep. We go to church in Nashville, Tenn. Elder R. L. Biggs is pastor there. He has been in poor health and has recently had surgery, but is now at home. We pray that he will have a speedy recovery and will soon be able to preach again.

My subscription for the *Signs* is due in April, so in order not to neglect it, I am sending a check for you to extend my subscription for another two years.

From a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

Harvey Vick

DEATH IN ADAM — LIFE IN CHRIST

Dear Brother Beebe:

A brother Parker, in Indiana, wrote me some time ago for my views upon the text, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 22) I neglected replying with his request until now. I send a discourse delivered upon that subject in the Old School Baptist chapel in Lebanon, Ohio, on the second Sunday in May, 1894, which you may publish if you think proper.

My mind seems to rest upon this portion of the inspired word: and I shall endeavor, as God may give me ability, to speak words of comfort to the broken-hearted, a word in season to him that is weary, and point out springs of water to them that are thirsty, and rivers of milk and honey to them that are hungry. May the children all have ears this morning to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

This passage of the written word has been relied upon by false teachers to prove their vain imaginings and unholy speculations concerning the salvation of men. The Arminian ignorantly resorts to this quotation to hide the grossness of his schemes and give some face to his free-will absurdities; but when his Universalist brother puts in his claim for it, to bolster up his plan. The Arminian is forced to yield the ground to his more

logical claimant, who, as the strong man armed, keeps his goods in peace until a stronger than he comes. This occurs when one who is skilled in the word of righteousness, whose understanding has been opened to understand the Scriptures, takes it in the light of the testimony of the Spirit, and presents it in its true relation to all other Scripture, to the faith, experience and knowledge of those who have been taught of God. It is then clearly seen that it is stolen goods in the hands of all those teaching a conditional system of salvation, and will not fit their scheme.

“As in Adam all die.” I shall first briefly discuss the word “all”, for upon this word mainly rests the perversion of this text, as well as that of many other portions of the Scriptures. This little word has been made to shoulder very weighty responsibilities. Many an elaborate discourse, many a zealous sermon, many a stirring exhortation, has been delivered solely at its expence. We have often heard men who have more zeal than knowledge, whose fanaticism outweighs their thoughts, and with whom logic is at a discount, and airy conclusions at a premium, in their bursts of enthusiasm and blind rage against the truth; assert in the most self conceited triumph that, a-l-l never spells part. They consider this a knock-down argument against unconditional, personal election, that fundamental principle of all Bible truth. They deem this foolish, meaningless assertion sufficient proof against the doctrine of particular redemption, special calling and final preservation, and hold it as an elenchus of the doctrine of offered mercy, offered love and offered salvation; but such puerile, empty, sweeping assertions can never be taken as argument by a mind that is accustomed in the least to think on these things. A-l-l does frequently and almost without exception spell part. All men in Ohio are but a part of the men in the United States; all the men in the United States are but a part of the population of the American continent; all christians are only a part of the people of the world. It is clearly

seen that while this word always means all of something, it invariably means at the same time, a part of something. I have thus briefly spoken of the word “all” in a general way; let us now make the application to it in this text.

“As in Adam all die.” In regard to the all that die in Adam, there are but two positions possible: first, that all the human family die in Him; and second, that all the saints of God die in Him. So far as the fact of dying in Adam is concerned, the first proposition is true — all the human family die in Him; and if the first be true, then the second is necessarily true, for the Saints are a part of the family of Adam, and what is true of the whole, is true of every part of the whole. Now, to arrive at the truth of what is taught here, it remains only to determine which of these positions is embraced in the text. The Apostle has under consideration here, the resurrection of the just, and their final deliverance from this bondage of death. He is treating of the resurrection of the Saints in their order. He modifies the expression, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,” in the next sentence by saying, “Every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” Here he stops short: not a word said about any one except Christ and them that are his. This clearly sets a limit to the word “all”. As all that are Christ’s die in Adam, so all that are Christ’s shall be made alive in Him. But suppose that all does mean all the human family, which is true as a fact, but not necessarily true from this text, this argues nothing for the Arminian or Universalist, as there is none made alive in Christ but them that are His. As in Adam, all that are in Adam die, even so in Christ, shall all who are in Him be made alive. Even then if the first “all” does mean the whole human family, there is nothing in the wording of the text which teaches that the same “all” who die in Adam, are made alive in Christ. This must be proved, if it can be, from some other source.

The death of the saints in Adam, is their inheritance from him. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death hath passed upon all men, for all have sinned. The dissolution of this mortality is only the consummation of that death which hath already passed upon us. We are not simply under the sentence of death, waiting the execution, but death itself hath already passed upon us in reality. There is no power of will, no moral reform, no religious conjuring, no medical skill, that can deliver us from this death. Death reigns absolute, so far as his subjects are concerned; and his dominion is a broad one. The whole human family, the lower animals and vegetable kingdom, are territories where none disputes his sway or disturb his reign. There is no one so noble as to escape the common lot, none so ignoble as to be slighted, none so rich as to buy a reprieve, none so poor as not to be worth the taking; but all are swept away struggling, shuddering, resisting, pleading, by the merciless hand of death.

"The glories of our mortal state
Are shadows, not substantial things.
There is no armor against Death;
He lays his icy hand on kings.
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

"Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at length must yield—
They tame one another still.
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death

"The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds,
Upon Death's purple altar now
See how the victor-victim bleeds!
All heads must come
To the cold tomb:
Only the actions of Christ the just
Smell sweet and blossom from the dust."

Death seems to be a necessity both in nature and in grace. Not that God was under necessity to so arrange, but that it seemed good in His sight to have it so. Its all prevading, irrestable, ir-

repressible reign throughout all countries, all ages and all departments of nature is enough to start the question in the thoughtful mind. Does not death serve some great economy in God's universe? Is it a mere interloper that God would not have here? Is it not a provision of His own wisdom for carrying out His own design in creation?

Death is a necessity in the vegetable kingdom; for "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) This is a specific statement, setting forth the principle of reproduction in the vegetable world. Everything that lives is an evidence that something died. The giant oak, adorning the majestic forest, is a living monument that marks an acorn's grave; and the inscription read in every leaf and written in every bough is, "An acorn died." Every speck of grass that gems the lawn, every flower that brightens and perfumes the garden, every crimson laden tree of the orchard, proclaims that something died.

The holy Apostle, in treating upon the resurrection of the dead, brought to his argument this universal fact of nature. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The Saviour, in speaking of the necessity of His own death, and the glory that should follow, used the same fact as an illustration in the words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Death precedes quickening in the vegetable kingdom, and is essential to it. This same mysterious principle in a deeper and more hidden manner extends into the animal kingdom, and even reaches the kingdom of grace. The Saviour opened the door and gave us a glimpse of this mysterious chamber when He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." (John 12:24) He applied the universal principle of reproduction in the vegetable kingdom to himself. He here gives us to understand that the process of reproduction exemplified in plant life was in some way wrapped up in him; and the principles of His death

and our redemption by His blood are in some way illustrated by the death and quickening of a grain of wheat. Now this same saying may with propriety and truthfulness be transferred to Adam, for he is the figure of Christ. Except Adam had died, he would have abided alone, and the world would never have been peopled through him. Adam begat no children until death passed upon him in the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die." This is strange indeed; but what is not strange when properly thought upon? Its being strange is no evidence against its truthfulness. Truth is always stranger than fiction sure enough. The process cannot be explained, the reason cannot be given, yet it is true. We are warranted in carrying this fact into the animal kingdom by a strictly scientific basis. The principle of reproduction, growth and repair, is found alone in vegetable life; it does not belong to the order of animal life. The difference between the tree and the animal is not that the animal does not possess vegetable life, but that the tree does not possess animal life.

The order of vegetable life endows the animal with the power of reproduction. When a bone is broken, it is the power of vegetable life that causes it to knit together again; and the same principle heals the wound that is made in the flesh or muscles of the body, and causes the hair to grow again when cut or plucked out, and the finger nails to grow again when trimmed. Animal life endows its possessor with the power of locomotion and instinct; but without vegetable life, there would be no reproduction growth and repair. Then, so far as the reproduction of his kind is concerned, it is found alone in the order of vegetable life, which is mysteriously combined with animal life, to make up an animal organism, or a human personality. Hence the same principle of death and quickening which is essential to plant reproduction lies deeply hidden in the fact and process of all animal procreation; hence it was necessary that Adam should die. It should be noticed again that death is not simply the dis-

solution of this mortality, but that this dissolution is but the consumation of that death which has been at work in our members from the time of our birth.

Now, the saints of God in their mortal state, in their natural personality, were created in the earthly Adam; and when death passed upon him, it passed upon them. They are the production of a body of death; consequently they must die. This death, with all its attendant circumstances, its prodigious economy in all nature, cannot possibly be the accident of a day, the result of the mistake of free-will, or anything of that kind. This would be the blindest fatalism, the sternest doctrine of chance. Death plays too stupendous a part in all the affairs of this world, both in the physical and moral spheres, and shines too bright in the everlasting covenant, to be a mere interloper in God's universe. Faith looks upon it as a provision of infinite wisdom, a gracious providence, ordained by the Creator to fulfill His own eternal purpose, both in providence and in grace. The whole process of Christian experience is a struggle between life and death, sin and holiness, corruption and incorruption: and the whole summing up of christian hope is that we shall one day be delivered from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

"Even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The "all" referred to here, are clearly they that are Christ's, the whole election of grace. The resurrection of the saints as here brought to view, is in Christ. This resurrection is but the triumphant consummation of something long gone before. It is the harvest of grace, sown in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is "the divine far-off event to which the whole creation moves." Death in Adam and life in Christ is the fundamental idea of the New Testament Scriptures, the golden text of the gospel of grace, the master-key to christian experience. In treating upon the same theme, the same inspired writer has recorded, "As by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall

many be made righteous." Men are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, upon exactly the same conditions upon which they were made sinners by the disobedience of Adam.

Adam's sin and disobedience reached us by virtue of our vital relationship to him. Upon no other condition could we possibly have been made sinners by his disobedience. If we had not been in him, virtually in him, of the same life with him, then this disobedience would not, could not, have reached us at all. Upon exactly the same condition the obedience of Jesus reaches His people and makes them righteousness. When the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, He took upon Himself the seed of Abraham, the election of grace. They were made members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones in His incarnation, by virtue of the grace and life that were given them in Him, according as they were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. He was the ark of God's covenant; and when he struggled with temptations; when he suffered for sins; when he died upon the cross. when He descended into Hell, they were safely housed in him, and brought safely through it all. They paid tithes in Him, became dead to the law by His body, reconciled to God by Him. By virtue of this oneness of life, this vital relation to Him, His perfect obedience, His suffering and triumphant resurrection, are all accounted unto them, and reaches them most effectually, and shall make them all righteous.

As to the certainty of the Saints all being made alive, is just as certain as their death in Adam. Who can question the certainty of death? Is it not this certainty that strikes terror to the heart of all living? Are there any conditions between us and death upon which death can be brought or stayed? There is no way of escape. According to the inspired record of eternal truth, there is no reason to doubt the certainty of life in Christ. Inasmuch as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also

bear the image of the heavenly. The one is just as certain as the other. Jesus himself said, "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 hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

It is not the will of our heavenly Father that any of these little ones who fall asleep in Christ shall perish. All our sins have been put away by Him, and He has redeemed us unto God by his blood. By the one offering He hath perfected us forever. We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory. He hath loved us with an everlasting love; He hath chosen us to salvation; He hath appointed us to glory; He hath ordained us to eternal life; He hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son; He hath laid down His life for us; we are reconciled to God by His blood; we are washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. Our destiny is indissolubly linked with the destiny of Jesus. How can this incomprehensible work of grace fail? Faith embraces it all, and rests in this finished work of our Redeemer, and looks forward with joy and gladness to the final consummation of it all. The resurrection of the dead is the crowning result of the work of Christ and God's purpose of salvation. Then shall be brought to pass the saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" "I will redeem them from death, I will ransom them from the power of the grave." Death will be swallowed up in victory.

May God give us grace to trust Him, and to walk humbly before Him, and in patience and hope await the great day of our final, eternal deliverance.

H. M. Curry

(The above by Elder Curry was published in the *Signs* June 20, 1894. In reading it re-

cently, we were so delighted with the way he presented the wonderful subject, we wanted to share it with those who have not read it. — J. D. W.)

“WHAT SEEK YE?”

Rt. 3, Box 42,
Chestertown, Md. 21620

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

This letter may not be worth reading, much less worth printing, but I will leave that to you to judge. If the Lord is in it, I am going to try to put some of my thoughts into writing.

In our daily lives, many times our minds are filled to overflowing with thoughts upon portions of Scripture and the meaning of them. The other evening while listening to a program on the radio I was very much interested in the answers given by some young college students concerning their ideas on various phases of life today. There were four students — three girls and one boy. When asked what part religion had in their daily life, I was thoroughly amazed to hear three of them say they thought “religion was definitely on the way out!” Can you imagine that?! The other one said he thought religion “should have a place in our lives but that more stress and importance should be put upon other things”. What other things? Why are the people today so restless and unsettled? The girls who felt religion was on the way out gave as their reason, “Young people of today want to see what they believe in. How can we be expected to believe in something we cannot see?” And much more on the same line of thought. Hearing these young folks and what they call the modern way of thinking aroused many thoughts in my mind. There were “Doubting Thomas-es” in the days of our Lord and there will always be. Show me and I’ll believe it!

The worldly go around today seeking they know not what. Looking, ever looking, for something to satisfy them, and not knowing what they want. The young folks often come from homes even more

confused than they are. The scripture verse in John 1: 38 came to my mind. “Then Jesus turned and saw them following and saith unto them, “What seek ye ” What a powerful question. So full of meaning each time the Savior asked it.

Before proceeding further, I want to go back a little and speak of John. This man came up from the wilderness, preaching a strange, different sort of message, from that which anyone had heard before. His personality and appearance attracted many followers who were interested in the news he brought. They were looking for a King — one whom the prophets had said would come and free them from their wicked rulers. When John came, they wondered if he were the expected one, the Christ. When questioned, he denied that he was the Christ. They then asked, “Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us.” (John 1: 22) He said, “I am the Voice of one crying in the Wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah”; and then went on to say, “But there standeth One among you that ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose.”

When John saw Jesus coming, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for He was before me.” He told them of Jesus and how “He must increase but I must decrease.” They asked many questions and John answered according to the scriptures and prophets from the Old Testament. After John was cast into prison (I must decrease) and Jesus began to preach (He must increase), the multitudes follow Him to hear the strange, wonderful things he spoke. Then we see how Jesus received these followers. All through the Gospel record of the New Testament we find Jesus ever searching the hearts and probing the minds of men. He knew their thoughts and the reasons for their behavior, but he must ask them and re-

ceive their answers. Knowing the frailty of our nature, Jesus often put them to the test by asking the fundamental question, "What are ye seeking?" "Then Jesus saith unto them, "What seek ye?" Not always did they have a good answer. For some had been following from curiosity; some to see what He was doing; and some thinking He was the King, long awaited, watched for some great happening that would free them from their bondage. Many left following Him when they saw nothing unusual. Many followed for the free food they received and as long as they received that, they did not look for spiritual food.

Jesus, knowing what is in our hearts, knew what their answers would be. That's why, as we turn to Him and He asks, "What seek ye?", unless we can say "The Savior, Lord.", we see him for less than He is. Man in his carnal state is always seeking something. Wandering from place to place; false pleasure to false pleasure. In this restless unsettled condition, if one were to question, Why?, it is very doubtful if one would get a satisfactory answer. We are so overwhelmed with the problems of everyday life that we fail to stand back and look at life as a whole. We need to put our eye to the telescope and look past the fragments that confuse us daily, to the great, wide wonderful world as a whole, and see things in the true proportion as they are. We are just tiny specks in a great big world. We retreat at times from the world to refresh and recreate a new spirit and enlarge the scope of our life, when the flood tide of the Spirit washes away the absorbing, hurrying pursuit of life.

The average person is aware that something is lacking and knows not what it is, nor does he know how to go about obtaining it if he *could*. If the Lord is in the matter, stirring up the mind and heart, there will be no end to it until the work is finished and he is brought face to face with himself, to know how wretched and undone he is. How useless his life has been! Phil. 1:6. "Being confident on this very

thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Then, and not until then, can he give a good answer when asked, "What seek ye?" "Seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven, all things then shall be added." Then we realize we did not come this way of our own accord, we know that it is all of the Lord, for "*all* things are possible with God." (Mark 10:27) Stop just a minute and think of what that means! *All* things are possible! Not just part, but *all*. That covers a vast area and unless our minds are expanded to grasp the greatness of it, the conception is too large to enter into our minds at all. But once we are blest to realize how great that meaning is, it will revolutionize all our points of view and raise us up to a higher plane of thought and feeling: Our spirits would take wings and fly up with the angels on high.

Again, think of the moment Christ uttered these words, "What seek ye?" and know the reason for them. The rich man wanted to inherit eternal life, seeking heaven the easy way. When Jesus told him to "Go sell whatsoever thou hast and give it to the poor and follow me," it was too great a price to pay. So he did not truly seek God. Christ said, "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." (Luke 18:25) This is often misinterpreted by the worldly to mean to get through the eye of a needle only after a struggle, so they use other words than "camel," making it appear that if they struggle hard enough, they will finally make it to heaven. But God said, "camel," and as this is utterly impossible, it truly means it is impossible for one rich in their own self-works and self-righteousness to enter into heaven. Our Lord asserted an unconditioned impossibility. The disciples were astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?" What was the Lord's answer? "With men it is impossible, but *all* things are possible with God."

Once again we see that *ALL*. The "impossible" constitutes the whole sphere of divine operation. It is human to make mistakes, but God never makes errors. Men can slay, but we see the finger of God when dead men rise again. If water will not cleanse the soul, then it must be God who cleanses it with Blood. When those who are dead in trespasses and sin walk in newness of life, we see displayed the power of God.

The great lesson the Savior was teaching His disciples was not that of human ability, but that of Divine ability. That man *cannot* save himself. He had not made that supreme sacrifice on the cross yet and the redeeming blood had not been shed, but He preached "Believe in God and thou shalt be saved." And the meaning remains the same throughout eternity. For He and His Father are one. "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." Therefore, everything is so ordered as to fix our attention first on our helpless, undone condition, and then to rejoice in the Almighty Salvation of God. Here is the only sure place our hope is anchored and our feet safely established. None knows better than we how hard it was to get away from self trust: reaching for God with one hand and holding tight to the world with the other. How often we thought, by some action of our own, we could gain a title to happiness. But none knows better than we the sadness and disappointment we felt when we found our efforts were of no use. It may be that, like the rich young man, "we have kept the commandments from youth up," it had not satisfied our heart. We still went on seeking and seeking. We still asked, "What lack I yet?" "What good thing shall I do?" Our needs are never satisfied in this manner. The ends of the earth may know our voice and we may have bestowed our goods to feed the poor: we may have even given our body to be burned, but it profits us nothing. The soul still cries out, "What lack I yet?"

If I were to look deep into my heart

and the struggles of my storm tossed soul passed before my mind's eye, all its past despairs, fears, hopes, and doubts, would be a long history of discouragement and ineffectual efforts of my own to please God and gain eternal life the easy way. We knew we couldn't save ourselves; our best hopes always ended in failure. Then, wonder of wonders, like balm to a bruised and broken heart, our Lord's gracious assurance: It is impossible with man, but not with God, for *All* things are possible with God.

What an assurance! He places us upon the Rock of the Salvation of God. And resting in the shadow of this Rock, our storm tossed craft of life finds peace and rest at last.

"What seek ye?" Ah, yes, what blessed peace we have when we can say, "The Savior, Lord."

I haven't meant to write so much, but it just seemed that I was full to overflowing with this thought and couldn't seem to find a stopping place.

When one says, "Religion is definitely going out," I wonder just what they mean. I think it applies to people who say "God is dead." They never had God to begin with or He wouldn't be dead to them, and if one truly had a good religious life (true religion, that is) it would never "go out." You cannot lose faith in God; if you do, you never had it to start with and you cannot lose something you never had.

I desire to give all the praise to God, for it was He that enabled me to put my thoughts in writing.

Your little Sister in Hope,
Ruth Lucht

P. S. Since writing the above I received my February *Signs*. What a wonderful uplift I received from the various articles and letters, especially Sister Crawford's and Brother Berry's experiences; to say nothing of all the others. Truly I feasted as I always do, but somehow I was made to rejoice that the Lord had seen fit to lead me

to a people like the Old Baptists, and to have a home with them; and I am made to desire to help make it possible for others to get such a wonderful paper, filled with nourishment for the soul. Please use the enclosed check wherever you see fit.

May the Lord bless and keep all you editors, so the *Signs* may continue to go out to the poor and needy in Christ.

Love,
Sister Ruth

NEW VERNON MEETING

The Lord willing, there will be an all-day meeting at the New Vernon Meeting House, New Vernon N. Y. on Saturday June 3, 1967.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

Elder A. J. Slauson

PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING CORRECTION

In the April issue on page 90, and in the first paragraph of editorial, it should read, "them also I must bring," instead of "them also I can bring." The "can bring" certainly does not express the truth here. We are at a loss to know how this was overlooked in reading the proof. — J. D. W.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Healthy Plains, Wilson County, N. C. the 5th Sunday in April. The church is located about two miles west of Rock Ridge, N. C. which is on N. C. 42.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

ANNUAL MEETING

The White Water Primitive Baptist Church, Tinsman, Arkansas, holds her Annual Meeting the first Sunday in July, and Saturday before. The church is located two miles northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, at the Watson Cemetery. Every other month of the year we meet on the fourth Sunday afternoons at 2 p. m. Visitors are welcome to meet with us. Refreshments will be served at noon both days.

Elder David Turner, Pastor
Ross Watson, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND (To March 1, 1967)

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Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.....	10.00
Mrs. L. A. Calvert, Ark.....	5.00
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PLEASE NOTE: We hope the brethren will send notices of associations and other meetings which they desire published, at least six weeks before the publication date of the *Signs*; otherwise we may not be able to include them in the issue desired. Send such notices to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

— Editors

EDITORIAL

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

Sometime ago we received a request to write on the above scripture. I realize my inability to write to His glory, and the comfort and consolation of people, unless guided by our dear Lord.

Our correspondent seemed to have certain questions in mind relative to discipline in the gospel church, by the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles. We would do well to read the preceding verse that we may have a clear view of what the apostle had reference to: “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” (7th verse) And then, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.”

The expression, “Yesterday, and today, and for ever,” refers to the past, the present, and the future. How important it is to be blessed to see Him in every dispensation: whether it be the Law, the Prophets, or the Gospel; or the hope of his second coming in glory, to raise the dead. In every generation Jesus has been seen in his own light: even as a man sees the natural sun in its own light. A God given faith centers every Hope, Anticipation, Joy, and Consolation in the same Person, regardless of in which generation. In the first chapter of Hebrews, Jesus is brought wonderfully to view as the one by whom God has spoken to us; as the one that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

This presentation of Jesus in person, was not contradictory to the prophet’s presentation of him under the Old Dispensation: It was bringing fully to view Him who had been prophesied of in types and shadows under the law: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”

The apostle throughout the epistle to the Hebrews, shows the pre-eminence of Christ, our great High Priest, over Aaron, the priest under the law, (who was a type of Jesus,) by His entering heaven once by his own blood, with eternal redemption; whereas the high priest under the law went year by year into the tabernacle made with hands, offering the blood of the various sacrifices — which was a remembrance of sin from year to year. Jesus our law keeper, who offered himself without spot to God, purges the conscience of his people from dead works, to serve the living God, by the application of His atoning blood to the sinner; but the ceremonial and sacrificial law made nothing perfect.

Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant, which was established upon better promises than the Old Covenant, obtained a more excellent ministry than all the ministers under the law, and brought in everlasting salvation for his chosen people, by honoring the law in his life, keeping it perfectly for his people; and dying under its just demands in our room and stead. Thus the New Covenant is manifested, and His laws are written in their hearts and put in their minds; and he says, “I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and

every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

My dear readers, the question may arise whether Christ appeared under the law dispensation less glorious and beautiful to his people, than he did to his disciples while he was upon the earth. My answer would be, No! A God given faith has always viewed Him as the only hope of hell deserving sinners. This lovely hymn expresses this sentiment; and the faith of God's humble poor acknowledges it:

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty word:
Abra'm to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by th'eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

Abraham saw the day of Jesus: he saw the day of Jesus and was glad. How wonderful it was that God's servant Abraham could behold all the beauty of Jesus by faith! He saw the gospel day, and beheld the Lamb of God: he viewed all the merit of Jesus as his salvation. This view caused him to seek a different kind of city — different from any he had ever known: a city which had foundation whose builder and maker was God. Throughout the ages all the people of God, being called out of the world and by faith given a precious view of Jesus, have manifested that they seek a heavenly country: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God.

The only way there can be a people in heaven of whom God is not ashamed, is by He himself providing the way: bringing salvation to them by their redemption in Jesus Christ, and revealing this salvation by the Holy Spirit, keeping them by his own power, and preparing

them for heaven and immortal glory.

How wonderful and effectual was the work that caused Moses to forsake Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. Moses did not see Jesus as others saw him while he walked upon the earth, but he saw him by faith. Jesus was the fourth one with the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. That is why the hair of their heads was not singed, and there was no smell of fire upon their clothing.

The Lord's servant Job saw him as his redeemer who would stand upon the earth at the latter day. This glorious view of him by faith caused him to say, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." We follow our dear Saviour to that passage in the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, and hear the assurance of God as it related to the perfect salvation through Jesus; and hear him saying to his people, "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

The anti-type cannot be less than the type. When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. In full accord with the covenant promises of God given under the law, a virgin conceived and brought forth a son. The message that Joseph received of the angel, was that Mary would bring forth a son, and his name would be called Jesus: for he should save his people from their sins. He took not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. He was described by the Apostle Paul as the only Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He took part of the flesh and blood of his people; and being born of a woman, he came under the law with his people to redeem them

from its curse.

Though Christ's glory was veiled in human flesh when he made his advent into the world, his glory and power was seen and felt by those who were called to follow him. It was not necessary for him to die and go to heaven, to have his glory and power manifested to his own people. When he entered into Jerusalem, those whose eyes had been opened to see the King in his beauty, spread their garments in his pathway, "crying, blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord." His mission was aptly described in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, where he speaks of his work: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God: to comfort all that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: that they might be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."

As we follow him here, we follow one who was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; yet we behold one whom the wind and the sea obeyed; one who said, "All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth." And, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." In giving them eternal life, Jesus manifested his wondrous power. No poor sinner that was called to him, ever questioned his power. The devils obeyed him; they had no power beyond that allotted them.

Jesus called men to preach his everlasting gospel. The same power that called them also qualified them. He said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It was never necessary for anyone who was called to preach the gospel, to attend schools of men. The things they were to preach, were revealed to them by the power that called

them. Thus Paul determined to know nothing among those to whom he preached, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He counted all things but loss because of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

We hear Jesus crying out on the cross, "It is finished." When he hung on the cross, forsaken of God and men, in his precious body prepared by the Father, to pay our debt, we hear him cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

"Twas then the Father gave the stroke,
That justice did decree:
All nature felt the dreadful stroke,
When Jesus died for me."

In a few moments the Father appears again: His sufferings are over, and heaven is in view; and he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

I cannot leave my dear Saviour here — he has only paid the debt: He was delivered for our offences, but he must be raised for our justification. We must be freed from the power of the grave by his resurrection. Though all the powers of men were arrayed to thwart the resurrection of Jesus — the king's seal was placed upon the tomb, a great stone rolled there, and soldiers placed to watch the scene — when the appointed hour of his resurrection arrived, the soldiers became as dead men, and the body of Jesus arose from the tomb. The soldiers were instructed to report that his disciples had stolen his body by night: those who would deny his resurrection in the same body could be classed with the Roman soldiers. Jesus arose from the dead in the same body in which he died; and his body saw no corruption. He talked with his disciples after he arose, was with them forty days, and ate with them; and said to them, ". . . handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." He appeared to them on different occasions after his resurrection, and was seen also of above five hundred brethren at once.

Now we arrive to where we await the adoption, to-wit the redemption of our bodies. That will be when He comes

again, without sin unto salvation. The last record we have of his presence among his disciples, was when he was taken up into heaven, as recorded in the first chapter of Acts: "And while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

This is the same Jesus — yesterday, and today and forever; the same one mentioned in Thessalonians, where his second coming is described as, ". . . the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God . . ." "To them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." To lay aside the personal coming of Jesus for his people, would destroy every vestige of hope a believer has. In Revelation we read, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Whether we receive the doctrine, the order, or discipline from God's word, it is the same Jesus. Paul could tell the church that he laid the foundation as a wise master builder; but in the same breath he says that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. All the doctrine and order of the church of God was given by Jesus, delivered by his chosen vessels. Jesus could tell Peter that he was giving him the keys of the kingdom; but he also showed him that he himself must be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

So, we are exhorted when listening to men delivering the word of God, to consider the end of their conversation, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. Paul wrote, "But though we, or an angel from heaven,

preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Such as preach any other gospel, we are commanded not to receive them neither bid them God speed.

When we follow the faith of those who have spoken unto us the word of God, the gospel of the Son of God, we find that Jesus is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever — the same in every dispensation unto his people.

D. V. S.

EDITORIAL

DEACONS

I have an urgent request from the Baptist people in Kentucky to write an article on the duties of deacons. I feel that many are qualified far better than I am for the task, but I will do the best that I can. I ask your kind watchcare over me as I write, and your supplications at a throne of grace in my behalf. If these are granted, I shall not have written in vain.

First, let me say that I do not have any thought that conflict has prompted this desire of these people. However, if there is an apprehension in anyone's mind concerning that phase of the matter, I suggest that you consult our dear brother and Elder, J. N. Darnall of Cadiz, Kentucky. I will say this: If I thought that his request was prompted by any thing other than the welfare of the saints and the glory of God, I would deny it. In days past and gone, I have thought right much in regard to the matter. I have met up with a lot of situations in the last thirty years in the ministry. Some of them have been trying; some have been puerile; some of them have been so contrary to the scriptures that the promulgator should have been called to a reckoning before the church. But by far the greater part of the deacons in the churches under my servitude have been godly and well meaning in their efforts to serve the church and the Master.

Many duties that the churches have laid on the deacons, and that they, in too many cases, have assumed, do not have a thus saith the Lord for. I will try to point these matters out as I write. These pointed statements will probably antagonize some; of that I leave in the hands of the Master. First, and probably the most dangerous and sacrilegious of all the assigned or assumed duties of deacons, is that they are the boss in the church. Second, and not a whit behind the other, is that they are to guard the pulpit, watch and control the minister. If these two assigned or assumed duties can be found in the New Testament I stand corrected and reprimanded.

“And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” Will you please read these two last verses of the 5th chapter of The Acts of the Apostles? Who was Luke writing about? Ponder my question well, dear brethren. Undoubtedly, he was writing about the apostles, and no less so the ministers of the gospel today. What were they doing? How busily engaged in it were they? If language means anything, they were carrying out a heavy schedule in the ministry. What did this bring about? “And in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows (the Grecians) were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” Please read the 6th chapter of these Acts.

At this particular time I want to call attention to Isaiah 32: 1st verse. A king is to reign in righteousness, but no less

so are princes to rule in judgment. There is one sense in which all the heirs of the kingdom are now reigning in judgment. they are made princes and given to judge. However, this must be understood as belonging exclusively to the Apostles. Under Zion's King their judgment is final. Bringing this judgment down to the time and matters of which we are treating, we find it was the apostles that thought to do something about the difficult situation that had come up. Unless we are prepared to reject and cast away all of the New Testament, this work must be accepted without reservation, as the ruling in judgment. Unless we do accept it as here laid down, anybody's opinion about deacons is as good as what we find in the Bible. I wonder if this rejection of their judgment is not the reason for all the confusion about their work.

Now what do we have? 1st. We have a murmur or complaint in Israel (in the church); a complaint that is disturbing to the welfare of the organization. Some of the famous commentators have made an effort to make this a common, uncalled-for quarrel among contending parties. Do you believe that? Is your perception of God such that He would move Luke to write this history about some ungodly quarrel among his people? If you have that kind of perception, it widely differs with mine. To me, this was a matter that was worthy of being corrected. The murmur was justified; it called for decency and order, without which no organization, be it secular or sacred, will long continue. What could be done? Who had authority to do anything? Where could the overburdened apostles get relief? 2nd. We have the twelve calling a special meeting. There has not been precept nor example of doing anything like unto this. The reason for this is because that the need had not arisen. In this called meeting, the apostles felt it unreasonable to leave the preaching of the word to wait on the tables. The original word means that it is not pleasing to do this. In the correction of this complaint, the correction is the only one that will ever be needed in the history

of the church. The administering of the daily alms to the poor, the serving at tables of all kinds, were placed in the hands of those seven men, the gathering of this common stock for this purpose, all, was brought into consideration at this time, and placed in the categorical work of the deacons. 3rd. The apostles did not take the right of the church away from them. The church was ordered to look out and select the seven men. However, we must follow that up by saying that they retained the right to judge their selection. That is still followed today in the Old Baptist church. The church makes the selection, but the ones selected must meet the approval of the presbytery. As in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the church, they were to be careful in their choice. They must be careful in their selection because the work to which they were being appointed required careful attention. These men were to gather the alms, they were to wait on the tables; that is, they were to distribute all of the money in the church. There is not any decency nor any order in slipping money in the minister's hand. The church is entitled to know about all of the money that is used in the church in any way, and the way for her to know, which way is given us in this 6th chapter of Acts, is by everything passing through the hands of the deacons. Brother Darnell requested specifically to know the duties of the deacon. This duty can never be performed by him as designated by the Holy Ghost until the church also does her duty first. If I were permitted to make one change among our people today it would be that all money pass through the hands of the deacons. This is not to tell any church how much she is to give her minister; it is not to tell any church how much she should spend on the poor of the flock; it is not to tell any church how much she should spend in a new house of worship; it is not to tell any church as to whether she should have electric lights, water works, baptistry, or other things like unto that, but it is to say that the scriptural way (and thus the only right way) is for the money to pass through the

hands of those that were designated to handle such matters. This is not what I say, but it is what the apostles said.

By this work of the apostles they did not surrender and give up their right, should the occasion arise, of the ministration of alms, the waiting on the widows and orphans and poor in general, of ministering at the communion table. This was not to take away the former duties of the ministers; it was not to make them have less to do, but it was done that they might have more time for preaching; it was not done to take away their concern for the poor, but it was done that they might have more time for preaching to the poor. What a lovely picture is this: The minister continually, without ceasing, in prayer and in the ministry of the word. Finances in the hands of the deacons; administering of these finances in their hands; the looking out for the finances in the hands of these appointed servants; the judgment of who and how much that any recipient of church welfare is to get, in the hands of their servants, the deacons; the looking out for the welfare of the minister in the hands of the deacons.

There is a double honor that the Holy Ghost has bestowed upon the minister. (I Tim. 5: 17, 19; 2nd Pet. 2: 11) How unscriptural it is for one that the church has thought to be of good report and full of the Holy Ghost for him to assume authority over the pulpit or the minister. In no sense whatever can the Bible be construed to teach any such. He is not in authority over the minister but he is a subordinate servant of the church. He is not to dictate what the minister preaches, how he preaches, how long he preaches, where he goes in his ministry of the word. The Bible is as silent as the cemetery in regard to such things. However, it must be insisted that there is a special honor accorded to the deacons. (see Phil. 1: 1) And, too, it must be remembered that the deacon does have every right that any other member of the church has to call in question what the pastor or any other member of the church does. This calling in question of any member must be be-

fore the whole body, whereas, his waiting on tables in all of the various forms is carried out by previous authority given, subject only to the final word of the church in the reception of their reports to the body.

In the first letter to Timothy we have some sweeping and blanketing rules about the qualifications of deacons. While Paul was not a member of the apostles when the matter of deacons was first brought before the church, there is not any variance in what he personally declares to be their qualification and what the twelve in unison said about those qualifications. These qualifications are not **duties**, but they are prerequisite to any duty being performed in a scriptural way. These several qualifications are laid down together . (I Tim. 3: 8, 13)

How prone we are to jesting and fool's talk. Jestng about alms for the poor; jesting about waiting on the communion table; jesting about the finances of the church; jesting about "paying the preacher"; these things do not belong to the deacons office. As there is not any jesting mentioned in Christ nor his apostles, there is not any place for it in the duties of the deacons. He should not be chosen unless he is grave to begin with. These deacons were to be already in possession of a good name; they were to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Nothing is said about making him good, but he is to have a good name before he is assigned a place among the deacons. A jewel of gold in a swine's snout is out of place (Pro. 11: 22), and a deacon ministering in the kingdom of heaven with levity on his lips is **not doing the duties of a deacon**.

The appointment of a man to the deacon's office should not be upheld if there is proof that he is doubletongued. As certain as a man has this about him, he is not a fit subject for dealing with the unfortunate ones of the flock. He cannot do his duty and have this trouble. Let us all understand here. We are not, as the apostle was not, dealing with perfection in the flesh. We are dealing with a habit of life; we are not dealing with an absence of sin, but we are dealing

with a reign of sin. Where doubletongue talking is the habitual way of life in a man, he is not a fit subject for a deacon.

Our brother wanted to know the duty of a deacon. Let me point out that a man under the influence of wine (strong drink) is not capable of handling any kind of business in a natural way. How much more so is it in regard to this business in the church. The church may do it, but it would be **the height of rebellion** to select such a man to this high office. The church would not be doing her duty, and the appointee could not do the duties of his office. If a man takes this wine as a beverage, he is given to too much wine; if he takes it as a medicine, either as a preventive or remedial, he is qualified, but here, as in all cases of Christian obedience, he is to avoid the appearance of evil in this matter.

If a man is slack about small things, he will be slack about greater things. It is not wise to place a burden of dispensing to the poor when that man has a love for filthy lucre. A greedy man will act greedy. A good man, out of the goodness of his heart (not his fleshly heart), will do good (as a habit) unto all men. One that has the love of God in his heart will have a love for the brethren there. (I John 5:1) His action toward the widow, the orphan, the feeble, the poor in general, the pastor, will be handled exactly as the handler would desire to be rendered unto himself, should reverses in life come to where it was needful.

There are two distinct and outstanding items in the New Testament in which we have flagrantly discarded and tread them under foot. The first of these is doing what our Saviour commanded in regard to offences between saints. The second is like unto it, to wit, declaring openly and above board (and boasting of it when need be arose) that we did not believe nor practice anything save that which was in the Scriptures. (see the various Articles of Faith of the many associations in America) These deacons were to hold the mystery of the faith (practice, doctrine) in a pure conscience. If their brethren chose them from among the people of God to serve tables,

it was indeed a great honor and blessing. To look at the travel of Stephen and Phillip (and I am equally sure in the others, would show much and high regard towards this mystery. The scriptures would teach us from beginning to end of how little they knew, **but would never authorize them to say that they did not know.** It would cause them, when selected for this momentous work, to question their ability, but it would not cause them, to question the decision of the body of Christ, the apostles in judgment, the work of the presbytery that set them a part to the work. This pure conscience is not related to the conscience that we are told "to let your conscience be your guide." That is a false promise, and regardless of how we reason from it, we will always arrive at a false conclusion. The pure conscience of the deacons is coupled with the pure mind of the saints. (Titus 1: 15; 2 Peter 3: 1; I John 3: 3) This pure conscience will not permit going beyond this faith (practice, doctrine) in the doing of the work of a deacon. There can not be a glossing over, a covering up, an adding to nor subtracting from of these duties. A pure conscience will not say that: We the board of deacons are to rule the church, to boss the minister, to watch the pulpit. An impure conscience will add to the written word, and it will take from it at the pleasure of its impurity.

These deacons must first be proved. This is a matter for deep concern to us all. The presbytery must never lay hands suddenly on any man, whether bishop or deacon. Novices and upstarts and unlearned men are to be held in abeyance by the church until they (both the church and presbytery) are satisfied about their qualifications. This being proved is not as a deacon but as a disciple or Christian. There is a sort or kind that creeps in for nefarious purposes (2 Tim. 3: 6), and these are to be waited on that the church may find out what sort of mind that they have. (I Cor. 3: 13) They are not to be put in the harness to make them a deacon. The greatest monstrosity ever palmed off on the church has been the harnessing of the

burden of office on brethren who were otherwise useful and lovely. After proof of qualification has been given, **then** is he to use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. This "being found blameless" is not a finding of the would-be-deacon, but a finding of the church, a finding that he has proven his qualification, that he is blameless in seeking the office. I will in the future, as blessed of God, look further into the qualifications and duties of this important official in the church.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

I PETER 3: 8

"Finally, be ye all of one mind."

This eminent apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, in common with all the other apostles of the Lamb, was invested with divine authority to establish in the church of God every principle of faith and order which can ever be lawfully entertained in his kingdom. No religious organization can ever be recognized as a church of Christ, or a branch of the church of Christ, unless standing in the apostles' doctrine, conforming to their decisions, listening to their instructions and accepting all their decisions in judgement on all parts of the law of Christ. The apostle John lays down this rule of judgment, this infallible and everlasting test of fellowship, and criterion by which the saints of God shall know, without the least shade of uncertainty, who of all the professing world are of God, and who are of the world, and not of God. He says, "We (that is, the apostles, and the apostolic church, which holds the apostles' doctrine and order,) are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." "They (that is, they whose spirit and doctrine are not of God,) are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them."—

I John 4: 5, 6.

To hear the apostles, in a scriptural sense, is to receive their instructions, accept and abide by their decisions in all they have said, and to obey their injunctions and heed all their admonitions. He that is of God will do all this, and if any who profess godliness do not in this sense hear the apostles, it is because they are not of God, but are of the world. This decision is infallible, whether applied to individuals or to churches. By this rule the church is commanded to "try the spirits," and by it they are to discriminate between truth and error; between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world, or of antichrist.

In conformity with this unerring rule let us examine the admonition of Peter, which we have placed at the head of this article. It is given as a finality, admitting of no amendment, of no abridgment, of no alteration. "Finally." This word is used not only to express in this place irrevocable decision, but also legitimate deduction from the instructions contained in the context, in which the duties of all the saints to God and to men are distinctly and authoritatively laid down; as citizens of the world, to kings and governors, magistrates and rulers, of wives to husbands, children to parents, and of servants to masters. These are the instructions immediately preceding, and the "finally" of our text is expressive of the general summing up of what they amount to, or the unanimity of consent with which they must be accepted by all who are of God; all who are to be held in fellowship as "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience," &c.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind." Unanimity of sentiment is indispensable to church fellowship. Of the church, in her original organization at Pentecost, we are informed that her constituents gladly received, or heard, the doctrine of the apostles, that their union was so perfect that they were of one heart and one soul. They on whom God had poured out his Spirit were pricked in their hearts, gladly received the word of the apostles,

were baptized in that faith and order, continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. They could not possibly be in the latter, if not in the former, for if they were of God they would hear the apostles, according to the infallible rule copied from the apostle John, and if any one of them stood not in the apostles' doctrine, his spirit was of the world, and not of God. No one was allowed to dissent from the apostles' decisions on any one of those positions taken by them, on the plea that he had a right to his opinion independent of the apostles, or of the church of God in which apostolic rule and order are maintained. The apostles have not so decided, that if any man teach otherwise from their instructions that it is only a matter of opinion, and he has a right to such opinion, and his brethren and the church should tolerate such independence. No one is to be recognized as being of God who does not yield every opposite opinion, and bow to the decision of the holy apostles. Paul says, If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, &c., he is proud, knowing nothing; that is, knowing nothing of the things of the Spirit of God. How can he, if his spirit is of this world, and not of God? No man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. They are spiritually discerned, therefore the natural man cannot know them, and consequently he knows nothing, and in his blindness and ignorance he dotes about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, &c. From all such the command of God through the apostles is, "Withdraw thyself," and all who are of God will hear this last, as well as all other of the apostles' commands and decisions, admonitions and exhortations.

As all the fraternity of the household of God are required to be of one mind, as our apostle has decided, then it follows, of course, that no member of the brotherhood has a right, or can be tolerated by the church, in holding sentiments or opinions discordant with the

mind of the church, which is based upon the decisions of the apostles. How can the church of God be distinguished from the world, or from antichrist, if there be no unity of faith, no unanimity of sentiment, no agreement in doctrine and practice? It is indispensable to the existence of an orderly gospel church that all her members should be of one mind, and to be of but one mind; it is equally indispensable that all should be of one spirit. If all are born of the Spirit, and led by the Spirit of God, then all will have the mind of Christ, and in that mind there is unity. That mind is always in perfect harmony with all the teachings of the apostles, and will recognize their high authority, as inspired judges of the spiritual tribes, to establish forever the order of the church of Christ.

But, one demands of us, Have I not a right to my own opinion? Must I pin my faith on the sleeve of another? While we believe that all intelligent beings must have settled convictions and opinions of their own, and as members of the human family no man or set of men has a right to domineer over the conscience or judgment of his or their fellowmen; and while as citizens of states and nations freedom of thought and independence of opinion is the inalienable right of every man, so far as relates to the authority of his fellowmen to control his thoughts, provided, however, that he, in his freedom of thought, does not infringe upon the equal rights of others, by entertaining unwarrantable thoughts or malicious feelings against his neighbors. Yet, while admitting all this independence of thought to men of the world, we at the same time hold and contend that, as a member of the body of Christ, no one has a right to entertain thoughts or opinions independently of the faith of the church to which he belongs. This point the apostle has settled in our text: "Be ye all of one mind." When called out of the world we were commanded to renounce the world and its doctrine, spirit and opinions, and on the profession of faith of Christ we professed to gladly receive the doctrine of the apostles, to take on us the yoke of Christ, to learn

of him, and to take his word as the man of our counsel, the standard of our faith and the rule of our practice. In short, we relinquished all claim to an independent position, we gave ourselves to the Lord, and by his will, to one another, were baptized into one body, surrendered our individuality, became all one in Christ, a perfect unit; no more our own, for we were bought with a price; members of Christ, and members of one another. No reservation of rights which we did not hold in common with the church of the living God. As to the right of thought, take for example the case of Peter with Simon Magus. How terribly sharp was his rebuke: I perceive that the thought of thy heart is not right. Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Upon the plea of independence and right to think differently from the doctrine of the church, how is heresy to be detected and disposed of? The divine rule enjoins on the church to reject an heretic after the first and second admonition. Heresy is understood to be thoughts and words which are opposite to, or not in harmony with, the doctrine of Christ, as laid down by the apostles and held by the church. They were heretics who resisted Paul, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and Paul describes them as being of the sort which creep into houses, who lead captive silly women. He says they are heady, high minded, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power (or authority over them) thereof, and he adds, From such turn away. Timothy is commanded to "shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness; and their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." There are many such examples of heresy recorded, and the peremptory command in every case is, "From such withdraw thyself."

Now it must be seen that the church

of God has no right to tolerate a diversity of sentiments or opinions on any matter of faith or practice which has been established by the authority of Christ, through his holy apostles. While on every matter only involving personal interests or rights we are admonished to be lenient, kind, forbearing, longsuffering and gentle, we are not allowed to trifle with the order of the church as positively established by divine authority. Those who are unwilling to yield their own independence, or who claim the right to dissent from the rules and authority of Christ in his church, should never be admitted to membership. Except they become as little children they cannot truly enter the kingdom of God; this is an indispensable prerequisite to membership in the church of God. No church can be all of one mind where the rule is not strictly adhered to.

It has been thought by some that there are exceptions to these divinely established rules; that the church has no authority over our worldly matters, such as belong to our domestic or political relations with mankind. If that be so, why did our Lord require that we render to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and to God the things that belong to God? The apostles have laid down rules which are binding on all christians, to regulate all their social, civil, political and domestic relations in the church and in the world. This fact is overlooked by many, and quite repudiated by others, but it is nevertheless true. **They have given no rules for the world to be governed by; the world is not responsible to the church, nor the church to the world; the kingdom of Christ is not of the world, nor are the governments of the world of the church; they are quite separate and distinct.** The apostles only sit on their twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. "Them that are without God judgeth." All within the precincts of the kingdom of Christ are in their social relations to associate only as the apostles have directed. This department embraces the social relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, people and

magistrates, rulers and ruled, and we hold that the apostles have clearly laid down and explained to the church of God the laws of Christ, commanding christians to be governed by them. By this law the christian can have but one wife; the parent must provide for those of his household, or he denies the faith. Children must honor and obey their parents; servants must honor and faithfully serve their masters, and every christian, by the law of Christ, is to submit to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to the governor, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well, and every soul is to be in subjection to the higher powers. They are commanded to pay tribute, and, as good law-abiding citizens, render honor to whom honor, and tribute to whom tribute is due.

Therefore if any man seeks to evade the laws of the house of God by denying the right of the church, or of his brethren, to meddle with his politics, or his secret lieges, or oath-bound covenants, it is an evident mark of disloyalty to the King of Zion, and a virtual repudiation of the authority of Christ in his church over his members. Can the admonition of our text be duly regarded if conflicting views be entertained by her members? Is it possible they can all be of one mind if a portion of the members are allowed to deny responsibility to the church, and regard any part of their walk and deportment as being beyond the jurisdiction of the church to which dissenters profess to belong? Can two or more walk together except they are agreed? To be all of one mind in the church, as the divine law requires, can only be practicable where all the members are required to receive and continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, withdrawing from all who depart from the faith.

We cannot repudiate the apostles' instructions, decisions, admonitions and exhortations and still be a church of Christ, nor can we tolerate in our churches such as the apostles command

us to withdraw ourselves from, without repudiating them and their doctrine; nor can we repudiate the apostles, as enthroned in judgment over the church of Christ, and still retain Christ as our King; for when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, then shall his apostles also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. **If the apostles do not sit over us in judgment, then neither does Christ preside over us as members of his spiritual kingdom.**

The church of God is the body of Christ. The necessity of unity in the body, harmony in all the members, is strikingly set forth in the figure of a perfect body. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, and if the members of Christ be not all of one mind, where is our stability? If in the body one hand claims to be independent of the body, not moved by the same volition, but by some spasmodic or rebellious impulse, it cannot work in harmony with the other. If one foot resolves to journey southward and the other northward, the rebellion of both against the government of the body would prevent the travel of the whole body. Or, if to compromise the matter, the feet be each in turn to have its way, the unstable body alternately swayed by its refractory members would, like the pendulum of a clock, vibrate back and forth, and make no progress. But the rule to be applied in case of such disorder and schism is, If thy foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; or if it be thy hand, or the eye, or any other member, and let all be of one mind.

Let those who are refractory, if they cannot by gospel rule be reclaimed, go to their own company, where they can enjoy their independence of the body among their kindred spirits. Of the church it is said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye (all her members) are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1865. May the Spirit apply these things powerfully in our hearts. They are unchange-

able throughout all time. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JAMES LESTER BUTCHER

Brother James Lester Butcher was born December 10, 1889, and passed from this life November 3, 1966, at his home in Danville, Virginia, at the age of seventy-six years. He was the son of Benjamin Thomas and Lucy J. (Hodnett) Butcher.

He leaves to mourn his departure, his wife, Mabel Parcell Butcher; one daughter, Virginia Minson; two grandchildren and two great grandchildren, of Alexandria, Virginia. Also a brother, Andrew Butcher, and five sisters: Ida Reilly, Nannie Varnier, Lillie Sears, Lena Butterworth, and Annie Spahr, of Richmond, Virginia.

He joined Richmond Primitive Baptist Church in 1920, and was made a deacon in 1921; which office he filled until the time of his death. He was a kind and gentle husband, a good father, and a lovely brother. He loved his church and his brethren, and was a faithful member; and a firm believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone. We feel our loss is his eternal gain; and that he is asleep in Jesus: blessed sleep, waiting the glorious resurrection, when he will be raised by his Saviour, be like him and be satisfied, in that world that has no end.

His funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne, and he was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

Written by his wife,
Mabel P. Butcher

FLEM WATT PRILLMAN

Flem Watt Prillman, was born October 29, 1873. He was called from this world December 22, 1966, making his stay on earth 93 years. He was the son of Isaac and Bettie Via Prillman.

He was married to Miss Ruth Abigail Smith, December 27, 1900. To their union were born two daughters: Mrs. Dora Lewis of Martinsville, Virginia; Miss Neppie Prillman of Henry, Virginia; three sons: Blandford I. Prillman of Rocky Mount, Virginia; Amos Prillman of Henry, Virginia; and David Prillman of Henry, Virginia; one sister, Mrs. Emma Hagwood, Richmond, Virginia. Six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Union on September 22, 1900. He was or-

dained Deacon in 1904, and was interested in the welfare of the church, and his seat was filled as long as he was able to get there. He was straightforward in his personality. He believed in salvation by grace and grace alone. We feel that he died in the faith that was once delivered to the saints; and feel he had a sweet hope that the Lord would raise his sleeping dust when He shall come in the clouds of glory.

His funeral was held at Knob Church, December 24, 1966, by Elders Leonard Brammer and Rufus Brown. He was laid to rest by his companion in the family cemetery.

On his last birthday attended by Elder Leonard Brammer and others, among the songs they sang, and he hummed afterwards, was: When I can read my title clear, to mansion in the sky, I'll bid farewell to every fear and wipe my weeping eyes.

May the Lord give us at Union strength to look to him for all our help.

Written by one who loved him,

A sister in hope,
Pearle Shelton

SPARREL CLAYTON RAKES

Brother Sparrel Clayton Rakes was born January 2, 1895, and departed this life October 31, 1966, at the age of 71 years, 9 months, and 28 days.

He was the son of the late William and Lillie Nolan Rakes of Patrick County, Virginia, and was married to Rada Lou Martin on December 29, 1920. To their union six children were born. He leaves to mourn his passing his devoted wife, three sons, Chester E. Rakes, Fieldale, Virginia; Willis C. Rakes, Stuart, Virginia; Ralph Rakes, Richmond, Virginia; and three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Via, Collinsville, Virginia; Mrs. Vera Bryant, Fieldale, Virginia; and Mrs. Mary Lois Simmons, Vienna, Virginia. Also thirteen grandchildren; two brothers, G. T. Rakes, Floyd, Virginia; Walter Rakes, Ferrum, Virginia; and five sisters, Mrs. Lelia Koger, Fieldale, Virginia; Mrs. Minnie Wood, Franklin, North Carolina; Mrs. Eugene Culler, Collinsville, Virginia; Mrs. C. L. Turner, Collinsville, Virginia; and Mrs. Roy Bennett, Glade Hill, Virginia.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Union July 27, 1963, and was baptized August 24, 1963, by his pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer. He died in Veterans Hospital, Salem, Virginia, after a long illness. His funeral was conducted at Union Church by his pastor, Elder Leonard Brammer, and Elder R. A. May. Burial was in the church cemetery. Brother Rakes was a faithful member of the Church and attended the meetings as much as

his health would permit. May the Lord richly bless and comfort all that mourn and cause the Church to be submissive to his will.

Written by a sister in hope,
Clora S. Akers

BERTHA E. HANLEY

As it has pleased the Lord to take from our midst our beloved friend, Bertha E. Hanley, we humbly trust that we may be given minds to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Mrs. Hanley was born October 7, 1880, and departed this life on January 24, 1967, making her stay here a little more than 86 years. She was the daughter of the late William Edward and Mary Isabelle Baker. She was married to Clarence W. Hanley who departed this life many years ago. To this union was born one son, who also is deceased. Surviving are one grandson, John H. Acton, and one great grandson who reside in New Jersey. Also she is survived by two nephews.

Mrs. Hanley, though never a member of the visible church, attended the meetings as long as her health would permit; and the writer, having visited her many times, always found her anxious to hear about the meetings. On one occasion, shortly before her death, she said that though she could not be with us in person, her mind was with us. We feel that she knew the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and her hope was in his mercies.

Funeral services were held at the Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin, Md., by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery of the same town.

May it please the Lord to reconcile her many friends who knew and loved her so dearly, to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

LULA ELLIS THOMAS

At the age of eighty-one, on the night of January 24, 1967, God's mercy overshadowed my precious mother, and relieved her in death. She suffered for four years with a lingering illness, bearing it with much patience — never complaining, but many times would say how good the Lord had been to her. We loved her dearly, but God loved her best. Her sweet smile manifested that Christlike spirit that dwelt within her. It was hard to give her up, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Though her weak voice will be heard no more,

she will long be remembered.

She was born March 9, 1885, and was married to Eason Coburn Thomas in 1905; who preceded her in death by four years. To this union were born seven children: four died in infancy. Surviving are three daughters, one brother, and eight grandchildren.

Mother united with Contentnea Church in North Carolina some forty years ago, and was baptized by Elder George Boswell. She remained a faithful and loving member until her Heavenly Father called her home.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Paul Lamm, Elder S. R. Boykin, and Elder D. B. Stokes, and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery, awaiting the resurrection morning.

Written by her daughter who loved her, and misses her very much.

Mrs. Vivian Hardee

IN MEMORY OF
MR. GEORGE DAVID RUDD

"Mr. Dave," as he was known from the mountains to the seashore by the Old School Baptists, never united with the church though he proved his abundant love for her, not in word alone, but in deed. His donations to the church at Bush Arbor were not in money alone, but a great many days of his seventy-six years upon this earth were spent on the construction and preservation of the building and grounds.

He was born in the Bush Arbor community and attended regularly from his youth up, being a useful man, for the Lord so graciously blessed him with a talent unsurpassed among his people. He was not only song leader at Bush Arbor for forty-five years, but wherever he went among the people of this faith he freely shared his talent. The number of times he left his family and farm to assemble in funerals and comfort the sick with the songs of Zion, is known only to the Lord of Glory.

Few people have been more closely associated with their pastor and shown each other more love and respect than "Mr. Dave" and Elder W. C. King, who stood so closely by in his last hours. "Mr. Dave" loved the song "When I Can Read My Title Clear," and we feel that when he reached his hand toward Heaven and spoke of the beauty he saw, he was "reading his title clear."

He leaves to mourn a devoted wife, Mrs. Nettie Simmons Rudd, and a lovely family of six children, Isaac and Earl Rudd of Burlington; and Willard Rudd of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; Mrs. Edna Aldridge and Mrs.

Eva Walker of Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; and Mrs. Mae Skeens of Burlington, N. C.; and one sister, Mrs. R. E. Miles of Burlington.

His funeral was conducted December 9, 1966 at Bush Arbor by Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elders Ernest Oakley, Wallis Smith, and Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a huge mound of beautiful flowers to rest from his labor and await the coming of the Lord.

Read and approved by the Church at Bush Arbor in her regular conference on February 11, 1967. A copy was ordered for our church records, a copy sent to the family and a copy sent to the *Signs* for publication. Written and presented to the Church by one who loved him dearly, Brother Clifton Robertson.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Church Clerk

ELDER JOSEPH OTIE CONNER

Elder Conner was born September 29, 1899, and died December 26, 1966. He was married to Miss Mary Sowers April 3, 1921; and to this union were born six children. Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Sowers Conner, Salem, Virginia; four daughters: Mrs. S. L. Semones, Roanoke, Virginia; Mrs. R. E. Craighead, Mrs. H. N. Hundley and Mrs. D. J. Conner, Salem, Virginia; two sons: W. T. and Junior Conner, Salem, Virginia. Surviving also are two sisters, Mrs. J. C. Woods and Mrs. E. G. Martin, Roanoke, Virginia; and two brothers: Jesse Conner, Elliston, Virginia and I. E. Conner, in Florida.

Elder Conner united with Little Hope Church, Roanoke County, Virginia, and was baptized into the fellowship of the church the 4th Sunday in November, 1936. He was ordained to the ministry on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in October, 1943. At the time of his passing he was serving Little Hope, Mt. View and County Line Churches; which he served well. No sacrifice was too great to hinder him from filling his appointments.

Funeral service was held at Salem Church, Floyd County, Virginia, December 28, 1966, by Elders C. E. Turner, J. L. Agee and B. O. Thompson. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, with his spirit returning to God who gave it, to await the coming of his Lord.

It can truly be said of Elder Conner that he fought a good fight, he kept the faith. Written by request of his wife.

(Elder) C. E. Turner

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1967

NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MEDITATIONS ON THE 23rd PSALM

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

What beautiful words! what a sweet thought! The Lord is our Shepherd. He watches over his little ones at all times. If we go astray, he rebukes us and shows us the error of our way. "We shall not want," for he wonderfully provides for us, both naturally and spiritually. He knows what we have need of; and he makes the way for us, when there seems to be no way out, and everything seems dark before us. He provides spiritual food for us when we are blessed with a hearing ear and an understanding heart; and when we hear the good sermons that are preached by our able ministers, we are fed spiritually, and rejoice in the gospel of His love.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." When we can meditate on the goodness of God, we realize how He has cared for us all the days of our lives, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins; and how he cares for us at all times, in sickness and in health. When we can feed on His word, how sweet to feel the refreshing; and when we can read his word with an understanding heart, having a revealing of those things to us, then we lie down in green pastures, tasting his goodness and mercy towards us. Then sometimes when we are in a great turmoil and know not

what to do, the Lord comes and calms our troubled hearts, and makes everything right, and we are calm, serene and peaceful: it is then we are led beside the still waters.

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Sometime we feel we are far from the Lord, and void of the Spirit. Our minds are not on spiritual things, and we are low in our feelings, feeling forsaken and alone. We are prone to stray from his way, for we are poor, weak beings: all of our strength is in him. But the Lord comes to our aid: He puts a new song in our mouth, praise in our hearts, and we are uplifted and made to know that we are not forsaken by him; and we follow in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. We are not interested in the pleasures and vanity the world has to offer, and we seek to follow after, and to hear more of the goodness and mercy of our Lord. How rich it is to feel the righteousness of our Lord when we are in the Spirit to rejoice in it. All of our righteousness is in him: we are all sinners, saved by his grace.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We have our troubles, trials and sorrows here in the world; and sometimes we seem so burdened with them that we know not which way to turn, but we are made to feel that no evil will befall us, for everything is in his hands; and he has promised never to leave nor forsake us. He will be with us in all our troubles until the end of this life, giving us courage and strength. The rod and staff the shepherd holds, comforts us: for it is his marvelous love and grace that abounds in our hearts, and sustains us at all times.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over." When we attend our meetings and hear the gospel, and are blessed to partake of the spiritual food that He prepares for us, the table is set before us to enjoy the contents thereof, we forget our enemies and worldly affairs. We partake of the good things sent us from above; and what a feast! He annoints our heads with oil of gladness and thanksgiving, and we partake of his blessings, and enjoy the sermons we hear, or the sweet meditations we have at times; and our cup runs over with joy and gladness in His love for us.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." His goodness follows us all our days, if we are his chosen vessels. When we were dead in trespasses and sins, it was only his goodness and mercy that kept us, and showed us the ruined state we were in; and then revealed his Son as our Saviour. He raised us up, and placed our feet upon a solid rock, and put a new song in our mouth, giving us a precious hope of heaven. We feel unworthy and undeserving of this great love he has for us in leading us to the house of the Lord (the church). We can never praise him enough for his goodness and mercy.

What comfort and peace to follow our Lord in baptism! It is very sweet to us, and we are more reconciled in our feelings, and have a more completeness in spiritual things. When we go into the watery grave and rise up again to a newness of life, following our shepherd through green pastures, resting in his love by the still waters (his grace), there is no greater joy for us here below. Then, after this life, when we are called to our heavenly home, where all of the redeemed of the Lord are, we shall see our Shepherd face to face, and be forever with him, there will be no more sorrow, pain or death. What wonderful words for those who have a precious hope in the Lord!

Written in love,

Mrs. Thelma Reece Wilson,
618 Cardinal Place, Apt. 2,
Danville, Va. 24541

A PREDESTINARIAN

Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio
1741 Davis RD.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I have a desire this sabbath morning to write some of the thoughts which are on my mind. I am at home alone since my family went visiting: they wanted me to go along, but I had a feeling I wanted to be alone. I wanted to meditate upon the goodness of God, of how merciful he has been to me in sparing my unprofitable life. It was our meeting time at Union Church, at Sharps Chapel, Tennessee, today, the second Saturday and Sunday in April. I wanted to be with them so badly, but I can't drive on long trips, and it is about three hundred miles from where I live in Ohio to the church where my membership is. The job I have requires me to be at work six and seven days a week. It seems I would give my right arm if I could be with my brothers and sisters often; and my desire is to travel and visit the churches in different parts of the country.

I read the *Signs of the Times*, which is so dear to my heart. I did not know of this paper until about three years ago. I read articles in it by people I have never seen, and I sometimes wonder how they tell what I believe better than I can myself. It gives me hope that their schoolmaster is mine. I joined a church which called themselves Primitive Baptists, who believe in a limited predestination; and I lived with them from 1930 until 1939. In 1954 I saw a minute of the Predestinarian Baptists, and I visited them the 2nd Sunday in September, 1954, and I heard them preach what I believed. I loved the people that called themselves Primitive Baptists, and I have nothing hard to say against them, except they preach a conditional God,

which He knows I do not believe. I was ordained to the ministry in July, 1966.

If God will bless me I want to write a few things I believe, and if you deem it according to the doctrine, would appreciate it if you will print it in the **Signs of the Times**. The God I believe in was before all things: all things were created by him, and they were created for a purpose — if they do not fulfill His purpose then He is not perfect in his work. Should we say that he created something he had no purpose in, we would charge him with folly. Before time began, even before the dust of the highest hills was laid, all things were present with him. He 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. At another place it is declared that he does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and that none can stay his hand.

My precious brethren, if God does his will, is there anything going on against his will? A thousand times no!

I want to say a few things concerning the salvation of His people. I believe everything was one eternal now with Him in eternity; and that all events will take place at the place and time appointed by his sovereign power — to the honor and glory of his precious name. I believe the Lamb of God stood in the eternal arrangement of the salvation of the elect lady, which is His church; and that her name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was. That Lamb came into this world at the appointed time of God his Father, for the specific purpose of saving his people. Everything that was done to him by wicked hands, was according to the determined council of God in eternity. He hung on the cross suffering for the sins of his people, and his blood was shed for your sins and I hope for mine. When he cried out "It is finished," the elect lady his bride was saved there and then.

I believe everyone he died for will be called according to the eternal arrangement to the knowledge that Christ is

their Saviour, and that heaven is their home. It makes no difference where they are, when He calls them they will answer. "The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." He was speaking here of the dead sinner. God's shall are just as sure as he is. He turns them about, and puts a new song in their mouths, even praise to his name.

Precious brethren, sometimes I am in the valley, fearing and doubting whether I am one for whom He died: Sometimes I can say I know my Redeemer lives, for I can feel his smiles and precious love. Do you have fears and doubts?

In conclusion, I want to say that it seems the time is close when He who died and rose again, will come again for the elect lady, his church.

To the fathers and mothers with sons in Vietnam on the battlefields, God bless you and comfort you is my prayer. Your son's lives are in the hands of the God I have been trying to tell you about. Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without your heavenly Father. God's all-seeing eye knows right where they are.

May God bless all of you, is my prayer. I would be glad to hear from any who may feel to write me.

Garrett Wilson, Sr.

"O THE DEPTH OF THE RICHES"

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33)

Solomon said in Proverbs, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table."

Webster says that knowledge denotes acquaintance with, or a clear preception of facts; Widsom is the capacity of judging soundly of facts, or dealing broadly with facts. God's knowledge was sufficient to comprehend all things:

there was nothing that he did not see and know, even before time was spoken into existence. That being the case, his wisdom was great enough to formulate his will for the execution of his purposes and designs. In fact, He is all wisdom. The house that Solomon says wisdom built, embraces his kingdom here, and hereafter.

We, as finite creatures, cannot comprehend His purposes only as it pleases him to reveal them to us. We agree with Paul that the wisdom and knowledge of God is so great: or, Paul says, the depth of it is unsearchable. God had already chosen a portion of Adam's race to be the beneficiaries of eternal life, when as yet the earth had not been created. Paul says we are blessed according as he has chosen us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. And since it is of God that we are in Christ Jesus, he is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

God's knowledge being great enough to perceive all events before time, He knew that Adam and also Eve, would eat of that forbidden fruit, even before there was an Adam, or an earth, or a garden of Eden. Knowing that the whole of Adam's race would fall under the bondage of sin, and knowing they could not redeem themselves, he decreed that his only begotten Son should be the ransom price for his people.

After having put it in the minds of the prophets to prophesy concerning His coming, and that he would be born in Bethlehem, Micah wrote, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." When the time came for him to make his appearance, the eternal God put it in the mind of the Roman authority, Caesar Augustus, to have all the world taxed, and that everyone should go to his own city, he did not know God was using him to fulfill prophecy.

When the time came for the babe

Jesus to be born, Mary, "Brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for him in the inn." Wise men from the east were led to him by a star: they were wise because God made them wise. Their wisdom was in Christ, just as ours is, if indeed we were among those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks by night, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. The angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

God made known to the wise men by the star, and to Herod by the wise men, and to the shepherds by the angel, that the promised Messiah had arrived. His name was called Jesus, which was the name given him before he was conceived. According to the law he was brought to Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord. There was a man there named Simeon, to whom the Holy Ghost had revealed that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. "And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law. Then took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

When the time came for Jesus to begin his earthly ministry, he went to where John was baptizing in Jordan. Men had mused in their hearts whether John was the Christ; but he told them, "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he

shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." When John saw him coming, the Spirit made known to him that he was the Christ; and he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." After Jesus was baptized he began to preach of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to open the blind eyes and heal the sick, which no man had done before.

The Jews rejected him because they were looking for someone to change the social and political life for them. But that was not what Jesus came for. Paul said to the Corinthians, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." James speaks of a people who are preserved in Jesus Christ and called, and sanctified by God the Father. Paul said to the Romans: "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And Peter told them on the day of Pentecost, that the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Jesus ransomed all that the Father gave him in eternity — He reveals himself to them by his Spirit, and gives them hope of eternal life. God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in trespasses and sins, spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, said Paul. And he also said, "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us for the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

It is a great consolation to know that He will never leave nor forsake us, and that his love and mercy will be our constant guide and shield.

(Elder) J. A. Tew,
Rt. 1, Box 268,
Dothan, Ala. 36301

ARE OUR BLESSINGS CONDITIONAL?

As the Lord blesses us, let us talk about an error that Satan has introduced in some churches, and by carefully examining the matter, see that the motive is to rob God of the honor, praise, and glory due unto His Holy Name.

"Conditional Time Salvation": According to this theory, man has the ability through his own merits to perform good works, and by doing so, he will enjoy a peace of mind and obtain blessings which God has promised to them who take advantage of the opportunity offered. In other words, the advocates of this theory teach that God has laid out the blessings before the children of God, and that they may enjoy the benefits of them (here in time) if they take advantage of the opportunity offered them. If they do not perform certain conditions, then they will miss the blessings offered.

Such a doctrine as this is erroneous. It does not give God the praise for the blessings we enjoy. It exalts man, because man is responsible for obtaining the blessing, since he took advantage of the opportunity to perform the conditions. According to that doctrine, man is the author of Time Salvation! This is similar to the condition of the Galatians. Notice the expression of Paul: "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3) And, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Galatians 4:9)

This error is to puff man up. It is to give man the credit for the blessings he receives. In other words, man deserves the praise because he took advantage of the blessings offered, and by performing certain conditions, God was obligated to bless him. Or, since man did perform these conditions, God became indebted to man; and was obligated to bless him. Therefore, man controls his Spiritual seasons, according to this theory. By man's own ability,

he could always enjoy seasons of basking in the sunshine of God's mercy.

But this is error, my friends. All praise, honor, and glory belong unto the Lord. We cannot control the natural seasons, and we cannot control our Spiritual seasons. If it is midnight with our souls, we cannot drive the darkness away, and we cannot hasten the coming of morning.

Let us remember that God takes care of his people. Satan uses error such as the **Conditional Time Salvation** doctrine to attempt to rob God of his glory, and to puff man up; but God brings them down. "Though thou shalt exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord." (Obadiah 1,4)

Though we do not believe this theory, we believe that Satan still tempts us in our experiences with the **principles** of this doctrine. And, Oh how cunning Satan is! In Genesis 3:1, we read, "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field..."

For example: Let us assume that we perform good deeds or works, such as visiting the sick and shut-ins, and helping our needy brethren, etc. Now, this is good on the surface. "Pure religion and undefiled before the father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27) In the epistles of John, we notice that he admonishes the ones who have this world's goods to help the ones in need.

On the surface, these deeds are good, but what about the motive involved? "Men looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7) "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men, Verily I say unto

you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." (Matthew 6:1-4)

Now, are we doing these deeds because we feel impressed to do so? If so, then the motive is good. On the other hand, are we doing these deeds in order to be seen of men, and to receive the praise of men? Are we doing these deeds for the purpose of gaining the favor of God, and to receive a blessing from Him? If so, then a selfish motive prompts us to perform them.

But, Satan does not give up. Let us assume that we are impressed by God to perform certain deeds. After it is performed, Satan may slip thoughts as this is our mind: "My, you sure are a good person to do this. There are not many people like you. You should be proud of yourself, etc." Thoughts as this tend to puff one up.

Let us remember that Satan does not have a set pattern. He may set thoughts as this is your mind to attempt to drive you to despair: "You really think you are somebody, don't you? Those people you visited think you are a little saint. But they just do not know you. The reason you visited them was for selfish reasons. You wanted their praise, and admiration and wanted them to think you are a good person, etc." Accusations as these tend to drive us to despair, except the Lord intervenes and speaks sweet peace to our poor souls.

Let us briefly state another selfish motive in performing good deeds. Doing a good deed for the motive of expecting a favor in return is wrong. The motive of helping our brethren with the expectation of receiving a favor in return is not prompted by love. It is just a selfish motive.

In closing out our thoughts concerning the error of "Conditional Time Salvation," we quote from J. C. Philpot:

"But the Lord has attached — I will not call it a condition, (it is a word I

abhor), but a declaration; which declaration is linked on with the promise. The Lord has appointed a certain path, wherein the soul is to walk. The walking in that path is a necessary step, to obtain the blessing that lies at the end of the path. It is **no condition to be performed by the creature**; it is nothing that springs out of, or depends upon, human will or human merit; but it hangs upon the Lord's appointment. God has connected certain promises with certain appointments; He has connected certain deliverances with certain trials; He has connected certain blessings with certain states and positions of soul. The text states that the Lord has declared a certain path; He has made a positive declaration: and to this positive appointment He has graciously annexed a certain promise. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." Thus it is no matter of free will, it is no matter of man's righteousness or man's wisdom, whether he shall "call upon God;" it is appointed he should call upon Him. God has said in positive terms — (and His "I will," and His "he shall," never can be broken) — "He shall call upon me." It therefore does not rest with the creature, whether he will call upon Him or not; it's not a matter poised in the balances of the creature, whether he shall pray or not; God has not left it to man, whether he shall take up prayer or lay aside prayer; but He has made it a part of His own sovereign appointments, of His own eternal decrees, which can no more be frustrated, than salvation itself. Therefore this soul, that "dwells in the secret place of the Most High" — "he shall call upon God." It is not left to him, whether he will call or not; but it stands in a way of eternal decree, in a way of sovereign good pleasure. He must call upon God, because God says he shall." (**Selected Sermons**, by J. C. Philpot, pg. 105, 106)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

1610 Normandy Way,
Leesburg, Fla. 32748

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription is due. Please enter for another year with the enclosed check; giving the balance to the Indigent Fund.

I look forward each month to the **Signs**. I receive such comfort from the good articles published. I feel surely that the spiritual food I receive from the articles, and the sweet gospel truths I am sometimes blessed to hear preached, is the only reason I have strength and courage to face the problems I have in this world today. It is such a comforting thought to know that all things are in His good and gracious hands.

May his grace be with us all.

In fellowship,
Mrs. Lois Kennedy

P. O. Box 357
Elgin, Oregon 97827

REALIZING THE WAY WE HAVE BEEN LED

Dear Editors:

"And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock:

And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:

And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen." (Exodus 33:20-23)

In reading the above scripture, my mind was led to Genesis 32: 24, wherein an account is given of the wrestling of Jacob with a man (Holy Spirit) from whom a blessing was received only after the **breaking of day** (the passing from darkness into light). Jacob being crippled in this self same hour, could no

longer trust in the arm of flesh but was made to lean forevermore upon a staff. (Jesus Christ his Lord and Saviour).

In the third chapter of St. John, a man named Nicodemus came by **night** (darkness) to inquire of Jesus, and was told that a man must be born again. He, being a man of the Pharisees, knew not how this transition was possible. He did not understand that before birth there was life; and failed to see that natural birth was only the passing from darkness into light of this world. He therefore understood not that this natural body is also the abode of the spiritual body which must pass from darkness into light before it is made manifest in a child of hope.

In the mind and purpose of God, all his children were created in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Yet, considering the conception of spiritual life within the natural body, this spiritual conception surely took place in that self same moment in which it was declared, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the **day of Jesus Christ** (light). (Phil. 1: 6) For in him we live and move and have our being.

In reading the account of Saul's conversion in the 9th chapter of Acts, we are shown the dealings God has with one of his chosen vessels before his eyes are opened to understanding, and by what power and manner this is brought about. Here we see that Saul was born of the Holy Spirit before the scales fell from his eyes that he might see, thereby enabling him to declare Jesus the Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

"And the Lord said, Behold there is a place **by me** (prepared of his hands), and thou shalt **stand** (nothing required of the sinner) upon a **rock**. (Jesus) And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of **rock** (Jesus) and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away my hand, . . . and thou shall see my **back parts**. (our journey to hope.)"

Oh! what a glorious picture is this, Dear Ones. When we are enabled to see

all the way in which we have been led through, and from works to Grace. Many times it seems that our very souls would faint within our breasts. Because of sin we are made to feel our just condemnation.

Oh! what joy is this; when, by his everlasting love and grace he removes his hand and we can view for a moment **his back parts**, wherein by his love and grace toward hell deserving sinners he has commanded the storm that rages within us, saying, "Peace be still." And all is calm.

"O Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever." (Psalms 117)

In hope,

Lloyd C. Spikes

IN MEMORY OF
THE LATE ELDER W. K. SMITH

His old chair is vacant beside the fire,
No smile greets us when we come in;
Our hearts almost burst at the very thought,
We have lost our most precious friend.

His daily council kept our erring feet,
From striking many a rough snag;
The word of his God was his drink and his
meat,
He counted his own righteousness as rags.

Such a beautiful gift as ever was placed
On a poor mortal here below;
'Twas given to him by Sovereign Grace,
'Twas a blessing from Heaven we know.

At home and abroad, at church or with
friends,

He was blessed with wonderful power
To remove anger: restore sweet peace;
He was father to us at all hours.

He served several churches: one for forty
years,
When duty called he obeyed:
Tho' he said he was snatched from blaspheme
and shame,
When the burden upon him laid.

He was given love, and love for the Cause,
By his Maker who reigneth above,
He was called to the labor of "carrying the
word,"

And his was a labor of love.

This world held no beauties apart from his
God,
For he saw Him in each event of time:
In the beautiful flowers, the songs of the birds,
Some trace of his God he would find.

In his late years of life as his body declined,
He had little desire here to roam:
And often when retiring at night to his bed,
He would say, "One day nearer home!"

He is gone and alas! His absence we mourn:
For his presence and comfort we sigh:
Yet we know that our loss is his eternal gain,
He has gone to his Savior on high.

Instead of murmuring at the will of our God,
We must be reconciled that it be so;
And thank the Giver of all good gifts
That he was spared so long here below.

May God thus use us to the praise of His
name,
Make us obedient as we journey along;
And pray when our purpose in this world is
served
We shall meet him in that long-sought home.

(In memory of my husband's father.)

Mrs. John Lee Smith
Spearsville, La.

EARLY MEMORIES

Rt. 2, Box 70,
Star City, Arkansas 71667

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing three dollars for a year's subscription to the Signs; and am also enclosing the obituaries of our dear parents for publication.

I have spent my entire life among Primitive Baptists. My earliest memory is of going to the District Meetings and associations, traveling by wagon over dirt and gravel roads for thirty to forty-five miles; and of people of the Old Baptist faith coming to visit in our home. It was not unusual to have fifteen or twenty to spend the night, and sometimes more. There was always plenty of food, and all seemed to really enjoy being together.

I found the following poem among old church letters and minutes in my great aunt's trunk, which was written by the late Elder C. M. Weaver in February, 1924:

"Day by day it is my cry:
God my Saviour, grace supply;
More of faith and strength impart,
To console my fearful heart.

Let thine arms my refuge be:
Shield, protect and shelter me.
When my troubles grow severe,
Let me find thee always near.

None but thee such grace can lend;
None can be such faithful friend.
All my needs thy canst supply
When for help to thee I cry.

Keep, direct and feed me, Lord,
Let me feast upon thy word;
'Neath thy table let me crawl,
To receive the crumbs that fall."

This seems to fit me, if anything does. Elder Weaver had visited in the association here around 1918-1919, and in the home of my parents.

Sincere wishes to all,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

HAS READ THE SIGNS
SINCE A SMALL BOY

P. O. Box 63,
Exeter, California 93221

Dear Editors:

On receiving my issue of the Signs today I noted that my subscription is due for renewal, so enclose money order for another year's subscription to this good old paper.

After glancing through this month's issue and reading a few articles, I especially enjoyed the one headed, "Has Declared Sovereignty of God Fifty-three Years." I have to agree that I like the word "Absolute" also, just as my grandparents before me did.

I have truly enjoyed receiving the past twelve issues, and hope I can continue to receive them in years to come. This starts my second year. I have been a reader of the Signs since a small boy, for it has been in the family for a long, long time.

May the Lord bless you to continue in your good work. I look forward to each month's publication.

Sincerely yours,
Bill G. Clinton

IT IS WHAT HE BELIEVES

801 E. 9th Street
Coleman, Texas 76834

Dear Editors:

Just a line to tell you I have enjoyed the last three issues of the **Signs**. Brother Wood's "New Years Greeting" was good; and I agree. Other editorials were good; and also in the February number.

All the editorials in the March **Signs** were good, and I especially enjoyed Elder Gilbert Beebe's letter to Brother Walker. God possesses every attribute of divine perfection, and Brother Beebe set forth the perfect work of a perfect God; and gave scripture for all he said.

These are profound matters indeed, and before any one denies this, he should go read Brother Beebe's letter again; and also read the scriptures he referred to. There is no such thing as "time" with God. It is "one eternal now" with Him. Time is what God has given to man. But at the consummation of all things, when the angel shall stand with one foot on land and one foot on sea and declare that time shall be no longer, it will be the end of this time world.

Brother Beebe has explained and ably defended the finished work of our Lord. He could write it a lot better than I can, but I feel that I believe it as strongly as he did. That is what I have believed for a number of years; and it does me a lot of good to know that is what he and those brethren in his day believed. Thank you for reprinting that letter. Give us more like that. The least, if one at all

In hope of life with Him,
C. U. Landers

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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EDITORIAL

PSALMS 7: 9

"For the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."

The heart here referred to is not the muscular organ of the body, but rather

the seat of affection and passion, the secret purpose, the disposition of mind. It is this heart that the Scripture means when it says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Again, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Also, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Believing in Jesus is a heart work. Phillip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." It is also written, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." One must know the folly of his own heart (and that by divine teaching) or he will trust in it. God searcheth the heart; that is, he turns his searchlight of truth upon the heart; when he does, who can stand? Poor mortal man, then is like Hazael, whose name signifies sight of, or seen by God. When Elisha looked steadfastly in his face "he was ashamed." Why ashamed? Because the prophet saw his inward secret purpose; he could read him. What man is there living who could stand a close inspection of his life and doings, who could stand with his soul naked of its fancied coverings? Would he not quail before it? Who of us would be willing for our closest friend to examine in detail our hearts and lives with the measuring rod of truth? Who would have our thoughts for one day, or one hour, exposed? How much more to have our whole life open before our closest friend for him to see the unholy thoughts and godless deeds, the lies, deceit, backbitings, envyings, pride, lust, and a legion of other things that God hates.

If, we say, we were examined by our closest friend, our cheek would be covered with shame, and he would cease to be our friend from then. We resent calumny, hypocrisy and treachery often more because they harm us than because they are untrue. We loathe others for the things we too frequently allow in ourselves. In spite of all the wickedness of the human heart, what man is there who does not pride himself in his fancied goodness, which to his friends, if they

knew his heart, would be obnoxious? How much more unto Him who knows the thoughts and the intents of the heart? "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it," and the love of self is inherent in us; self-esteem, self-justification and self-seeking are natural propensities of the heart of man. While it is true man would for shame hide himself if his closest friend saw him just as he is, yet it is the awful truth that he blushes not before Him whose eye is in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Such is the hardened, callous heart of man. He takes more thought and pains to hide his faults and failings from his friends than from his God, and winks at the very thing in himself that he is forward to condemn in others. O Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? Why should there be so much thought for the good will of man, who at his best state is altogether vanity, when there is so little concern about Him whose glory filleth the heavens?

"The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
The sea can roar, the mountain shake;
Of feeling, all things show some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine."

It is natural, but not God-honoring to belittle our own failings, and ever to be ready to judge others rather than judge ourselves, and we often carry ourselves before others, as though we were perfect in thought, word and deed. Surely this is walking in a vain show. How different it was in the beginning: man walked with God and delighted to be in his presence without the sense of shame, for he was innocent, but after his transgression he hid himself from God, for he knew he was naked and could not endure the eye of him who is too pure to behold iniquity. From then until now none can endure his presence and live, yet it is he that trieth the hearts and reins of men. If man, even our closest friend, were to judge us, after he had seen the vileness of our hearts and reins, yet his judgment would be unrighteous, because his heart and reins disqualify him as a judge. His heart and reins are foul like

ours, but God is righteous. Paul calls him the righteous Judge, and it is he that trieth the hearts and reins. Have we known anything of this trial taking place in ourselves?

Dear brethren and friends, this is a solemn question, yet all who have had such a trial take place in their lives know something about it. This trial in Paul's life made him to say, In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing. Job, who was another of those whose heart was tried, said, Behold, I am vile. The Lord has his way to make the sinner testify against himself, and when he has clearly brought the case out into the open court of conscience the sinner is self-condemned. The Lord does the searching and trying; in wisdom he has seen fit not to give his glory to another. He shall convince of sin, righteousness and judgment. Man may judge you, but what does man or his judgment amount to? If put in the balance with God's judgment they are lighter than vanity. When God has brought the sinner into the place where sentence shall be passed, the sinner knows he has no hope only in the mercy of him who is the Judge of all. There, to his amazement, Jesus is revealed as the end of the law for righteousness. It softens his heart of stone; in fact it breaks his heart. Now he knows what the Scripture means, where it is written that the love of Christ surpasseth knowledge. He is deeply grieved when he sees that his sins crucified his lovely Jesus, and though while being tried his face was filled with shame, yet now his face is no more ashamed. Jesus, his best friend, who knew his inmost soul with all its ills, loved him and gave himself for him. Once more, to the wonder of heaven and the astonishment of earth, God and man are reconciled. The Judge and the sinner are everlasting friends, and through his precious Lord the poor sinner is clothed and in his right mind. "A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." His trying and searching of their hearts has been a blessing to them, so that often now their hearts' desire is that he will continue to search and try them.

While in such a heavenly mind they love the Lord, his ways, his people, and their cup runs over. They believe with all their hearts.

Why does not this joy and gladness last? Why does such an one who has been sick of self sink back into self? It is because there are many lessons to be learned. Jesus was led up of the Spirit in the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. We thought we knew what vile and sinful hearts we had, but it is God's purpose to hide pride from man, which is accomplished as God tries the heart. "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."

(Editorial by Elder Ruston October 1, 1923. The subject is ever new and present with the Lord's people — J.D.W.)

EDITORIAL

"OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED THESE THINGS?"

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

(Luke 24:25-27)

How impossible for anyone to really understand and believe what the prophets spoke unless his understanding is opened, though he may be well acquainted with their words. (see Luke 24: 45)

When Jesus said unto the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me," he was showing them how wrong they were in their understanding of the scriptures; for, instead of their finding in them eternal life by external forms, ceremonies, and works, which they thought was the value of those writings, the prophets were in truth testifying of the coming and the work of Him who was then in

their midst, and then speaking unto them. He sharply rebuked them, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

The two brethren, in the connection of our text, were not yet brought to know the purpose and magnitude of the mission of Christ in his coming into the world; and they were greatly saddened that the chief priests and the rulers had delivered him, (whom they thought would be the deliverer of Israel from their Roman bondage,) to be condemned to death, and had crucified him. Their great anticipation was blasted, and it was quite enough to make them of sad countenance as they walked and talked of the things which had just come to pass. Early that morning certain women of their company had gone to the sepulchre and reported that they did not find the body of Jesus, but saw a vision of angels who said that he is alive. And others had given the same report.

It was because of these things, they told the stranger who had joined them in the way, that they were sad. These two did not recognize the stranger, for "their eyes were holden;" yet their hearts "burned within them" as he talked with them; and as he rebuked them, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." It was a little later that day that their eyes were opened as he blessed and broke bread while they were eating, and they knew whom it was that had spoken to them in the way.

"Ought not" indicates an obligation, or the necessity of Christ coming into the world, and suffering, and entering into his glory. "He expounded unto them

in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Ought not presents the necessity not merely of his fulfilling all the prophecies concerning himself, but more specifically to fulfill his Father's will in preparing a body for his incarnation and sending him into the world, that, after accomplishing the suffering for the redemption of those chosen by the Father (the church), he should enter into the same glory he had with his Father before the world began. (And the amazing part is that he takes all the redeemed with him, having fully reconciled them unto his Father.)

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12: 27) As we remember the sinner's lost condition, and know that he does not deserve even the notice of his offended God, we understand full well that the necessity of his coming "unto this hour," arose not from any obligation to the sinner, not because of the sinner's coercion, but rather alone from the love of God so freely shown in his mercy. Truly the subject matter of the whole Bible is the portrayal of what God has done for his chosen people; and is expressed by Jesus, "Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you," and by John, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

In order for us to understand the "first-cause" of Christ's coming to suffer, faith takes us to look at things before the world began, as related in the word of God. If one is blessed with faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit of which he is born again, he comprehends all the works of God from their decree in eternity to their completion. To him

"Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.

It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.

By faith we know the worlds were made
By God's almighty hand:
Abra'm, to unknown countries led,
By faith obeyed the Lord.

He sought a city fair and high,
Built by the eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we die,
That heavenly building stands."

— Watts

From the pronouncement of God unto the serpent just after the fall, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," to the coming of Christ, his ascension and promise of his second coming, we have a perfect unveiling of all things of which God is pleased to give an account concerning his Son and what he should accomplish in the world — sometimes in types and shadows, and sometimes plainly in him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," as he came to "this hour". These things all manifest the love of God and his mercy and grace from the beginning; and at the same time show that the redemption of God's people is not of themselves, but is certain because of the atonement made by his Son. The work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

All who concede that the Scriptures are the revealed word of God, but are skeptical of the doctrine, should read his word; for this is where this truth is found. There can be no other interpretation than this when the plainly correlative Scriptures are brought together, presenting a complete narration of Jesus Christ and his work on earth. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

We must look, however, to the things preceding the actual accomplishment of what Christ did, in order to find the reason why he ought to have suffered. The conception of any action is always older than the action itself — there cannot be one without the other. Should we look only at the life and work of Christ after he came into the world, we would overlook so much that is inseparable from all that was necessary in

the salvation of the Lord's people: for the coming of Christ for the salvation of his people was not just an after-provision to meet unforeseen conditions. His coming was in the decree of God, who had the entire matter incorporated in an eternal purpose.

Prerequisite to the sending of his Son into the world there was, first of all, the **love of God towards his people**, and the **choice of them in his Son** "when as yet there was none of them;" then the **creation of the world and forming man of the dust of the earth**; then the **transgression of His command which brought condemnation and death to all men**: thus manifesting the need of **redemption of those previously chosen in his Son**; then the giving of the law which made **sin exceedingly sinful**; then the **preview of the coming mercy of God** in the institution of sacrificial worship; and the **many promises of God** unto his people made "at sundry times and in divers manners;" then the **incarnation of his Son** in a body prepared of the Father **for the suffering of death** — the only way **God provided for the redemption** of his chosen ones.

This is a brief outline of the foundation on which the coming of Christ and his work of redemption rested. It is easy to recognize then the importance of viewing the whole matter from the beginning to the ending, in order to understand why Christ ought to have suffered, and to enter into his glory. These things all evidence the love of God and his mercy and grace from the very beginning, and at the same time show that redemption is not of the people themselves, but is made sure and certain unto the beloved of God by the atonement of Christ; and that the work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

It is right therefore for us to feel that Christ ought to have suffered and then to have entered into his glory; yet it involves the most solemn thoughts and feelings we may ever have — that God should give his only begotten Son to suffer for such sinners as we are.

The subject involves much more than

Christ being just a substitute for sinners in his death; as is so often expressed. A substitute for a guilty person could never clear him of guilt. We know of no time or circumstance in law in which a substitute could pay the supreme penalty for another; yet it is true that Christ died the just for the unjust: so we must understand the relationship of the Saviour and those he saved.

We are informed in the Scriptures that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world — they therefore had their spiritual existence in Him then, their life being hid with Christ in God. "This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Jesus said, "Thine they were and thou gavest them me." God's people (the church) being in Christ before the world began, had a close, vital relationship with him and with the Father: so close that God has been their dwelling place in all generations: from everlasting to everlasting; (Psalm 90: 1, 2) so close that the church had eternal life in Christ before the world was brought into existence. It was this close, vital and **continual** standing of the church in Christ that brought about his subsequent coming into the world for the purpose of redeeming his people who were fallen — it being his sole right to redeem them since they were his own.

This actual existence of the spiritual life of the church in Christ is not to be forgotten, while we are noticing that the earthly nature of the individual members had no existence until they were created in Adam with a natural life which was mortal: that is, subject to sin against God. Sin they did, and fell under the curse of the law which God gave them. Thus the children of God (chosen before in Christ) are born of the flesh and nature of Adam, and know nothing of their spiritual, eternal life which was hid with Christ in God, until it is manifested in them when they are called of God, quickened and born of the Spirit: it is then that the whole matter of their choice (election) in Christ, their fall, and their redemption, is so wonder-

fully made known to them.

When we read, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression," (I Timothy 2:13, 14) and, "The rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . .," we have presented the oneness of Adam and his wife, Eve; and when we are informed by the Apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians that we, "Are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church," we have presented the oneness of Christ and his church. It is plainly stated that Adam was not deceived, but the woman was; yet Adam went into the transgression with her; and there was no separation there. Was it not because she was bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh?

Again, since we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and since our life is hid with Christ in God, it was for the same reason, in the purpose of God, that Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin, dying the just for the unjust; and so there is no separation there. In Adam the chosen in Christ fell with all others, but the Father sent his Son to partake of their flesh and blood, in order that he should suffer for them in their flesh, bearing their sins in his own body on the Cross. It was this vital oneness, not only in his partaking of their flesh and blood, but in their lives being hid with Christ in God, that gives answer to his asking, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

All that Christ did when he came into the world was for the benefit of his people: to clearly manifest that there were a people of the genealogy of Adam who were nevertheless beloved of God before the world began — before they

had their natural existence — and for whose redemption his Father sent him into the world, (they being alienated from God by reason of their transgressions against Him,) in order that, as a part of the whole continuing will of God, they in their persons should receive the spirit of their adoption as children of God, the hope and assurance of eternal life, being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

The New Testament which Christ gave, which was but dimly seen before his coming to give the perfect light of the doctrine of God our Saviour, manifested that those before loved of the Father should be adopted from their earthly family, purified and made fit to be the sons of God: their death swallowed up in victory, their bodies redeemed from corruption to bear the image of the heavenly; and when their mortality shall have put on immortality, they shall be in actual possession of the eternal life given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then will be the fulfillment of the redemption of the purchased possession.

Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and enter into his glory, because He came to do his Father's will.

We have just hinted at some of the wonderful things contained in this subject, but we hope sufficiently to stir up the pure minds of those who read it.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

VOICES OF THE PAST

JOHN 4: 14

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

This text presents a part of what our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, and like all the words that proceeded from

his mouth, is full of interest and instruction to those who are divinely prepared to understand and appreciate the doctrine which he taught. The circumstances attending this interview are calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the perfection of the divine arrangement in the counsel of God, and the connection of his providence with the purpose of his grace. In the execution of the great work assigned our Redeemer when here in the flesh, he had occasion to go from place to place, and many circumstances which to the natural mind might seem trifling or accidental, are shown to be of vital importance, and highly essential to the accomplishment of the work which as the Mediator was given him to do. Such was the case in this instance; he had departed from Judea to go into Galilee, and he **must needs** go through Samaria. We are not informed of any other reason for this necessity or **needs-be**, but what appears in the circumstance of his meeting the woman at Jacob's well, the interview and conversation which took place, the effect produced on the woman, and also on the citizens of Samaria, who came out to see him, and who professed faith in him as the true Messiah. As he **must needs** go through Samaria, this woman **must needs** come out of the city at the very time to draw water, and every other incident recorded was equally important. And thus we believe in every instance of the calling, quickening and conversion of the children of the kingdom, the special providence of God may be clearly traced. God has appointed the bounds of our habitation, so that we cannot pass them.

"His decree who form'd the earth,
Fixed our first and second birth;
Parents, native place and time,
All appointed were by him."

By a well directed train of providential events, we find the Redeemer in conversation with the woman of Samaria. He asks of her drink from her pitcher; she expresses her surprise that he, being a Jew, should ask drink of a woman of Samaria, as the Jews and Samaritans

had no dealings together." Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who is it that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The woman, like all the Arminian world, entertained the false impression that God is as dependent on means and instrumentalities for the accomplishment of his purposes, as we are, for she knew not the gift of God, nor the Son of God, whom to know is eternal life, therefore she betrayed her ignorance of both by saying to him, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." This is a prevalent delusion among all will-worshippers and work mongrel religionists, that God is dependent on his creatures to furnish him with means and instruments with which to supply the waters of life. Sinners are now represented as sinking by thousands into hell, not because they are sinners, but for the want of means, men, money, tracts, schools, or something to draw with, and it is published far and wide that if men would be more active and liberal in supplying the Lord with something to draw with, multitudes would be converted, and the earth would soon be all evangelized. Whence, thought this ignorant woman, can he supply the water of life of which he speaks, unless he draw it from the well, and as the well is deep, how can he draw it thence without means? "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again." And it is even so with all who drink, religiously, of the religious systems, doctrines, works and inventions of men, which result from their popular means-using machinery, who for the time being feel their natural passions of fear, remorse and terror somewhat allayed, but surely as there is a God in heaven, they shall thirst again. Their hopes which are predicated on their works and instrumentalities will fail them, when God shall execute the words recorded in Isaiah 28:17, 18. Like the waters of earthly fountains, which may satisfy our natural thirst for a time, but the draught must be repeated as often

as the thirst recurs; so with false religious impressions, they only satisfy a carnal, depraved propensity which will recur from time to time as their fleshly passions are excited, and their natural fears disturbed; but in all such cases a revival, through the agency of a protracted meeting, exciting preaching, or some other instrumentality to **draw with**, is required at short intervals, to prevent their falling from what they call grace, and losing their religion; for they shall thirst again.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." On this part of the subject our views are called for; and while we cheerfully give them, we will remark that our views, or the views of any other person, are of little worth except so far as they are sustained by the word of the Lord. Whatever views may be entertained on the Scriptures, cannot change the truth which they express. From what we have written, the reader will perceive that we understand our Lord to draw a striking contrast between the earthly fountains, which are relied upon for salvation, and which are only available by the use of humanly devised means and instrumentalities to **draw with**, and his own method of salvation by grace, which is altogether superior to and independent of the agencies, means and instrumentalities of either good or bad men.

Three propositions are suggested. First, the figurative import of the water, which Jesus gives. Second, his purpose to give it to some, but not to all of the human family. And third, the lasting and blessed effects of the water of life resulting to those unto whom Christ shall give it.

First. **The water**, and what is figuratively signified by it. It is here called, in distinction from that drawn by instrumentalities from earthly fountains, **living water**; and it is elsewhere called the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb; and, as defined on the last

day of the feast of tabernacles, it signifies that Spirit which they that believe on him shall receive, (John 7:37-39.) Having reference to that Spirit which he promised to send after his resurrection, Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not neither knoweth him; but ye know him, because he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. (John 14: 17.) Hence, when preaching the doctrine of the new and spiritual birth, he said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3: 5.) Our natural birth, by which we are made manifest as the members of the old Adam, is of the flesh, and the life developed in that fleshly birth is not abiding, it is mortal and transitory, like the waters drawn from Jacob's well. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and it is life, and unlike our natural life, it is spiritual, immortal and eternal. Those who are born of it, receive it, are sealed by it, as the Holy Spirit of promise, and they are sealed unto the day of redemption, that is the day of the redemption of our body. (Eph. 1: 13, 14, Romans 8: 23.) This Spirit of life and immortality which is called the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (Romans 8: 2,) and which is not the spirit of bondage, again to fear, like the the spirit of will-worship, instrumentalities, bondage and fear; but it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which shall in due time also quicken the mortal bodies of all who possess it, by the spirit that dwelleth in them. (Romans 8: 11). This Spirit of life and immortality is the Spirit of Christ, and if any man have it not, he is none of his; and it is Christ, as the apostle declares, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness." (Romans 8: 8-10)

From these, with numerous other

Scriptures, it is clearly demonstrated that the living water which Christ giveth, is the Spirit of life and immortality, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba Father. Water is an appropriate and instructive figure of this Spirit of life, and the fitness of the emblem may be contemplated in the following particulars:

1. Water is an indispensable element; natural life cannot be substained without it. So in the absence of this spiritual life, we were represented as being in a pit wherein is no water. (Zech. 9: 11). And the fruitless inventions of the carnal Israelites, in looking for life and salvation by their own carnal works and instrumentalities, are charged with having committed two horrible things, for says God, They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. 2: 12, 13). Likewise the presumptuous wretches who are offering salvation to sinners, and pretending to be commissioned to aid in the conversion of sinners, are by the apostle Jude denominated, "Clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." — Jude 12. Being twice dead, they cannot contain any of the water of life which they pretend to offer to their deluded hearers. Peter says of them, "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever." (II Peter 2: 17).

When the children of Israel were in the wilderness and without water, they were in a dying condition, until God commanded, and Moses smote the rock which was in Horab; thence from the rock the water flowed in streams of salvation. In this figure, Paul says, "And that Rock was Christ." God, according to what we have quoted from Jeremiah, is the Fountain of living water, and God was manifest in the flesh of Christ, when he was smitten by the rod of Moses, and the waters of salvation broke forth, to follow all his redeemed family to their journey's end. Isaiah says of

Zion, the city of our solemnities, "But there, (in Zion) the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, (or instruments to draw with,) neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." (Isaiah 33: 21). This is that river of which David sung, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High (Psalm 46: 4). It was seen by Ezekiel, proceeding from the threshold of the sanctuary of God, of which God said to the prophet, "And it shall come to pass that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live." (Ezek. 47: 1-9). John also had a pleasing view of it: "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." (Rev. 22: 1). Of these waters God has said, "The beasts of the field shall honor me; the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert; to give drink to my people, my chosen." (Isaiah 43: 20). "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the mist of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41: 17, 18). "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be." (Zech. 14: 8).

2. We may also speak of the cleansing quality of water as applicable to the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Although the carnal, depraved nature of man remains in his flesh, and keeps up a perpetual warfare in the children of grace, between the flesh and Spirit, the old man and the new man; yet it is certain that the grace of God, developed in his children, will produce a reformation. They cease to fight against the truth, and they no

longer feel opposed to God's people, to his method of grace and salvation, but the things which they once hated they are made to love, and the society in which they had no pleasure or interest, now becomes the society of their choice.

3. The harmonizing, mingling, or unity of waters, is well calculated to set forth the unity of the Spirit as it is manifested in the saints of God. Let two who are born of the water and of the Spirit, come together, the one from Hindustan or Africa, and the other from a more refined part of the world, however hostile to each other in all their natural prejudices, as soon as they pronounce the **Shibboleth**, or manifest that they have both drunk of that living water which is in them as wells of water springing up into everlasting life, all their prejudices melt away, and they come together as two drops of water, and are of one heart and one mind.

Second. We proposed to notice the purposes of God, as implied in our text, to give this water to some, but not to all the sons of men. The words, He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, fully imply that there are those unto whom he will give it. But we do not depend upon any logical deductions, or mere inferences however clearly deduced, but on the most positive and emphatic declarations of the word of God. First we will present the testimony of the Redeemer himself, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." (John 5: 25). This passage most positively declares not only a fixed and irrevocable purpose, but also a pledge in which the veracity of Christ is involved, that some who are dead shall hear his voice and live; but whether all the dead or only some of the dead are included, must be ascertained from other portions of the word. To determine this matter, turn to the tenth chapter, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, and there we are informed who of the dead shall so hear and live. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I

give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." But perhaps a more direct declaration could not be expressed in our language, than that found in the appeal made by our Lord, to the Father, when he "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son, that thy son may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:1-3). But to settle the matter forever beyond all cavil, turn to his words in John 6: 37, 44, 45, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." As the water which Christ shall give, is the water of life, or living water, we see that those only are partakers of it, who are drawn by the Father, taught of God, quickened by the voice of the Son of God, and these being quickened, are qualified to appreciate the waters of life, because they, and only they, are capable of thirsting for living water. And the thirsty only are called to the waters. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," cries the inspired Isaiah. (55: 1.) To which Christ himself responds, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." As none but quickened sinners are thirsty, none but the thirsty are called, and as none but such as are drawn by the Father can come to the place of these "broad rivers and streams," so all who are so drawn shall come, shall live, shall in no wise be cast out, but shall be raised up at the last day. All therefore who know the gift of God, and who the Saviour is, will ask of him, for they being taught of God, have learned that God alone is in Christ, and that all the

waters of life are in him, therefore it is that they shall come to him, and that they shall ask for him, and he shall give, not offer, to them the waters of life freely, not conditionally, and the water which he shall give them shall be in them. We now come to our last general proposition, which is,

Thirdly. To speak of the lasting and blessed effects of this living water to all those to whom Christ shall give it. He shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. That he shall never thirst, does not mean that christians do not thirst after God, holiness, happiness, &c., in the sense in which the psalmist expressed in Psalm 42: 12, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," also Psalm 143: "I stretch forth my hands unto thee, my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land." But the peculiar sense in which the figure is employed in our text, is that they who receive from Christ the water of life which he shall give them, shall never be deprived of it, for it shall be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Christ, who is the fountain, is himself in them, and from that living fountain the waters of life shall be ever springing up. Of this life which is called water, it is said, "God hath given us eternal life and the life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (John 5: 12) Hence Paul, in describing the difference between this living water and that which has to be DRAWN with human instrumentalities, says, "But righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend up 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." (Romans 10: 6-8). This well being in them, and the waters of life springing up in their hearts, moves their lips to proclaim his goodness, and to

talk of his power. Water may be conducted by pipes to any depth and then elevated to a level with its fountain head; but, without some other power or agency, it can never rise above its own level or fountain. Hence the water, or life, which may be obtained by work-mongers who fancy that they have something to draw with, will never elevate them above themselves, as the fountain from whence they draw the life of their religion, is in the passions, will, resolutions and determinations of their own carnal nature, it will rise no higher than themselves. But the water of life which Jesus gives, is clear as crystal, and proceeds forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, it therefore is springing up into everlasting life. However dark and disconsolate the children of God may feel, all their trials are wisely appointed for the trial of their faith, and in every other respect, for their good and the glory of God, and the more they are exercised by the springing up of these living waters within them, the more they may expect to see and feel, and mourn their own carnal, depraved nature, and the more they may expect to be tempted by the adversary. But this rather proves the existence in them of the well of water, than otherwise. But it is consoling to be assured by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, that all unto whom this water is given, are secured forever, and shall never be deprived of that life which he gives to them, and which he is in them. They shall in that sense never thirst, because he has given them eternal life and they shall never perish.

What we have written we cheerfully submit to the criticism of all who wish to criticise, as we have no motive other than the advancement of the truth; if anything shall be found in our views which is not fully sustained by the Scriptures, let it be rejected. Prove all things, and hold fast only to that which is good.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe March 1, 1858)

OBITUARIES

ROGER LEE DADE

Many brethren and friends were grieved when they learned of the illness and death of Roger Lee Dade on February 14, 1967. Brother Dade was born near Jefferson, Frederick County, Maryland, October 9, 1882, the son of Maurice J. and Rachel C. Dade. He resided on the farm where he was born, and where for many years he was a leading milk producer.

He was united in marriage to Susie Eleanor Ball on November 18, 1903; and to this union five sons were born; all of whom survive: Maurice L., John B., Robert T., Walter C., and Roger L. Dade, Jr. Sister Dade passed away May 23, 1957. Surviving also are two sisters: Miss Ruth Dade and Mrs. John Ball, of Jefferson; and a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Brother Dade was of an old and well known family in Frederick County; and he was widely known among the Old School Baptists, among whom he traveled extensively the last decade of his life. He looked forward each year to the attending of several associations; and the brethren were always glad to see him come. He had many friends, for he fulfilled the proverb, "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly." (Proverbs 18:24)

Sister Dade was a member of New Valley Church, Loudon County, Virginia; and it was while attending the meeting there with her that Brother Dade heard and rejoiced in the truth for the first time, under the preaching of Elder B. F. Coulter, who was supplying after the death of Elder E. V. White. Soon he was received into the fellowship of the church, and was baptized by Elder Coulter March 15, 1908.

The writer was acquainted with Brother Dade for more than twenty-five years, and never knew one who loved the church and brethren more than he; or one who was more ready to do anything he could for their welfare. He would often provide for those who had no way of attending meetings. There was a closeness between him and his pastor all the years; and his passing leaves an emptiness which only the Lord can fill. For several years there was seldom a week-end that he did not accompany us to the meetings wherever they were.

Funeral services were held at the Etchison Funeral Home, Frederick, Maryland, February 16, 1967, by the writer; and he was laid to rest in Mt. Olivet Cemetery by the side of his wife, to await the coming of his Lord; when he, together with all the redeemed, shall be changed in the resurrection, and fashioned like unto his Saviour, to receive the fulness of those blessed things whereunto he was

sealed until the redemption of the purchased possession of Christ.

The large and attentive gathering testified of the esteem in which Brother Dade was held; and their flowers gave a silent tribute of their love.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to all of his family; and unto the brethren who miss him in their homes and in their meetings.

John D. Wood

TRIBUTE TO A VERY DEAR FRIEND
MR. ROGER LEE DADE, SR.
FEBRUARY 14, 1967

Our dear Heavenly Father called a dear one home to rest until that blessed day when He shall come again without sin unto salvation, to raise the bodies of all who sleep in him, and fashion them like his glorious body.

While we mourn his passing, we realize there is a time to be born and a time to die. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Mr. Dade never let anything stand in his way in attending his church meetings. He traveled far and near, and, when he could, he would travel for miles to take a friend or relative who had no transportation. He loved to entertain his brethren and friends in his home.

The last few months of his life were spent in considerable pain, but he bore his cross with a smile. There is a great vacancy in his church that can never be filled, but his memory will linger on.

We feel our loss is his eternal gain; and we pray that God's richest blessings will be with all of us who mourn for him.

Mrs. Ray Hawling

IN MEMORY OF MR. DADE

He would greet each one with thoughtfulness,
And share with those he met
His faith, his hopes, his happiness,
That we cannot forget.

We recall these things with happiness,
Rejoicing in the thought
Of a friend well met — deeds well done,
That we will not forget.

James and Alberta Craven
(Caretakers New Valley Church)

ELDER GEORGE L. WEAVER

Elder George L. Weaver was born in Galion, Ohio, January 11, 1873, the son of John W. and Emily S. Reed Weaver. He died January 31, 1967, at the age of 94. In September, 1892, he was married to Minerva L. Dean, who died in 1946. To this union one daughter was born, Mrs. Olive Hall, who survives. On September 9, 1949, he was married to Victoria Workman Meadows, who survives. Surviving also are a granddaughter, Mrs. Mary Jane Hall Carrin, and two great grandchildren; a sister, Mrs. H. A. Sherer, Galion, Ohio; and five nieces and nephews.

Brother Weaver united with Bethel Church, Galion, Ohio, in February, 1896, and was ordained to the ministry in 1898. During his active ministry he was pastor of several churches, among them Bethel, Pleasant Hill and Beulah, in Ohio; Sulphur Fork and Cane Run, in Kentucky; and others. In 1953 he moved his membership to Frying Pan Church, of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, where it remained until his death.

For some months Brother Weaver had not been able to travel among his brethren, but his thoughts were with them and he loved to hear from them, and corresponded with them as he was able. Upon hearing of the death of Elder Helms he wrote, "I would be glad when it comes my time, that it could be said of me: 'He loved his brethren, and kept the faith.'" We feel that this can rightly be said of him. He was sound in the doctrine of God, our Saviour, and loved to see order and discipline maintained in the churches. After he became quite feeble he was lovingly cared for by his daughter, Mrs. Hall, Shaker Heights, Ohio, until he passed away.

His funeral was conducted at Galion, Ohio, and he was buried beside his first wife. Due to the weather and distance the writer did not attempt to go for the service, and it was conducted by the pastor of one of his niece's church there. Brother Weaver is now at rest, awaiting the redemption of his purchased possession, the assurance of which he rejoiced in while he lived.

May the Lord be pleased to give Sister Weaver, and all others of his family, grace to reconcile them in their loss, and assure them that He does all things well.

John D. Wood

LILLIE COKER FOWLKES

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst Sister Lillie Coker Fowlkes, a beloved and highly esteemed member of Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church, Whitakers, N. C. She was born August 20,

1888, and passed from this life August 7, 1966, making her stay on earth seventy-eight years.

She was married February 18, 1922, to William Henry Fowlkes. To this union two daughters were born: Mrs. Naomi Fowlkes Willis, Rocky Mount, N. C., and Mrs. Eloise O. Waddell, of Saxeville, Wisconsin; who survive. Surviving also are twelve grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Sister Fowlkes united with Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church, Whitakers, N. C., in September, 1906, and lived a faithful and devoted member until death. She was a firm believer in God as supreme and having all power in heaven and in earth, and none is able to stay his hand; who was and is able to save to the utmost every one of his saints.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well; and who is too wise to err. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this Notice be spread on the church records, and a copy be sent to the family; and that we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family. Written at the request of Hopeland Church by

Elder W. B. Barnes, Pastor

MARTHA D. (PATTIE) ARMSTRONG

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved and highly esteemed Sister Martha D. (Pattie) Armstrong. She was born September 20, 1883, and departed this life September 14, 1966. She was married to the late Brother Walter Lee Armstrong February 22, 1902, who preceded her in death about ten years. To this union were born three children: Mrs. Maggie Lee Dozier, Whitakers, N. C., with whom Sister Armstrong made her home after the passing of her husband; Johnnie P. Armstrong, Port Richie, Florida; and George C. Armstrong, residing in Pennsylvania, all of whom survive; and also fourteen grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild.

Sister Armstrong united with Hopeland Primitive Baptist Church in Whitakers, N. C., in November, 1905. She was a faithful and devoted member; and to know her was to love her. She enjoyed so much to have the brethren and sisters visit in her home, and did everything she could for their comfort, always giving them a hearty welcome.

BE IT RESOLVED THEREFORE, That the church and all lovers of the truth bow in humble submission to the will of the great God and Creator of all things, who doeth his will in heaven and earth. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this Notice be recorded on the church records, a copy sent to the family.

This done by order of the church in conference. Written at the request of the church by

Elder W. B. Barnes, Moderator

JOHN ANGUS GUEST

John Angus Guest was born October 22, 1884, in Texas, and departed this life November 6, 1966, in Welletka, Oklahoma Hospital, at the age of eighty-two years. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Clara E. Guest, of the home; three sons: Stanley, of Dustin; Estel, of the Philippine Islands; and Joe Guest of Dustin; five daughters: Mrs. Lenys Cavett, Newcastle, Okla.; Mrs. Lois Eldridge, Tulsa; Mrs. Trudie Henry, Cedar Rapids; Mrs. Beraldine Voyles, of Okemah; and Mrs. Jolene Bond, of Newcastle; also by two brothers, Condie and Finis Guest, of California, seventeen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Brother Guest never offered to the church, but he told me a number of times, "I hope I am one of those chosen in Christ before the world was." The meetings have been held in his and Sister Guest's home for several years: alternating the meetings in Brother and Sister Dodson's home. He was kind and considerate, and would do anything he could for the comfort of the brethren and sisters.

Services were conducted by the writer in Spiller Funeral Home in Dustin, Oklahoma, and his body was laid to rest in Dustin Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, who shall raise these vile bodies with His likeness; and we shall see him and be like him.

Written at the request of Sister Guest.

C. U. Landers

VERNIE ALLEN DODSON

Vernie Allen Dodson was born June 28, 1890, in Indian Territory, and departed this life December 20, 1966, in Wetumka, Oklahoma, at the age of more than seventy-six years. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Ada Dodson, of Dustin, Oklahoma; one son, P. A. Dodson, Jenks, Oklahoma; two daughters, Mrs. Christine Yeats, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Mrs. Joan Gray, Seminole, Oklahoma; and by one brother, Floyd Dodson, Great Bend, Kansas; sixteen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Brother Dodson's first wife, Sister Stella, and two sons preceded him in death several years. Later he married Sister Ada. He and Sister Stella united with the Primitive Baptists in the early twenties. A few years later he was ordained deacon, and for almost forty

years he filled that office well; and also he was church clerk for a number of years. He loved his church and the doctrine of our God; and looked after the needs of the church as he should. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

May the God of all grace reconcile the family, and each of us, to His will; and cause us to remember that we too must pass on at our appointed time.

Services were held in Spiller Funeral Home by the writer; and his body was laid to rest by the side of Sister Stella in Dustin Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord. Written at the request of Sister Ada.

C. U. Landers

MARSHALL STOCKTON

Marshall Stockton was born to William and Abbigale Mathews Stockton, in Albany, Clinton County, Kentucky, June 6, 1886; and passed away at the V. A. Hospital, Marion, Illinois, November 29, 1966, making his stay here more than eighty years.

Brother Stockton was a pipe fitter and farmer by trade, but was forced because of ill health to give it up in 1939. The first Sunday in September, 1962, at the close of the service he came forward and asked to be numbered with the Old School Baptists at Old Rock Springs Church of Simpson, Illinois, and was gladly received: his wife having joined in August, they were baptized that afternoon together. He loved the church and had been a regular attendant for some years. His first words after being raised from the watery grave, were, "Thank God, I have desired this for forty years, and God has shown me mercy."

He is survived by his wife, Sister Zetta Stockton; one son, Eldon, and seven grandchildren. Also by one sister and a host of nephews and nieces, to mourn the passing of this gentle, soft spoken man. His church and the brethren who knew him will miss him, and feel their loss; but it was his desire to go. A few minutes before his passing, he told his companion: "Just a little while, just one more pain and I will be at rest with Him whom I love."

His funeral was held at Rock Springs Church, near Simpson, Illinois, by the writer, and his remains were laid to rest in Kerley Cemetery, near Simpson, to await the call of the Saviour, "Children come home." May God bless and comfort all who mourn the passing of this gentle brother, who trusted in grace alone for his salvation. Written by request.

W. Y. Chandler

MRS. FANNIE JORDAN SHELLEY

Sister Fannie Shelley was born July 2, 1887, the daughter of the late I. W. and Elizabeth Spivey Jordan, and departed this life December 23, 1966. She was married to the late Mr. Hope Shelley.

Final rites were held at Inman Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder Gardner Mishoe, assisted by Elder Grady Cox, with burial in Myrtle Green Cemetery.

Survivors include two sons: Fred Shelley, Wilmington, N. C.; Hoyt Shelley, Clarendon, N. C.; four daughters: Miss Estelle Shelley and Mrs. Frank Floyd, both of Hyattsville, Md.; Mrs. Helen Martin of Silver Spring, Md. and Mrs. Carl Ryman of Arlington, Va.; one brother: I. C. Jordan, Crescent Beach, S. C.; three sisters: Mrs. Ellen Sherrill of Whiteville, N. C.; Mrs. M. E. Riley of Charlotte, N. C. and Mrs. Ruth Coney of Jacksonville, Fla. and fourteen grandchildren.

For the past several years, Sister Shelley had made her home with her daughter, Mrs. Helen Martin of Silver Spring, Md.

She was a devoted mother and a faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church. She joined Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in the early Twenties, and on August 23, 1941, by letter, joined Tabor Primitive Baptist Church at Tabor City, N. C.

A manifestation of her love for the doctrine of salvation by grace was shown by her presence at her home church meetings, also sister churches, when she had an opportunity to attend.

We bow in humble submission to our Lord, who does all things well, express our heartfelt sympathy to the family and resolve that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one placed in our church records and one sent to *Zion's Landmark* for publication.

B. Floyd Wright, Clerk
Tabor Primitive Baptist Church
Tabor City, N. C.

(All the years Sister Shelley lived in the vicinity of Washington she was faithful in attending the meetings of the churches in the Virginia Corresponding Meeting at every opportunity. She was sound in the faith and a good conversationalist, and was always welcome in our homes. She is greatly missed by all of us; but we know that the Lord does all things right, and we desire to be reconciled to his will. — J. D. W.)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1967

NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

LOOKING FOR THE SAVIOUR IN A DREAM

(Isa. 61:3; Heb. 6:19 and 9:28)

On one night, I dreamed of walking
Amongst some lofty trees,
Whilst heavenward I was gazing
Beyond the tops of these.

In my dream, I was holding fast
One end of a strong cord,
Which reached upward above the skies,
Even unto Christ the Lord.

The Lord was at the other end,
For I could feel Him there,
But could not see, within the veil,
The One exceeding fair.

I did look for Him to appear,
But He was never seen;
Still I'm hoping my Lord to see
Without a veil between.

I hope that the cord in my dream
Typed the cable of faith;
And hope we have as an anchor
Of the soul, the Lord saith.

Now in my dream, the lengthy cord
Was folded and laid aside,
And this caused me to wonder if
I did in the faith abide.

But faith is not all of the time
Drawn out in exercise;
Nay, often in this vale of tears,
Saints find it otherwise.

Among the trees of righteousness,
They walk, but not by sight,
And as the poet hath well said,
They travel much by night.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

THE WILL OF MAN ITS SUPPOSED FREEDOM IN OBTAINING SALVATION

Brother Shipman, of Arkansas, has asked me to give my views on the above mentioned theme. In compliance with his request I submit to him and all the readers of the *Signs of the Times* a brief and hurried discussion of the subject. Volumes have been written upon the nature, tendencies and capacities of the human will by the different schools of philosophy and theology, beginning in the early history of christianity. That the will is free, and is the decisive power in morality, salvation and damnation, seems to be the favorite system of all nominal christian moralists, philosophers, and all work-mongrel, Arminian, will-worshipping churches. Free will forms today the chief god of nineteenth century thought and theology, and still sits as of old, in the temple exalted above all that is called God, and showing itself that it is God.

The discussion of the will belongs properly to the domain of psychology, but I shall know nothing in this article but the Bible and christian experience. My motto is that where fact contradicts philosophy, to take fact and let philosophy go. Where Christ contradicts Theology, take Christ and let theology go. If the will were such an important factor in man's salvation, Christ certainly would have emphasized that fact, the apostles would have dwelt more pointedly upon it, and the whole volume of inspired truth would have been given upon entirely different principles, for entirely different purposes, and would necessarily be made up of entirely different contents.

The first condition found in the human will that disqualifies it for the important functions claimed for it that I

shall notice, is its weakness, its uncertainty, its utter fallibility. The Saviour said there was a man who had two sons; and he said to them, Go work in my vineyard. One said he would go, but did not; the other said he would not go, but afterward repented and went. Why do you suppose this incident is recorded in the Scriptures? To fill up space, to finish out a page? It is written for our instruction, and serves not to teach us which of the two boys did the will of the father, but gives us a practical example of the uncertainty of the will. One said he would not, but he did; the other said he would, but did not. How constantly do we find this uncertainty of will exemplified in ourselves and those around us. We say today, I will do a certain thing tomorrow; but when tomorrow comes we are out of the notion entirely, and perhaps doing the very opposite. We say we will not do a thing; but perhaps before an hour has elapsed we are fully in the will to do the very thing which we had but a short time ago averred that we would not do. Is it not true then that the will cannot be depended upon for the most trivial things of everyday life? Then how much less can it be depended upon for the incomparably weightier issues of eternity? The world is full of failures in everyday life, resulting from this feebleness of will. How many men and women fail of success in providing comfortable homes in this world from this uncertainty of the will. Then how infinitely farther short must they fall of laying up treasure in heaven through will power. How unreasonable to suppose that God has left the issues of eternity upon the feeble, fickle, uncertain, incompetent will of man. This uncertainty and incompetency of the will is not only a matter of worldly experience, but it is most constantly, powerfully and painfully present in the everyday life of the saints themselves. Has not Paul recorded concerning himself that the good which he would he did not, and the evil which he would not that he did? Is this the language of a man endowed with free will, and preaching the doctrine of free will? This is the common experience

of all saints. If the christian cannot depend upon the strength, certainly and freedom of his will for his daily conduct, is it reasonable that the sinner who is dead, can bring himself from that state into life and light by his will power?

"The carnal mind is enmity against God." (Romans 8: 7) The will is an attribute of the mind. They stand in the logical relation to each other of container and thing contained. Then, if the mind is enmity against God, the will is necessarily enmity against God. Is it reasonable to suppose that God has placed himself, his Christ, his grace and salvation, at the disposal of that which is enmity to him? If this were so, would not all they who know the sinfulness of sin and the weakness of the flesh cry out in hopeless despair, Who then can be saved? Christ called attention to the practical working out of this enmity when he said to the Jews, "Ye will not come unto me." Arminians, in their ignorance of the Scripture and the power of God, frequently quote these very words to prove that coming to Christ is left with the will of the creature, when in fact the words prove the very opposite. It is the will that keeps them away, because it is enmity against him. This enmity shows a practical demonstration of itself in the choice of the people when Pilate offered to release a prisoner, in compliance with Jewish custom at the feast of the pass-over. He put before them two celebrated personages, Christ and Barabbas: the one the meek and lowly Lamb of God, the Saviour of sinners; the other a notorious thief, robber and murderer. When Pilate said, "Which of these men shall I release unto you?" with one accord they chose a thief and a robber, and condemned the holy and just One. They were well acquainted with the character of both these persons as men. They knew the innocence of the one and the guilt of the other; but enmity against God made the choice. Such is always the choice of the carnal mind. It seems to me that this incident, properly presented, would be enough to stop the mouth of any one proclaiming that salvation depends upon the freedom of the will in choosing

Christ. Here was a fair test, a demonstrative trial, and a convincing result. When the Arminian's favorite theory is brought to the test it will invariably result in this way — a thief chosen, Christ rejected.

Again, ignorance of God, and of right and wrong, of good and evil, is most conclusive evidence against the doctrine of free will and salvation through its choice. A man cannot choose that of which he has no knowledge. Before a man can choose God he must know God; before he can choose Christ he must know him as Christ; because intelligence is essential to the validity of a choice. But men in nature do not know God; they are totally ignorant of Christ. A fundamental principle of Bible doctrine is that the world by wisdom knows not God. Not only is this fact asserted by the Scriptures, but it is strikingly exemplified in the history of our race. Did men know Christ when he was in the world? When he asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? what was the answer? "Some say John the Baptist; some Elias; some Jeremias, or some of the old prophets risen from the dead." All of them wrong. Their highest conception of him was no more than that of a risen prophet, a man who had come up out of the grave, instead of one who had come down from heaven. Every incident in his life, from the cradle to the skies, is concurring testimony that men did not know him. Even his own disciples, they of his own choice, knew him only as he would reveal himself unto them, both before and after his resurrection. He declared himself that "no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; and no man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." God and Christ are known only by and to each other. They dwell mutually in the secrecy of their own glorious, eternal and invisible personality; and no man (there is no exception to this no man) knows either except through their mutual revelation.

Then it is of the utmost folly to talk of men having power to choose, and their destiny depending upon the exer-

cise of that power. But the boast of this ignorant, idolatrous, blasphemous age is that men are wiser now than ever before; and although they might have been somewhat ignorant two thousand years ago, that matters are quite different now. The man who would take this subterfuge from plain declarations of Bible truth, and the universal exemplification of the same in the conduct of men, is to be pitied for his ignorance, and his cause is to suffer in the estimation of all sensible men for lack of argument. Did not the Jews have an acknowledged advantage over all other men in respect to these things? To them the law was given, to them were committed the oracles of God, and through them as concerning the flesh Christ came. They searched the Scriptures continually, and studied them most diligently. They received the most rigid and thorough religious instruction and training; and when Christ came they in ignorance rejected, persecuted and killed him. If the Jews, who were his own kindred, and among whom he did his wonderful works, in whose streets he taught, and who had been instructed out of the law and the prophets concerning him, did not know him, how much less shall all other nations be expected to know him. If men knew him not when he was here in the flesh, and all nature witnessing and acknowledging his power, how much less shall they know him now when he has ascended into the heavens. Man's ignorance of God, and his conduct towards the man Christ Jesus, prove that salvation is not through the choice of the human will.

The doctrine of free moral agency, as it is called, is universally based upon the idea of man's knowledge of right and wrong, of his qualification to choose between good and evil. This doctrine necessarily gave origin to the old cunningly devised fable of the line of accountability which is founded in ignorance and superstition, and requires very little investigation of the proper kind to explode it. If our future destiny depends upon the choice of the will, it necessarily depends upon our knowledge of right and

wrong; and if our destiny depends upon our knowledge of right and wrong, this knowledge must be so infallible that there can be no possibility of making a mistake. But does man possess this absolute knowledge of good and evil? If it can be shown that he does, then the doctrine of free will may stand, so far as this argument is concerned; but if it can be shown that he does not, then the doctrine of free will must fall with it. The first field for investigation in this matter is ourselves. Have we that knowledge? Have you that knowledge? As for myself I must frankly confess that I have never yet arrived at that place where I always know right from wrong. Perhaps in many things, in the traditional sense, I know right from wrong; but where is my absolute knowledge of good from evil? Where is yours? How often do we perplex ourselves every day over matters continually coming before us in which we are at a loss to know the right things to do? Frequently, not being able to decide by our own deliberations, we seek counsel of friends and advisors, and after all find that we have done the wrong thing at last. This is an indisputable fact in the everyday experience of every man. Every christian has found in his own experience that the commandment which he thought was unto life was unto death. Is not the whole religious world, who are engaged in teaching the way to heaven, divided among themselves as to what is the way? Did not the builders in ancient times disallow the stone that became the head of the corner? I will give one example before leaving this part of the discussion. The Apostle Paul, or more properly Saul of Tarsus, who had all possible advantages in ethical culture and religious training, after his call declared that when he was persecuting the saints, compelling them to blaspheme, delivering them to death, wasting the church of God, he went not against his own conscience, and that he truthfully thought that he was doing God's service. Many others have lived and labored and died under the same delusive ignorance. What need we fur-

ther witness that men in nature do not know good from evil? The saints themselves only knew as led by the Spirit of God. With the false idea of man's knowledge of right and wrong must fall the favorite air-castle of free moral agency.

The whole process of salvation is directly opposed to the doctrine of free will. The doctrine of election, which lies at the foundation of all salvation, is in direct antagonism to free will; so much so that in order to establish the latter the former must be emphatically denied. That the purpose of God according to election might stand, it was said of Jacob and Esau, "The elder shall serve the younger." Is not this opposed to the will of the creature? Would free will lead the elder to serve the younger? But this is so in order that the purpose of God according to election might stand. Then it is true that free will and God's purpose according to election cannot stand together. Which must fall? Furthermore, if salvation were through the will of the creature, where is the necessity of the election of grace? All believers in the doctrine of free moral agency are led necessarily into a flat denial of election, and, in fact, every other principle of the doctrine of God our Saviour.

What had the will of man to do in bringing Christ into the world? Did men make a contract with God that if he would send Christ to die they would accept the sacrifice? Did Christ come into the world to do men's wills? But he says that he came not even to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him; "and this is the will of him that sent me," continued Christ, "that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day." Christ himself was not a free moral agent; he did not come upon that principle. He came not to do his own will; he came as one sent of the Father, bound by the everlasting covenant to execute the will of the eternal Jehovah.

The Saviour said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Is there any harmony between

this expression and the doctrine of free will? Does not the one essentially down the other? Does not the fact that this birth is a necessity prove most conclusively that all the powers and capacity of the natural man are wholly inadequate to bring him to God? Does it not absolutely cut off every shadow of possibility of salvation through the combined powers of men, angels and devils? A christian is a child of promise; just as much a child of promise as Isaac was. "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Galatians 4:28) A child of promise is a child that was to be; a child especially promised, which could not come into existance upon natural principles. Isaac was by promise. He was not born after the flesh; his birth was absolutely impossible from that source. So then the christian comes by promise, by the promise of the Father, and is born of the Spirit, because the flesh cannot produce him. If a man should preach that Isaac was born after his own will, or even through the procreative powers of his parents, men would at once reject it as false. A man would be at once apprehended as insane if he were to preach that any man is born after his own will. It is just as unreasonable to preach that men are born again after their own will, or even through means of any kind. That man who has not been born again has no more existance as a christian than the generations who are yet unborn have as citizens of this world. It is just as impossible and unreasonable for a man to come into the kingdom of God through the power of his own will, as for a man who shall be born a hundred or a thousand years hence to determine where, when and under what circumstances he will be born, or whether he will be born at all or not.

The doctrine of free will is contradicted by every principle of salvation as taught in the Bible and exemplified in the experience of them that are saved. It is contradicted by many direct quotations of Scripture. "It is not of him that willeth." (Romans 9:16) "Not of

blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." (John 1:13) Salvation is always ascribed to the will of God. There is a willingness that accompanies the experience of the Saints, but it is given them of God, the fruit of his Spirit, God himself working in them both to will and to do his own good pleasure.

H. M. Curry

(The above by Elder Curry was copied from the Signs of February 28, 1894, and will commend itself to all those who know the joyful sound of the truth. — J. D. W.)

EXPERIENCE

1218 Oakview Road
Decatur, Ga. 30030

Dear Elder Wood:

A number of weeks ago, in reply to my letter you invited me, saying in part, "We would be glad, should you ever feel to write, to have you send it for publication in the Signs."

What I am submitting below may not be of any interest or comfort to the readers of the Signs. If you find it is not in accord with the scriptures and the doctrine contended for by the Signs, you will discard it, thereby doing me and others a favor.

I have heard and read of ministers and others tell of their experiences, how they felt that the Lord was revealed to them at certain times and places, showing them their condition in nature and causing them to believe the Old School or Primitive Baptist doctrine, which they did not believe or care for before. I cannot say that I can point to any certain time that the Lord revealed himself to me, causing me to believe the Primitive Baptist doctrine — Salvation by Grace. This adds to my doubts at times that I have been born again.

When a boy I went to the Primitive Baptist Church with my mother, of which she was a member, and to other Primitive Baptist Churches. When I observed the ministers preaching I was impressed with the thought that they

would not be able to say what they said without it being given them by some greater or higher power. And observing the deacons and members near the pulpit giving their undivided attention to the preacher, that place at times seemed to me so divine and sacred that it was no place for me to approach. When some older, a younger sister and I began to go out with young people and go to the churches of other denominations, the minister gave invitations and sometime persuading non-members to surrender, give their hearts to the Lord, come and give their hands to the preacher and be saved. Somehow this did not appeal to me. If God had all power and wanted the person saved and said come or go, I thought how could he resist.

During World War I, I was on the Muse Argonne Front with the 47th Infantry, 4th Division from September 26 to October 18, 1918. After a few days the Division had advanced a few miles, we stopped, "dug in" and was holding the line. In the early part of October, late one afternoon the Germans were shelling more than usual and some of the shrapnel hit some of the soldiers in the shallow dugouts, and they were calling for stretcher-bearers. A shell hit near the head of our small dugout and knocked rocks and dirt on me and my buddy, Burger from Penn. I said to him, "It looks like our time is next." He replied, "trust in Jesus." Somehow, I felt that my mother was offering a prayer for me. I said, not out in words, "Oh Lord if thou will return me home, I will ever do thy will." A soft, bright, thin light came and hovered momentarily over the dugout. I felt a relief and peace I had never felt before. No, I never told this to my buddy. After the Armistice November 11, the 4th was one of the Divisions that went to Germany in the Army of Occupation. We were there from December 15, 1918, to July 10, 1919. We entrained July 10th, at Coblenz on the Rhine for Brest, France. On the ship returning to the U. S., I began to think about what I would do after I got home. I had

taught two years in country schools and had a crop on my father's farm in Gwinnett County, Georgia, before entering military service. I decided that I would go to the University of Georgia at Athens and take a one-year special course in Education and Agriculture. I was discharged August 5, 1919, near Atlanta, and returned home that day. I felt that part of the prayer on the battlefield of France, "that I be returned home," was then answered.

In September 1919, I went to Athens, about thirty miles from home, with the intention of taking a one-year course in Education and Agriculture. I met up with some young men I knew, one or two were to enter the three-year Law Course. After reconsidering my Course, I entered the law school. I mention this for the thought or truth proclaimed by the Prophet Jeremiah, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10-23)

After graduating, some of my work was in Atlanta where I attended a Primitive Baptist Church a number of years before joining. In November 1947, Sister Florence Gibson and I were received into the Church on profession of faith, and were baptized in December. About a year and a half later I was ordained a deacon. I am now a deacon of the New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, Hiram, Georgia. Most of my work has been in education, Government service under Civil Service, and the practice of law, all of which I am retired, except a little legal work and some hobbies.

I have had conflicts without and within. I have promised and promised the Lord I would try never to transgress his laws again and try to do his will, but found myself breaking the promises and unable to do the things promised. Here the 7th chapter of Romans by the Apostle Paul is consoling. When I read of the certainty and surety of God's promises to his people, I am made to wonder if I am included in his promises. The Lord speaking through the Prophet Isaiah says; "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O

Jacob and he that formed thee O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isaiah 43: 1-2)

And the Apostle Peter: "Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1st Peter 4: 12-13) It is such with you readers, that you have been made to feel that you have passed through the waters and fiery trials, and are made to doubt that you are one of his; even so, you have a hope that you are included in the promises to his elect, for whom Christ came to redeem? If so, I have an experience in common with you.

To me, one of the sweetest things that I have ever read is the account of Peter and Christ just before his crucifixion, recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said. "I tell thee Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." (Luke 22:31-34) After Peter denied three times that he knew Christ, the cock crew. "And Peter went out and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:62)

Here, as in all of the scriptures, the Word of the Lord must be fulfilled; Peter must deny Christ three times, and the cock must crow. There is no doubt that Peter was a chosen vessel of the Lord, but he is taught that he must be stripped of every vestige of fleshly power and volition, and wholly

a dependent creature on the power and the will of the Lord. Not only is this to be shown to Peter, but the other apostles, disciples, and to all succeeding generations of his people. The Lord did not forsake Peter because Peter denied that he knew Christ. Being a chosen vessel for the purpose, Peter was highly endowed of the Lord to preach the gospel of Christ.

The Lord has been good to me. I have been blessed with good health, a good and kind hearted companion, a daughter, who is married and has three young, healthy children. A son with the U. S. Army Security Agency in Germany, and to be home soon.

No, I am not sure, but I hope that I have been born again. Not to prolong this writing, I would like to close with two stanzas, each in a different hymn:

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

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

Reuben A. Braswell

2245 Macon Avenue,
Camden, Arkansas 71701

Dear Brothers Spangler and Wood:

Enclosed is check for \$3.00 for renewal of my subscription to the dear **Signs of the Times**. I enjoy the **Signs** so much, and as I do not get to go to church as I would like to, it is such a comfort to read the sweet letters and editorials.

I hear a sermon on my radio each Sunday morning from Eldorado, Arkansas. Brother Elbert Lambert was on April 10th. His wife, Dessie Mae, is my baby sister: they are both so very dear and sweet to me. I am the oldest child of seven, and all are gone except Dessie and me, and I have lived my three score and ten. I hope and pray that when I cross the waters of death I will have a home with the dear Lord and Saviour.

Please remember me a poor sinner: if saved it will be by grace, and surely not by my works. May God bless and keep you. Elder Lambert of Winnsboro, Texas is my pastor.

A sister in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Florence Boggs

APPRECIATES THE
SOUND DOCTRINE

Rt. 1, Box 90,
Glade Hill, Virginia 24092

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

It seems to me that the **Signs** is being blest — I wish our people would take up the May issue and read and re-read Elder Griffin's article concerning the office of a Deacon.

Also, Elder Curry's article, which to my mind is one of the ablest expositions of what we believe. And in a recent issue the **Signs** carried a very rich letter from Elder Ruston to the late Sister Gooch. I hope our people everywhere will give these wonderful articles their most careful consideration.

Brother Wood, I can't find words to express how much I appreciate the sound doctrine on the pages of this respected paper, the **Signs of the Times**.

In bonds,
(Elder) Julius Bock

"THE BLESSINGS OF
THE ETERNAL COVENANT"

"And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (2 Samuel 9:1)

As we just sang:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus name.

His oath, His Covenant, and His blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before his throne!"

A sure foundation for the Hope of God's elect is that eternal Covenant made between the Father and Son before the world began. Before going into our text, for the benefit of those who may not understand our covenant theology and faith, let me briefly explain that Old Baptists believe in a Covenant-keeping God.

God has made three different covenants, or agreements, or testaments, which involves His relationship with His creatures. First, in the very beginning, God made a covenant with Adam in the Garden whereby Adam was to receive the blessings of life and all the fruits of the Garden. However, God gave him one commandment, one mark of God's sovereignty over man. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17).

Beloved, God made a covenant with the race of man, in Adam. You know the sad story. Adam had but one possible sin he could commit, for sin is the transgression of the law, and Adam had only this one law. He transgressed, he died spiritually, and plunged all that were in his loins into a state of sin and death. God made a covenant with fallible man, and man broke it, and thus made it null and void as a grounds for any hope of salvation.

Second, God made a covenant with Abraham, and in its national aspects, re-affirmed it with Israel when they left Egypt as a nation of run away slaves. This covenant in short, is embodied in the Ten Commandments and issues forth in a "do this and thou shalt live." Moses summarized it when he said: "And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, (Deut. 6: 24-25). James tells us

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all,” and Jesus replied against Israel that they had substituted the commandments of men for the commandments of God. God made a covenant with Israel, that if they kept the law, it would have been imputed to them for their righteousness. In reality, it was given to show that man CAN NOT keep a law, for righteousness. Man invariably wants to make a law to keep so as to earn salvation. Of all the systems of works that God is expected to accept, surely that Law which He gave which is just and holy and good, is the only one He would accept, and He clearly does not accept the works of the law as a way of salvation and life! God made a covenant with Israel, a nation of men, and again MAN BROKE THE COVENANT! Man does not have the ability to do anything good in the sight of God. Man is totally depraved!

But, the Eternal Covenant we speak upon this morning was **not made with feeble, fickle, failing man!** This Covenant, called the New Covenant, or Testament because of its dispensation in the history of man, is the old and Eternal Covenant. No, the All-knowing, All Wise God certainly knew what He had decreed to be! Long before these weak covenants were made, God had made a covenant that was a Rock under them, that even though these were to fail, to teach God’s elect precious Truth regarding their own nature, yet this covenant was a rock which held their hope fast in spite of their failure in the other covenants!

This covenant is sweetly set forth in the context of our text. Is there any left of the house of Saul that I might show the kindness of Jonathan to? David refers to an early incident in his youth. You recall how the young lad went out to slay Goliath and then was taken into King Saul’s palace and not allowed to go home to his father’s house? There as a young country lad he was very much alone in a house-hold whose head was often given over to an evil spirit by the Lord. Can you imagine how a child

of God would feel confined against his will in the midst of ungodly people? That is how we expect David felt. But there was one ray of sweet sunlight in that dark palace. The King’s son was a child of grace, and David’s heart was knit together with the young Prince’s as one. “And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul Then Jonathan and David MADE A COVENANT, because he loved him as his own soul.” (I Sam. 18: 1-4).

Now this covenant was reaffirmed later as shown by I Samuel 20: 12-17. It was twofold in its nature. Jonathan agreed that whenever King Saul was angry with David and meant to do him harm, that Jonathan would warn David; or when King Saul was in good spirit, he would let David know of it; and in return, David was to show kindness to Jonathan when David received the kingdom. However, the covenant had a very important clause inserted in it: “And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy KINDNESS FROM MY HOUSE FOR EVER: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David everyone from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying: Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David’s enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.”

Can’t you see the picture? How exceedingly beautiful it is. Jonathan, the Prince, the Heir to the throne, rather than being jealous because God had ordained David King in his stead, makes a covenant with him IN BEHALF OF HIS SEED, HIS FAMILY! Beloved that is a type of that Eternal Covenant between God the Father and God the Son with the Holy Spirit as testator or witness to it. God the Ruler, made a covenant with His Elect Beloved in behalf of His people, and this covenant was to be everlasting! God made covenants with man,

and man always broke them, but this covenant, the covenant whose blessings thereof reach unto the elect children of God for their salvation was not made with the children, but with their Lord. God the Father enters into agreement with Christ that even after His death on the Cross, yet indeed, God will show mercy and not justice, toward the election of grace. No wonder David can so sweetly prophesy of the blessings of this covenant relationship when he wrote: "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If His children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless **my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him**, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. **My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.** Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." (Psalm 89: 28-36).

That dear saints, is eternal security. God does indeed send His rod upon His people when they sin, and they all sin, yet they can all testify many times that God is faithful. He has not utterly withdrawn Himself from them but always sooner or later visits them again with comfort of His Spirit and the assurance of salvation. When they sin, He withdraws Himself, chastens them, and their faith all but fails, and at such a time all they have left is a hope, which serves as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast. But when Christ restores His Blessed Presence to them, faith is increased, hope takes its place as a secondary grace, and one is made to rejoice in the assurance of salvation for a season. Then, down they go again into almost utter despair, only to see His covenant blessings restored later! Yes, we know by experience that our God is a covenant-keeping God, or else we would

have been cut off in His wrath from this vale of sin and sorrows. Ah, how great is our God, to love us so, for Christ's sake! "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, (that house that is cursed), that I may show him kindness for Christ's sake?"

And Ziba said unto the King, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is LAME ON HIS FEET." (Verse 3) Ah, listen dear child of grace. There you are! Lame on your feet. You can't come to Christ, you are crippled! I wonder how this son was crippled? We read in 2 Sam. 4: 4, "And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame . . ."

That is how it happen. He FELL. Brethren, the great difference is Predestinarian Baptists and Arminians lie right here. What happened in the Garden? Did man FALL, or did he just STUMP HIS TOE? Is he DEAD in trespasses and sins, or just SICK? Is he WITHOUT FAITH, or has faith to exercise? Is he rotten from head to toe, or does he still have a "spark of Divinity" in Him? Is God seeking the elect, or is man seeking God? Is it Christ that makes one accepted, or is it man that accepts Christ? Which? Can man come to Christ, or must CHRIST NEEDS GO THROUGH SAMARIA? Jesus said "No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him." (John 6: 44 and 65) Paul says of reprobates "For all men hath not faith. ." (2 Thess. 3: 2) And also states that man is dead of trespasses and sins, and that it then is Christ who makes one accepted in the beloved. (Ephesians 1. 2-6 and 2: 1, 2) Brethren, this son of the covenant is lame! He can't come to the King, he has to be brought! Now, "his name was Mephibosheth."

The word "Mephibosheth" means: "A destroying shame." Talk about man's dignity! God describes even the elect as "a worm, and the son of a worm." He calls them "grasshoppers" and "less

than nothing." Man thinks he really is somebody, but God speaks otherwise. The only reason King David shows mercy on this crippled son of an accursed household, this destroying shame, is for "Jonathan's Sake." And beloved, the only reason God shows mercy on any of the elect sons of cursed Adam, these ungodly rebels against His kingdom, is for Christ's sake with whom he made that covenant that Christ might be the firstborn among many brethren! It was not for anything IN you, but for THOSE IN Christ, God shows mercy. There is nothing in man to turn God's heart toward him; just enough to turn His stomach. Man, yes, even elect men, are destroying shame, yet when we were without strength, Christ died FOR THE UNGODLY. Christ died for SINNERS, not righteous hypocrites. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," says our Lord.

Where did David find Mephibosheth? "Behold he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar." (verse 4) Ah, listen how sovereign God is! He in His providence uses men with names that carry precious truths to the believers' heart. That is absolute predestination dear child of God! Where is he? He is in the "house of Machir" which means "Sold." There we were too! Paul said "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died," and stated, "I was sold under sin." (Romans 7: 14) If one is sold into slavery, then he must be redeemed, or brought back and the Scriptures clearly teach that Christ came to REDEEM those that were under the law, under the curse of that broken covenant! We are taught that we are "Justified freely by His Grace through the Redemption that is in Christ." (Romans 3: 24)

Not only was he in the house of Machir, but he was the son of Ammiel, which word means: "People of God." Anywhere in the Scriptures we find the suffix "el" it means "of God" and the Hebrew word "Ammi" means "people." Beloved, the only ones in that covenant with David must be the children of Jonathan! And the only ones in that covenant

of grace must be the children of God. Christ died for none other. He prayed only for "those whom thou hast given me" in John 17. It is only the "people of God" who share in the election of grace, and in this Eternal Covenant. All of salvation, or deliverance, are blessings that flow from this covenant, and they flow only to those who are people of God. They are people of God before they are ever born in this world. The angel proclaimed the purpose of Christ's birth saying: "Thou shalt bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1: 23) Their names were written in the Lamb's book of life, not when they believe, but "before the foundation of the world." (Rev. 17: 8) Yes, the "people of God" are "sold under sin" and in need of eternal redemption! Not only so, but they are in "Lodebar."

"Lodebar" literally means "without pasture" so we can easily phrase this for men instead of animals by interpreting it "without bread." Mephibosheth is in the house of no bread! Have you ever hungered and thirsted after righteousness? Have you ever wondered if "God could prepare a table in the wilderness?" If God has ever visited your poor bankrupt soul, you know He can. Ah, children of the covenant, aren't we completely bankrupted in Adam, insolvent, poor, hungry, and naked. Are we not in the "house of no bread?" Yet has it not pleased the Lord from time to time to break the word of life to us, to feed us manna from his table. We are like the Syrophenician woman who came to Christ to have Him cast a devil out of her daughter, to whom Jesus said unto her, "Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto the dogs." (Mark 7: 27) We have been taught, if God is our teacher, that we have no complaint when called a dog, that we deserve nothing from the master's table, yet we have been made to feel as she, "yes, Lord, yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

As I visit among the Predestinarian Baptists, I find the crumbs to be a ban-

quet of sweet tokens of grace given to me. And when we are thus taught of God, we like Mephibosheth, will fall down at the feet of the King in holy adoration. And, beloved, all those in that covenant will one day inherit all its blessings. "And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan's thy father's sake, and I will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat at my table continually." Did you not know that the saints shall inherit the earth, the domain of Adam? Yea, did you not know that we are "predestinated unto an inheritance?" (Ephesians 1: 11) All that are in that covenant shall inherit that kingdom with Christ and this for Christ's sake alone. Aren't you glad Christ could not deny himself and break that Covenant. Are you of hope, that when He entered into that agreement with the Father, He viewed you as one of His seed? Has the Spirit of God caused you to bow before Christ the King Eternal and in praise and wonder exclaim: "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I?" (Verse 8)

"Come Thou Fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise

Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the Mount, I'm fixed upon it!
Mount of Thy redeeming love."

(Sermon by Elder Stanley C. Phillips April 2, 1967, Indianapolis, Ind.)

"DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE"

2768 Clifton Ave. N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

Signs of the Times:

Dear Brethren:

Nearly always, when I take the **Signs** in hand to read, my eyes fall on this line of expression, "Devoted to the Old School Baptist Cause." And most of the time a warm glow of love flows through my mind as I am made to consider that

Devotion; as well as The Cause. I have at times wanted to let it be known there is appreciation for the Devotion.

I often consider and am deeply concerned as I read the travel of those in times past, and of those of today. Why do we love the testimony of the ones that "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness?" Why do we want to go to meeting? What seek we to hear? to see? Why do we bother to read?

This Kingdom has a King, and he is Jesus, for he is that Righteousness, and reigns as such. Our affection seems to be set on things above — not on things on the earth. I realize that to say, "I want to hear this Jesus as being uppermost in everything," is to bring persecution toward me. And yet in the past thirty-four years that I have been a member of the Old Baptist Church, I have not known any better thing to seek after. Even when I was a little girl, the word **Jesus** gave me comfort, for he did not forbid a little child; and I feel that littleness to this day. I hope I never forget that I am so little that I am nothing.

There is suffering in knowing Jesus; but our suffering is nothing compared to His. He being the **Way**, we must know it is rugged. He being the **Truth**, we must know it puts all falseness behind and in the back ground. He being the **Life**, we must behold Him to live. For this cause there is a devotion that cannot cease.

Seeing this devotion as I attended meetings when blessed with conveyance, and a desire so strong to go even if it meant miles of rough road, and to walk part of the way at times; and seeing that shining love and faith in the members present, both old and young, was a cord not to be treated lightly. Indeed I could not resist; and I did not, and do not to this day deserve such a blessing. God is Love. There is nothing greater than love, because it is God. It overcomes all else — gives life.

Recently in a song being sung, my eyes fell on, "Jesus my blest abode." It filled all space, and was so consoling as I felt embraced in that glorious truth;

and as the preaching that followed was a continued theme of Jesus, "Ark of the covenant," it was uplifting and comforting.

There have been several times when certain words of Scripture dropped so sweetly and so stirringly into my poor begging mind, which so filled my heart that I could not keep tears from streaming down my face, even while on my job in my daily effort to "earn my living." The scriptures were, "The Lord our Righteousness," and the "Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." There is fear here — the love that overcometh.

"Be of good cheer for I have overcome the world," is something that gives me much thought. Do I believe it? At his manifest presence, Yes. Without Him I can do nothing: it leads me to seek after Him. His name being, Wonderful, and the government being upon his shoulder, and being the Prince of Peace, the Everlasting Father, and I hope, my Counsellor, the feeling that so great a Being embraced me in that government and will keep me, overwhelms me, for I am so needy and so poor in spirit, and as a little child unable to cry. Yet a sigh is known unto Him.

He told Peter, "Feed my sheep." What food do they need? He is the Bread of Life. What did Peter see in these sheep? We know that God is Love, and that love begets love; so we hear the confession, "Thou knowest all things: thou knowest I love thee."

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

'I WONDER IF THEY CAN LOVE ME'

P. O. Box 39,
Chunchula, Alabama 36521

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is \$3.00 for the Signs another year. I do not want to miss one copy for we really do enjoy reading the good writings of every one. I want to say to Elder E. J. Lambert that my husband and I have just finished reading his

book, "Tried in the Furnace," and you will never know how much we enjoyed it. Your experience was wonderful.

I think so many times that if I had an experience like others, how I would like to write it; but mine is so little, it seems it would not be worth the time it took to read it. But one thing I know: I do have a little hope that I would not take anything for. "Sometimes my hope is little — I almost lay it by; sometimes it is sufficient if I were called to die." I often ask, "Am I his, or am I not?" but one thing I know, I do love the Lord's children wherever they are. Often I wonder if they can love me, for I am so imperfect and cannot do good.

I enjoyed reading, "Total Depravity," and the good experiences. One of them is worth more to me than the cost of the paper a year. Those things that are so comforting to us, we don't have to buy: they are gifts of God, from whom every good and perfect gift comes.

I hope the good Lord will bless every one of the editors and those who write, to keep the good paper coming to the poor people who enjoy it so much.

From one who has hope of mercy; love

Mrs. P. S. Bell

LOVES THE OLD BAPTISTS

252 Newport Ave.,
Detroit 15, Mich. 48215

Dear Editors:

I received my Signs of the Times. I enjoy reading it so much: it is all the preaching I get. I will be 89 years old if I live until the 19th of August, and have been a widow thirty years, and live with my children.

O, dear brothers and sisters, if I could just write sweet letters as I read in the good old Signs. I love the old Baptists, and I believe they are the only ones that preach the truth, giving all the praise to the Lord. If my time is past due for the paper, I will send the money.

I ask the prayers of you dear brethren. If I am a child of God, I feel to be

the least. If I am saved, it will be His grace and mercy, and not for anything good that I have done.

May the Lord bless you editors.

Mrs. I. W. Cox

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
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Miss Reidy Pickeral, Va.....	\$17.00
Lavenia Biggs, Tenn.....	5.00
Homer Bailey, Del.....	2.00
Mrs. Herbert Shanahan, Fla.....	1.00
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Wm. O. Hall, Wash.....	1.00
M. D. Merrill's, Tex.....	1.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.....	1.00

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The Upper Country Line Association is appointed to be held at Monticello Church beginning on Saturday July 15, 1967, and continuing through Monday.

Monticello Church is located in the village of Monticello, about twelve miles south of Reidsville, N. C.; and twelve miles north of Greensboro, N. C. Follow U. S. 29 from either direction, and the meeting house is located just off of U.S. 29, on the old Route 29.

For further information contact W. J. Lambeth, Brown Summitt, N. C., or D. V. Spangler, Rt. 1, Danville, Va. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1967 session of the Pigg River District Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Reed Creek Church, Henry County, Virginia, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in August, and continuing through Sunday. The meeting on Friday will be held in the meeting house, and on Saturday and Sunday at the Fieldale-Collinsville School.

To get to the meeting house, which is a short distance off U. S. 220, turn at the association sign one mile north of Bassett Forks. To get to the school house, turn west in Col-

linsville off U. S. 220, on South Daniel Creek Road at the association sign, and go one mile to the school building.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

John D. Wood, Clerk

THREE DAYS MEETING

The Riffe Primitive Baptist Church expect to hold their annual three-days meeting the third Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before, 1967, at Mossy Rock, Washington. For information contact Mrs. Opal Huntting, Silver Creek, Washington.

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association convenes, the Lord willing, with Union Church July 7, 8, and 9, 1967.

Union Church is located off State Road 605 in the Climax Community. Those coming from the North or West should watch for the Climax sign off Route 40 near Gretna, Virginia. Those from the South or East should turn on Route 57 inside of the Town of Chatham, Virginia, and turn at the Climax sign off Route 57.

All of our correspondents and friends are urged to attend.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

MEETING AT SLATE HILL

If God so wills, there will be an all-day meeting at the Slate Hill Meeting House, Slate Hill, N. Y., Saturday, August 5, 1967.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

A. J. Slauson

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Bear Grass Church, Bear Grass, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in July, 1967. Elder E. C. Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder W. E. Grimes, alternate.

We cordially invite everyone to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Rule, Clerk

Rt. 2, Williamston, N. C. 27892

Danville, Virginia July, 1967

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

**LITTLE BITS OF HEAVEN
FOR THE POOR**

“A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.” (Psalms 37:16)

I recall often an incident which occurred several years ago. I arrived at Paren Meetinghouse one Sunday morning after laboring all night, though so exhausted and despondent that I could not hold up my head. I felt that all my laboring had been in vain. I had never felt more wretched, cold, miserable, poor, and unprofitable in my entire life. As I walked upon the ground a little boy's hand slid into my hand, and I heard an anxious voice say, “Brother Lambert, go home with us tonight and talk about Jesus.” The plea in his voice made me forget about my exhaustion. I then looked into the face of this little boy and what I saw in his countenance

has never been erased from my mind. I beheld humility, earnestness, purity, and love together with pleading in this boys countenance to such a degree that I was unaware of anything else around me. My response was; “Phil, I will not wait until I can go home with you to talk about Jesus. The Lord willing, I shall talk to you about Jesus today.” This was better than a good night of sleep. This was a little bit of Heaven for the poor. Phil Pittman was then about six years of age. He is the son of Deacon T. J. & Sister Helen Pittman, Box 1917, Hawkins, Texas.

I experienced another little bit of Heaven that morning as the Lord blessed me to use very simple language to preach Jesus to Phil and the many others composing the congregation. When services were ended Phil came to me and told me that he enjoyed the sermon. He concluded by saying, “I dreamed about Jesus last night. I saw him come out of the grave and— and— He went through a hole in the fence.” Then I understood why he wanted to hear more about Jesus. His mother was so amazed at Phil's attention to the sermon that morning that she said to me, “Phil understood your sermon. Ask him about any part of it. I believe he can tell you what you said.”

A few months ago at the age of thirteen Phil excused himself from the living room where his parents were entertaining an Old School Baptist Elder. His teacher asked the members of his class to write a brief theme on the subject of their choice from forty six suggested titles. Several minutes later he returned from his room with the following composition:

“PHIL PITTMAN

“MY CHURCH”

“My church is a simple wood structure which is resting in the country far away from the hustle and bustle of the cities and towns. It is a place where my family and other people go to get peace of mind and worship the Lord in spirit and in truth. When I am down and out in the

pitfalls of sin, I can go there and hear God's Holy Word spoken and how I rejoice!

"My church helps me realize more and more that these earthly items will gradually fade away, and this helps me to want to go to that Heavenly Kingdom and get away from this sinful world. If a man on this old earth had more money than he knew what to do with and had every luxury known to man, but did not believe in our wonderful Lord, he would not have much to live for.

"A man that was a poor sinner in this old world might have to go around from house to house begging for food every day, but as poor as he might be, if he had the Word of God in his heart, he would be rich as a king.

"Yes, our church is wonderful for people to go to, to hear the Word of God preached, and to sing His praises."

God willing, we desire to glean a few "Little Bits of Heaven For the Poor" from the above quoted short simple theme. Better is a little simple wood structure where people worship the Lord, than a great stone edifice where people idolize the building. Better that a few meet in a quiet place searching for peace of mind than for multitudes to meet in a great building seeking the praise of men. I had rather read a short theme written by a 'teen age boy expressing simple truths and experiences than to read volumns composed by theologians who try to prove by their writings that they are wiser than other people. It gives me more joy to hear a boy express himself as being, "down and out in the pitfalls of sin," than to hear many men tell how righteous they are. When a person feels the weight of his sins and is aware of the terrible condition he is in by nature, he is in good condition to rejoice when he hears the gospel preached. An evidence of conviction of sin as well as a declaration of rejoicing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is sufficient testimony that one has been given Life Eternal. (See John 17: 2-3) The result of knowing God's greatness, when He reveals Himself to you, is to know your own sinfulness and weakness.

The result of knowing Jesus Christ, when He takes up His abode in your soul, is to know His power to completely and perfectly save you from your sins; and to finally deliver you into Heaven's Wonderland. "To get peace of mind and worship the Lord in spirit and truth," may not mean much to the rich. It may sound very simple and unimportant to those who have never experienced that warfare within when the "Flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh . . . so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5: 17) Suffice it to say that these two simple things are precious gems from Heaven to the poor and needy. A simple mode of worship consisting of singing praises to the Lord, hearing the Word of God preached, and worshiping Him in spirit and in truth, as well as seeking for peace of mind is more profitable than engaging in a long list of formal activities.

The vast majority of God's people are poor in worldly goods. James says in Chapter two, verse five, "Hath not God chosen the **poor of this world**. . ." Gideon was a poor man: ". . . Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." The widow of Zarepphath said, ". . . As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in the cruse." (I Kings 17: 12). The prophet's widow told Elisha, ". . . Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons as bondsmen." "Thine handmaid hath not a thing in the house, save a pot of oil." (See 2 Kings 4:1-2). We read of the widow who only had two mites and of Jesus who became poor for our sake to such extent that He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head" Matthew 8: 20. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none." (Acts 3: 6). Jesus said to the man that had great possessions, If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and

come and follow me." Jesus further explained to His disciples, "... That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of God." Evidently Jesus was talking of earthly possessions. Only God can change a man's heart so that he will think more of heavenly treasures than his possessions in this world. Poor people cannot finance the building of great structures in which to meet and worship God. They willingly give of their small means to erect simple houses of worship. The wealthy generally contribute only to the cost of great imposing buildings for personal gain of a high reputation in order to gain more wealth. They do this in such manner that it doesn't cost them anything, as it is subtracted from their income taxes. There is more joy in really giving from the heart than there is in diverting some taxes due to "charitable institutions."

The poor Child of God is more content with the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter, which they have, than the wealthy is with much. The poor thank God for what they have. The wealthy is too busily engaged in pursuit of greater wealth to enjoy the wealth they have already accumulated. A very small gift is more appreciated by one who has little than a large gift by one who has much wealth. Even much wealth cannot be satisfactory to the rich. We read in Ecclesiastes 5: 10, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase." Read the 12th verse, "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." The preacher spoke of a sore evil, "Namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt, Those riches perish by evil travail . . ." (See v. 13-14). The preacher further states: "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labor, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? All his days also he eateth in darkness, and

he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness." (Ecclesiastes 5: 15-17) If this be the lot of the rich while here in the world, experiencing much restlessness, sorrow, wrath, and sickness, they are to be pitied rather than envied. It is no wonder that the Psalmist said, "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." We conclude this paragraph by stating that the poor child of God is more fortunate to enjoy the little that he has here in the world than the rich with their many possessions: "Better is an handful with quietness, than both hands full with travail and vexation of spirit." (Ecclesiastes 4: 6)

"Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished." (Ecclesiastes 4: 13). Phil Pittman shows to have greater wisdom in the short theme quoted herein than many grown men who know nothing of the Grace of our God. He says, "My church helps me realize more and more that these earthly items shall gradually fade away." It is a little bit of Heaven to think that a taste of the grace of God in a child's experience will so soon cause earthly riches to lose its glamour. Phil suggests two extreme cases to prove his high regard for a little bit of Heaven and his low regard for worldly possessions. He speaks first of the worldly rich man and then the very poor sinner. Belief in our wonderful Lord is so much greater than lots of money and every known luxury that one having the latter without the former would not have much to live for. On the other hand, one having no natural bread, a beggar for the necessities of natural life, the Word of God in his heart would make that person rich as a king. Belief in God and the Word of God in one's heart makes life worth living. It makes rich. All the money and luxuries known to man without God could not make life worth living. "If a man on this old earth had more money than he knew what to do with and had every luxury known to man, but did not believe in our wonderful Lord, He would not have much to live for. A man that is a poor sinner in this

old world might have to go around from house to house begging for food every day, but as poor as he might be, if he had the Word of God in his heart, he would be rich as a king."

Little bits from Heaven for the poor makes rich. It is a heavenly gift to be made poor for I am persuaded that all whom God makes poor shall be made rich. We read in the first chapter of 1st Samuel, verses 7 & 8, "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich . . . He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory . . ." Have you ever been stripped of all your great faith in self, and have been clothed with a little faith in the Lord? The Lord disrobes you of your own self-righteousness and gives you a little hope in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. You are poor in spirit, yet there is a very little. Is it true in your experience that this very little is more precious than the much you once thought you had? There is much promised to the "Faithful in a very little." (St. Luke 19: 17). A very little moment in communion with our Saviour from time to time in this life is certainly a gracious blessing which overrides the days of conflict, doubts, and fears, which occur between these glorious experiences. Your love for God and the brethren may be so very little that you think you have no love at all. If you are greatly concerned about it, it shows you have a little bit of love. If you love, even a very little, you are born of God. (See 1st John 4: 7). Your talent may appear so very little to you that you conclude that you cannot be of service to anyone. You hesitate to use it: yet, when you do put it to use, there is a sweet feeling of relief. Many have complained of not being able to sing. I have heard these same people when they had forgottn everything but praising the Lord, sing like angels. I have felt many times when I went into the pulpit that I could not preach, there was no use trying, but the result was the best liberty in preaching. I conclude much of the time that I have no talent for writing. I go so far as to tell people

that I cannot write, I cannot write as well as I desire. Sometimes it is my experience that when I feel the least qualified, my writing is better. I feel so destitute of godliness and know so well the sinfulness of my flesh that I go mourning most of the time. Would I mourn because of my sins if I did not possess a **desire** for godliness?? Would not a **desire for godliness** be a little bit of godliness?? I must reason that I have a little bit of godliness because I desire it!! Precious thought! Christ says to the church in Philadelphia, "I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a **little strength**, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. (Revelation 3: 8). A very little time for communion with Christ is a little bit of Heaven for the poor. A very little faith, a very little hope, a very little love, a very little godliness, a very little gift, and a very little strength: all these are LITTLE BITS OF HEAVEN FOR THE POOR.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y.
 March 19, 1867

Brother Beebe:-

For nine weeks I have been confined to the house; but, through the mercy of our Covenant God, I hope soon to be around again. My health has improved a good deal and is still improving.

While I have been confined to the house my mind has been dwelling on many things, some of which I will write for the "Signs" if you approve of them. I have been contemplating the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession for us. To intercede is to plead for another, or others. This in an important part of the work of Christ for

His people; as saith the prophet, "And he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The being to whom intercession is made, is none other than God the Father. As it is written, "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Christ has said to the Father, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory." The persons for whom the intercession is made, do not include all the human family; for says our glorious Intercessor, "I pray not for the world." If His intercession be not limited to them that the Father has given him, then it cannot be in all cases effectual, according to his saying, "Thou always hearest me." But it is limited to that people for whom he ever liveth to make intercession. By reference to the priesthood under the law, their intercession was founded in the satisfaction made by the sacrifice which has been offered for the sins of the people. The sacrifice must be made without blemish, and so in itself considered, not deserving death. A transfer was made of the sins of the people for whom the sacrifice was offered to the victim which was then to be considered as the transgressor, and as such, deserving the punishment, and so put to death; then for the persons for whom the offering was made, the blood was carried within the veil by the high priest and there presented with his intercession as having a righteous claim for the acquittal of the offender.

Thus Christ as a sacrifice was holy, compared to a lamb without spot, and the sins of all the people were laid on him, as it is written. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." He then suffered as the offender, for "It pleased the Lord to bruise him." Again, the Father said, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd." Now when we consider the infinite value of the sacrifice, not only on the ground of its purity, but also on account of its union with the divine nature, which in the great transaction stood as the altar on which the

offering was made and so sanctifying the gift. Hence the Apostle says that he, through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God. Here then we have a sacrifice which not only shows the heinous nature of sin, but also shows the tremendous curse of the law against sin. It also shows an atonement equivalent to the full demands of divine justice. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." "Now, being freely justified by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." He having now obtained for us eternal redemption: which opened the way for him to rise from the dead. Sin, being now put away by the sacrifice of himself, death could no longer hold him; and rising from the dead, he ascended into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us. The apostle says, "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God." We now see him a priest upon his throne, having an unchangable priesthood; wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever lives to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us who needeth not daily, as those high priests under the law to offer up sacrifice; for this he did once when he offered himself.

Now we see the way opened from earth to heaven, and here is a people saved by the Lord; not by any means or efforts of their own, for it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. This atonement is definite and personal, embracing those to whom the promise was given. These were all by nature children of wrath even as others; yet they had the promise of eternal life, and this in Christ, and the promise that Christ would be manifested in the fullness of time. So at the appointed time, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, and by that Spirit they are quickened, and delivers them from death, and from the power of Satan unto God. When convinced of our lost and ruined condition as transgressors of the holy law of God, he manifests himself

to us according to his promise. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins will I remember no more." Here we receive the evidence of pardon through him, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, and here we are made to joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

All this comes to us in consequence of his intercession. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." To them the assurance is given. "O Israel thou shalt not be forgotten of me." "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it." Here is a people who have the promises in the covenant which was made in Christ, and came to us in a way of grace, without money and without price. Our great Intercessor says, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the waters of life freely." His intercession before the throne shall not cease until all the vessels of his mercy are brought in, for it is written, he ever liveth to make intercession for them, and his intercession is always effectual, although the child of God sometimes greatly fears that the Lord has forsaken him or that he is deceived and his doubts prevail because of the darkness of his mind, and the world and Satan together with his own corrupt nature beset him on every side, and he begins to sink under the weight of sorrow and grief; and he concludes, as the disciples once did, that he must perish. But the Saviour is always near at hand in every time of their distress, as when he said to them, "Why are ye fearful? O ye of little faith!" Here he shows the power of intercession, for he rebuked the winds and there was a great calm. Just before they were so much cast down, but not destroyed, because their Saviour still liveth to make intercession for them. Sometimes we look on things according to their outward appearance, and want to find Christ in our flesh,

and because we find so much of the workings of Satan there, we say, Surely we cannot be what we have professed to be, forgetting that it is said, "No temptation has taken you but such as are common to man; but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." Here again his intercession prevails, as in the case of Peter, when the Saviour said, "Satan has desired to have thee," but the kind Intercessor says, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

Now dear brethren, in conclusion, seeing therefore we have such an high priest, who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities, he having been tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin, let us at all times come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may ask for mercy and obtain grace to help in time of need. May we realize that our all-prevailing intercessor gives assurance not only that all his covenant people shall be with him, but also whatsoever they ask in his name, even while here in this world, shall be granted them. Having the witness within us that we are his children, may we consider it our greatest privilege to trust in him, and wait patiently and live holy, for he says "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Fight the good fight valiantly, rejoice constantly and repose eventually in the bosom of eternal love, whence the rage of earth and hell shall be felt no more. He will intercede until he has presented the entire family to himself without spot or blemish in immortal glory, dressed in white robes, clean and white, which is the righteousness of Christ; and with palms of victory in our hands, we shall join with all the glorified church in crying, "Salvation to our God, and to the Lamb for ever, Amen."

Your friend and brother,
Jacob Winchell

(From the Signs of April 15, 1867, Elder Winchell was the great grandfather of Sister Elnora Sickler, of Woodstock, N. Y., and Sister Verna Ellis, of California.

J. D. W.

OBITUARIES

MARY PAGE NETHERY

Sister Nethery, 88 years old, died at her home February 14, 1967. Her husband, Joseph E. Nethery, died February 14, 1959. She is survived by one son, Marion A. Nethery, Madison, N. C.; two daughters, Mrs. Annie Nethery Chambers, Pelham, N. C. and Mrs. E. Frank Johnson, Greensboro, N. C.; and two sisters, Mrs. Gertrude Dix and Mrs. Hattie Vaughn, Danville, Virginia.

Sistery Nethery was a member of Monticello Primitive Baptist Church, having joined there in 1921: she remained a faithful member to the end. She loved the church and attended as long as her health permitted. She said when she could not be at the services that she would meditate during the hour, and imagine she could hear the beautiful singing and the good preaching.

She was a lovely woman to know, and lived as nearly a saint as anyone could in this troubled world. She always loved to talk of her Saviour, and rejoiced when her pastor and friends came to visit her. We feel sure she is sleeping peacefully with her Redeemer.

Her funeral was held at the Wilkerson Funeral Home in Reidsville, N. C., conducted by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. Burial was in the Pleasant Grove Cemetery.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy sent to the family; and a copy be put into the church records.

Done by order of the church at Monticello March 8, 1967.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Vallie Chrisman, Clerk

MABEL ANNA WEEKS

As we believe that our eternal God has an appointed time for all things, we believe that our dear and beloved sister, Mabel Anna Weeks, who passed away January 17, 1967, had spent her allotted time here on these mortal shores.

Sister Weeks was born January 20, 1874, her parents were the late Lewis D. and Anna Peacock Gowell. She was married on March 31, 1894 to the late Walter L. Weeks; and to this union were born two sons and six daughters. Surviving are two sons, five daughters, twenty grandchildren, forty-two great grandchildren, and six great great grandchildren.

Sister Weeks was baptized on November 1, 1898 by the late Elder Z. M. Beal, her membership being with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, which in later years merged with the Whitefield Church in Whitefield, Maine.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer on January 20, 1967, and her body was to be laid to rest on a later date in the Libby Hill Cemetery in Gardiner, Maine.

Sister Weeks was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. May all who knew and loved her be reconciled to her passing away from these mortal shores; and may they be also blessed to feel that their loss was her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MABEL THOMAS FARNIE

Sister Mabel Thomas Farnie was born near Leesburg, Virginia, March 28, 1886, and died at her home in Leesburg December 25, 1966, at the age of eighty years. She was a daughter of the late William P. and Sallie Riticor Thomas; and was first married to Christopher A. Shryock, who died in 1931. On September 1, 1935, she was married to David J. Farnie, who survives. Surviving also are, one brother, Henry P. Thomas, Alexandria, Va., and one sister, Mrs. Margaret Ellington, Waynesboro, Va. and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Farnie was a retired registered nurse, and for several years was assistant superintendent of nurses at the Loudoun Hospital; and for many years President of the Loudoun Nurses Alumnae Association. A few years ago her hip was broken in a fall, and this with other ailments greatly restricted her activities.

She united with Mt. Zion Old School Church in Loudoun County, Virginia, and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts on August 22, 1943. She served efficiently as church clerk from 1945 until her death. Sister Farnie was a faithful member, and a strong believer that salvation is by grace alone. On the fly-leaf of a book which she had purchased, she wrote, "Bought by Mabel T. Farnie, who believes this Old School Baptist doctrine." Though we all greatly miss her, we would not wish her to have continued longer in her suffering, from which she is now free.

Funeral services were held at the funeral home in Leesburg by the writer, and she was laid to rest in the family plot in Union Cemetery in Leesburg, to await the coming of the Lord in his glory, when the redeemed shall be conformed to the image of the Son of God in the resurrection, and thus prepared for heaven and immortal glory.

The many friends and beautiful flowers at the services evidenced the great love and esteem in which Sister Farnie was held by the brethren and friends.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to Mr. Farnie and all the surviving family.

John D. Wood

BESSIE MABEL BAILEY

As it pleased the Lord to take from our midst our beloved sister Bessie Mabel Bailey on January 4, 1966, we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God.

Sister Bailey was born August 29, 1895, her parents were the late Walter L. and Mabel Gowell Weeks. She was married to George W. Bailey and to this union were born five sons, four of which survive. She is also survived by eighteen grandchildren.

Sister Bailey was baptized on September 22, 1919, by the late Elder F. W. Keene, her membership being with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church, (which later merged with the Whitefield Church) and she remained a faithful member until death.

Funeral services were conducted by Paul F. Keirstead, pastor of the Winter St. Baptist Church in Gardiner, Maine, and she was laid to rest in the Libby Hill Cemetery, Gardiner, Maine.

The writer desires to say that she was a lovely sister and always attended the meetings when health permitted. May all who knew and loved her so dearly be reconciled to her departure from this life, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

WILLIAM MAHONE GRAHAM

Born February 26, 1884, the son of Jack and Addie Graham and grandson of Elder Amos Dickerson. He was married to Maude Ethel Akers, who preceded him in death in 1961. To this union were born five children: Kathleen Martin, Ruth Heavener and William C. Graham. Two daughters, Helen and Dorothy died at an early age.

He united with Valley View Church in Montgomery County, Virginia, November 20, 1915; on July 19, 1930, was ordained deacon. Dad was a faithful member, loving the church and serving well until the time of his death. He departed this life August 29, 1966, at the age of eighty-two.

He was a good kind husband and father and will be greatly missed by the family and friends.

We believe he is now at rest, and our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his daughter,
Kathleen Martin

A FEW REMARKS
BY BROTHER WILLIAM GRAHAM'S
BROTHER

William M. Graham was very widely known

among people of the Primitive Baptist faith who truly believe in God's sovereign grace. He was affectionately called by his many church friends at Brother Willie. We attended many services together for over a period of years. If for some reason we did not attend together, the other would always call to ask about the service. I never knew anyone who enjoyed going to church more than he. In every case his remark would always be: "It was a wonderful service and you should have heard it." He was deeply devoted to his home church and pastor, and was a pillar to the church. He will be greatly missed by the church.

Peace to his memory.

J. Thurman Graham

JAMES DANIEL BOWEN

Deacon James Daniel Bowen, son of Malotha and Fannie Peel Bowen, was born January 19, 1877, and passed from this life, December 20, 1966, at the age of 89 years and 11 months. He was first married to Naomia Peel in 1897, who passed away in 1945. His second marriage was to Carrie Peaks, who passed away in 1954.

Brother Bowen was baptized into the fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, third Sunday in June, 1926, by Elder B. S. Cowan.

Brother Bowen was a successful business man and farmer. He was faithful in attendance and service to his church, kind, gentle, patient, unselfish, and wise in council, served on the finance committee of the Kehukee Association for many years, and was very liberal in support of Bear Grass and Skewarky churches. His home was a haven of rest to the brethren, sisters, friends and needy.

We, the Church at Bear Grass, bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God, who does all things well. We feel our loss is His eternal gain.

Brother Bowen leaves one grandson, Daniel M. Bowen, his wife, and three great grandsons. Two stepsons, Arthur and Jodie Peaks, seven stepdaughters, Mrs. Vernon Phelps, Mrs. Bruce Leggette, Mrs. Simon Lilley, Mrs. Ollie Facon, Mrs. Ruby Bonds, Mrs. Haywood Price, and Mrs. Henry Roberson.

His funeral was conducted in Bear Grass Church by Elder E. C. Harrison, Elder W. E. Grimes, and Mr. Thurman Griffin. Burial was in Bowen Cemetery.

A copy of this obituary be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, one to *Signs of the Times*, and one to the family.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in January, 1967.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer Peel, Church Clerk
E. C. Harrison, Committee

SISTER BELLE SELLERS

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite Wisdom, Love and Mercy, called home our beloved Sister Belle Sellers, on November 15, 1966. Sister Sellers united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1919, and had been a faithful member until the past few years due to declining health. Even then her children saw that she attended her Church as often as her health would permit. She loved the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and not works, and had complete faith and trust in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Sister Sellers enjoyed the fellowship of the Church, and listening to a godly conversation.

She had been living in and around Rocky Mount, N. C. all of her life — 83 years, and was the daughter of Ruben Diehl and Millie Hancock Diehl. She leaves to mourn seven children: Henry and William Sellers of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Lessie Sellers, Virginia Ethridge, Mildred Harper of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Dorothy Wood of Spring Hope, N. C.; and Wallace Sellers of Aulander, Florida.

Her funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home, by her Pastor Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Mr. Woodson Booth. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. May God in his infinite wisdom and mercy comfort the family and reconcile us all to His will.

Nina Pearson

SISTER MILLIE OAKLEY

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home our beloved Sister Millie Oakley on November 29, 1966, at the age of 90. Sister Oakley united with the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1914, and attended her Church faithfully until her last few years. Her health did not permit her to attend regularly, but the children would take her to Church whenever she was able to attend. She loved to meet with the members in fellowship and love. Enjoying the service and meditating with the members.

Sister Oakley is survived by besides her husband, three daughters and one son: Mrs. W. R. Turner, Mrs. W. E. Mooring of Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. Beulah Dowdy of Ports-

mouth, Va.; and Mr. Vernon Oakley of Rocky Mount, N. C.

Her funeral was conducted from Johnson Funeral Home by her Pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, assisted by Mr. Lowder. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord. May God in his infinite wisdom and mercy comfort her family and reconcile us all to His will.

Nina Pearson

MAUDE T. WARD

It has pleased our Heavenly Master to call from this life of toil, suffering, and affliction Sister Maude T. Ward on December 25, 1966, at the age of 79.

Sister Ward was a member of the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church. She is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Ora Lee W. Joyner, Mrs. Frances W. Miller, Mrs. Nina W. Pearson, and Mrs. Lois W. Hughes; one sister, Mrs. Arrah T. Knight; three brothers, Jessie Trevathan, R. R. Trevathan, and P. E. Trevathan; two grandsons, R. R. Miller, Jr. and Charles D. Hughes, and one granddaughter, Patricia Lynn Joyner.

Sister Ward was an inspiration to others, especially in her last days as she laid on the bed of affliction. She was always able to smile in her sickness and talk about the greatness of her Heavenly Father, who had promised good to all His people, even the afflictions of life. She felt even as Paul, as he said, "We glory in tribulation 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."

I, as her unworthy servant, feel that Sister Ward was looking forward with great anticipation to her day of death, knowing that there was something better for her than this life had to offer.

Her funeral was conducted by Mr. Fred Scott and Elder D. B. Stokes at Gay-Yost Funeral Home, amidst a host of brethren and friends. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.

We extend to the family our deepest sympathy and hope they may, by God's grace, bow in humble submission to the will of our Father. For it is him that giveth, and him that taketh. Amen.

Written by request of the family.

Elder D. B. Stokes

LEONARD CLYDE KING

We at Gilliams Church must bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father and realize he made no mistake in the calling of our dear brother in Christ, Leonard Clyde (L. C.) King, at the age of 39. For we know all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. Brother King is survived by his wife, Ruth Fogleman King, six children; four boys Gerald, Kenny, Roy, L. C. Jr., and two girls, Jean, and Dianne King.

I had known brother King for several years. It was a precious and sweet privilege to have seen such a wonderful change wrought in him by the effectual working of Almighty God. As we saw him being stripped of every earthly tie, brought to his wit's end, and made willing to suffer the afflictions of God's children, and come home to his friends telling what great things the Lord had done for him; and confessing he was a pilgrim and a stranger here below, desiring to live in peace with his brethren. It also was my privilege to have led him into the liquid grave, though unworthy as I felt to be. As he came up out of the water his words were, "I hope God will bless me to live in peace with my brethren." As his pastor I can say that he was granted that blessing. I feel that he witnessed with the eunuch, who went on his way rejoicing.

Brother King was one who showed his love openly that those who knew him loved him. I truly feel that God sent him to Gilliams Church. He was a shining light in the church, never engrossed in his own affairs to the extent that he didn't have the time to attend to the affairs of his church; counted it not as a burden but rather a blessing. We shall miss his kindness, his sweet smile and fellowship; but his kind memory shall not be forgotten.

He was not blessed to be in the fellowship of the militant church very long; being baptised on a 4th Sunday morning November, 1964; passed from this life March 2, 1967, but I believe his soul is still in fellowship with the ransomed church of God, the redeemed of the Lord.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, assisted by Elders E. F. Oakley, W. C. King, Donald Smith. There were many friends and brethren present showing evidence of his love and esteem. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May his precious family be comforted by the blessings of God and be given to witness with Job, "blessed be the Lord that giveth, blessed be the Lord that taketh."

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the *Signs of Times*, a copy put on church record and a copy be sent to the family. Done in conference by Gilliams Primitive Baptist

Church.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
C. F. Summers, Clerk

DEACON TRAVIS VERNON LUTZ

We, the members of Mt. Olive Primitive Baptist Church, agree to file in our records the following tribute of respect in memory of our beloved brother and deacon, Travis V. Lutz.

He was born January 22, 1905, in Wilson County, Texas, and his parents were Mr. and Mrs. Adam J. Lutz. His wife, Bertha, and eleven sons and three daughters mourn his passing: Tilden, San Antonio; Troy, Sacramento, Calif.; John, Tacoma, Wash.; Alvin, Derial, Milton, Eddie and Arnold, of Seguin; Douglas and R. V. of New Braunfels; Vincent in the Navy; Mrs. Virgie Stevens, New Braunfels; Mary and Kathy, of Seguin. Also twelve grandchildren, three brothers and one sister.

Brother Lutz passed from this life of sin and sorrow on September 13, 1966. He became a member of the church the fourth Sunday in November, 1963; and was ordained a deacon the second Sunday in December, 1965. He was a blessing and a comfort to our little church. He believed in a God who had all power in heaven and in earth, and that none can stay his hand. Brother Lutz's life and hope was in the doctrine of salvation by grace: a God who had chosen his children before the foundation of the world; and sent his darling Son for a sacrifice for their sins. This Son of God arose from the grave for their justification; and he shall present them to the Father without spot or blemish when time is no more. This is what Brother Lutz believed; and it is true, for, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and Jesus said, "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 hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." We shall miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain. Our sympathy goes to the bereaved.

Funeral services were held September 19, 1966, at Goetz Memorial Chapel, with Elders Malcolm Burkhalter and Gerald Shipman officiating. Burial was in Gaudalupe Valley Memorial Park.

We order copies of this to be sent to the family and the *Signs of the Times*.

Adopted December 11, 1966, while the church was in conference.

Elder Gerald Shipman, Moderator
Sister Lela Culpepper, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

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DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1967

NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMEMBERING OUR CREATOR

One scripture that has impressed me from the days of my youth is: "*Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou wilt say, I have no pleasure in them.*"

The whole book of Ecclesiastes is really a book of law. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to a knowledge of our shortcomings and condemnation, as we feel the judgment of God under it in being unable to keep it. However, there is hidden meaning in the word Creator, for it implies God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, for these three make the one true God; the Father who created all things and predestinated all things; the Son who redeemed, and the Holy Ghost who quickens dead sinners into spiritual life. Salvation is then the work of the three of the Godhead.

When we take this scripture under consideration over into the gospel to which it points, we find we are to be mindful of Him who created us unto good works in Jesus Christ, who chose us in the person of His Son, and provided redemption for us through the work of the Son. Also mindful of the need of the Holy Spirit to guide and instruct us, and to show us the things of Jesus, and to execute the will of God of which all of God's little ones are

heirs with Jesus Christ. We are to remember how the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters when darkness covered the deep and God said: "Let there be light." Now in a gospel sense we are to remember God in bringing light into our hearts and showing us the face of Jesus Christ in a good hope through grace. We are to remember the great deliverance that is ours from the curse and penalty of sin.

As a believer we have two birthdays; one every year of our natural life, the other in grace is one birthday continually, for we are born but once into the kingdom of God, and never grow old in that life, or kingdom. So in the youth of our gospel experience we are not to forget God, nor are we to despise the mercy and the grace of Jesus Christ; the second person of this Creator, whom we are to remember. We are enjoined daily to think upon spiritual things and to have our conversation upon spiritual things, and to desire the felt presence of the third person of the Trinity, the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. The scripture has a natural application under the law and a spiritual import under grace.

To remember our Creator is to examine ourselves, to pray for the needful things of life, to invoke the blessings of God upon that which we do, and to desire to do it for the glory of Christ. As we are created in Christ Jesus, we are to remember our brethren, and to strive for peace among them, to keep ourselves from reproach among men, and to desire the Lord to keep us, for we cannot of ourselves do this. In remembering our Creator we are to be mindful of what He has saved us from, and what he has saved us to, and to

consider the wonderful provisions of that grace by which we are saved. We must remember the work of Jesus who was a Surety for all the election of Grace and whose work stands forever accomplished as far as redemption is concerned. We must remember our Lord as our great Melchisedec who abideth continually as our High Priest in Heaven. We should remember with thankful hearts the gracious favors of God unto us and to love Him devotedly, and to worship Him with reverence.

If we have known Him in an experimental way in this grace dispensation we should remember the Creator in the days when He first sought us out and loved us with an everlasting love.

May the Lord bless this people abundantly, in all things both naturally and spiritually.

Sister Mary Hellings
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WRITERS WITNESS WITH HER

Box 183,
Stockdale, Texas 78160

Dear Editors and Readers
of the *Signs*:

Please extend my subscription two more years.

I am now past my four-score years and the *Signs of the Times* has been a great thing in my life — a light to shine upon the road that leads me, I hope, to the Lamb. It is an instructor, guide, and a rock as it were to shelter under, a staff to lean on when I am weak and weary. I mean it helps point out the way, and the writers witness with my experience that I am not alone in my travels and trials. Then there is news of old soldiers — a few I have met, and others I just have a “reading acquaintance” with, some of whom I meet later.

We here at Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, welcome all Old Baptists and friends to meet with us, and visit

in our homes. Our meeting times are on the Second and Fourth Sundays. Our beloved pastor is Elder Gerald Shipman; with Elders W. W. Fleet and H. L. Ballard preaching also.

Lela Culpepper

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Signs of the Times:

How we love to read the *Signs*, and comment on the many good letters which give our Lord and Master all the praise. It is good to know there are a few who believe in giving God all the praise.

I feel to be humble. We are in need of rain, and I know that when it pleases God to send it, then we will get it. We are taught to be patient in all things, always looking to Him, for we know our nothingness. I seem sometimes to be one of the weakest of mortals. Oh that we had the faith of Daniel! I feel sometimes that my prayers are answered, and then praise the Lord for his mercies.

My husband is not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, but defends the doctrine better than I can; for which I thank the Lord. There are a few who believe like we do: even our children do not. But if it is the Lord's will, I hope they will some day know why we believe as we do, forsaking all on earth for the Lord's sake.

We love our brothers and sisters and makes us happy to meet and embrace, and to hear the dear ones sing, and the preaching. We cannot go much of the time, but can read the *Signs*. We are eighty-eight and eighty-five years old and our health is not good. We read and re-read the *Signs*, and thank God that we love the good writings; and wish that we could write and tell more of what we hope He has done for us. We are enclosing \$5.00. May God bless all of you.

Yours in hope,
Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Rich

New Vernon, N. Y.,
September 1, 1841

OUR MOTTO

When the hosts of the alien were encamped around about the little trembling band of Israel like grasshoppers for multitude, and all human prospect of escape from captivity had fled, the despairing tribes were reduced to the necessity of looking alone to God for deliverance. The manner in which it pleased the Lord to give deliverance and victory to Israel, was the very opposite to what human wisdom would have suggested.

The Lord would neither suffer Gideon to go with his thirty-two thousand, nor with his ten thousand men: "Lest Israel should vaunt themselves against the Lord, saying mine own hand hath saved me." The first work of preparation for the onset was the reduction of the strength of their numbers, and to convince them that the work would be accomplished by the mighty arm of the Lord. How effectually did the Lord stain the pride of men in removing from them all on which they would be inclined to rely! And when they were brought down sufficiently, Gideon was instructed to advance with his three hundred men, divided into three companies, with directions to take their positions round about the enemy, without a single implement of war, excepting a trumpet in every man's right hand — with no weapons, offensive or defensive, no sword, nor shield, nor bow; but relying on the Lord as their Shield and Buckler, their High Tower and their defence.

Every man was to carry his empty pitcher covering a lighted lamp in his left hand, and to await the signal from their leader, at which every pitcher was broken, the united light of three hundred lamps at once flashed forth upon the surprised enemy, attended with the simultaneous shout of three hundred voices, crying as in one breath, "**The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!**"

How dreadful was the consternation of the Midianites at this display of the arm of the Lord! More dreadful to their

ears was the sound of the name of the Lord than all the thunder of the battle clash; and more terrific to their eyes the radiant flame than the glitter of a million spears! The dreadful majesty of the God of Israel shining around them, and the terror of his name echoing from the trumpets on every side, filled their hearts with dismay and their ranks with confusion.

We are inclined to believe there is something in this figure analogous to the manner in which the Lord is conducting the conflict of his people at this day, with the host of their opposers. The numerical strength of those who contend for the primitive order of the house of God, is greatly reduced; and they are taught by very many important admonitions, that they are not to rely upon human wisdom nor human might; their pitchers (mere earthen vessels) are empty of themselves, and only to be broken in the contest, while the light of that treasure which our God has committed to earthen vessels, is to shine forth with the united declaration of our sole reliance upon the sword of the Lord and of our glorious leader Jesus Christ, from every one whom God has honored with a place and rank among the very few by himself designated to follow their illustrious Leader into the field.

Not the sword of human power, of human wisdom, literature, science or fame; but the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. While the motto of our enemies is, "Attempt great things, expect great things," which motto truly expresses their confidence in their own skill and perseverance; the confidence of the people whom God has chosen shall be expressed by the shout of Gideon's little army whose reliance was restricted to "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." And although the sword of the Lord and of our Leader is at this day invisible to the enemies of Zion, as was the sword in the days of Midian, yet its glittering blade shall flash upon them in as unexpected a moment as is the case of their prototype, and shall be as effectual as on that memorable occasion.

A few words, then, of admonition to

those who can lap water like dogs, may be seasonable. Brethren, remember the charge that was given to the three hundred men: "And he (their leader, who, in this particular at least, was a figure of the Captain of our salvation,) said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise; and behold when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be, that as I do, so shall ye do; when I blow with the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

It is of the utmost importance that the little company whom God has preserved from bowing to Baal, should keep their eye fixed upon the Author of their faith, and imitate his divine example. We are to cry, **The sword of the Lord!** and rest assured that God will use it effectually in defence of his Israel and the discomfort of his enemies.

(The above was written by Elder Gilbert Beebe in 1841; and since we carry his Motto as he did from the beginning of the 3rd volume in 1835, and agree with what he has written concerning it, we feel that it will be of much interest to those who have not read it before. — J. D. W.)

SPIRITUAL THINGS ARE FOOLISHNESS UNTO THE NATURAL MAN

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)

This natural man is the old man or the adamic man. The question may arise: Can the natural man become spiritual by performing certain conditions? In answer to that question, we ask this: Can an apple tree bring forth pears? The same principle works in both cases. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.

This natural man is corrupt, and he is dead in trespasses and sin. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God,

neither indeed can be." (Romans 8: 7) The natural man cannot understand anything pertaining to the things of God. He may be well refined, well educated, and even have a head knowledge of the doctrines of Grace, but all of this will not change his nature, nor will it effect his heart.

Since the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, it is impossible for him to worship God. "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

All men are dead in trespasses and sins. This death has passed upon mankind. Man is destitute of the Spirit of God. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3: 10-12) I believe this Scripture is enough to show that the doctrine of works mixed with the Grace of God will not reach a poor sinner; nor will it save a soul.

Man is traveling the road to destruction and he does not know it. His god is actually the things of this world. He may be seeking after riches, the praises and esteem of men, the pleasures of this world, or any other desire which would satisfy his lust such as murder, power, adultery, theft, etc.

What will prompt man to profess a form of religion? Maybe society demands it. Therefore man professes to be a religious person in order to promote his business, to be popular in this world, or because of custom, etc.

This is a broad subject and we trust that the Spirit of the living God will enable us to rightly divide the word of truth. The Scripture states that the natural man does not receive anything that is Spiritual, then may we conclude that he cannot feed upon anything that is Spiritual. If he cannot feed upon it, just what is his reaction to a gospel sermon? It is foolishness to him. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which

are saved, it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1: 18)

If the natural man professes a religion, what doctrine can he feed upon? The doctrine of works. Why? Because this gives man credit for performing conditions that he thinks are necessary for his salvation, and this boosts man up. As we think of natural man feeding upon the works system, we think of this Scripture: "Israel being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness — (Romans 10: 3)

We do not wish to be misunderstood, because we believe that God has a people who live and die in those Churches that profess the works system. But we are inclined to believe that the people of God do not feed upon the works system. We believe that they are really in bondage, and that they know something about the "plague of their own heart," and that within their heart, they know that salvation must be by the Grace of God, and not by any work or righteousness they have done.

In connection with this, please note that the Children of Israel were in bondage to the Egyptians for 400 years, and many of them lived and died in bondage before the appointed time that Israel was delivered from this bondage.

On the other hand, let us consider this point: Satan tempts the Children of God to worship the works system. Why? Because the motive is to rob God of the praise and honor and glory that is due him. Back in the days of Paul, some of the brethren wanted to go back to the works of the law. Paul rebuked the Galatian brethren: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3: 1-3)

If Salvation were conditional, the reward would not be of grace, but it would

be of debt. Why? God would be indebted to man because man performed certain conditions. Therefore man would have reason enough to be proud of himself, and to boast of the things that he had done. "To him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Romans 4: 4) Following this line of reasoning, man would be his own savior.

In short, consider this: The doctrine of works builds man up and belittles God; and the doctrine of Grace shows an Almighty, powerful God, and a weak, puny man. The natural man will not have any use for the doctrines of Grace, because it is strange and very foolish to him. The world did not have any use for Jesus and his teachings.

Since the Scripture plainly states that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, then how does one know anything about the Spirit of God? We read, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor. 2: 10)

Now, the old man is not made over in the new birth. Also, there is nothing that the old man does that can promote his Spiritual birth. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Ephesians 2: 1) If the old man is changed in the new birth, one could not have nor know anything about the warfare mentioned in Galatians 5: 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Yet, a change is wrought in one after the new birth. Strange, isn't it? One mourns over his sins, and desires to do that which is right in the sight of God.

This is the work of the Holy Ghost, and this work is effectual. Before a poor sinner can learn the song that Salvation is by the Grace of God, he must first know something about his lost condition.

The Spirit of God cuts deeply, and takes away the armour that one once trusted in. It is hurtful to the flesh for one to be brought down as a poor beggar, and for one to know something about the plague of his heart, and to know that his own righteousness is as

filthy rags in the sight of God. One sees that he is weighed in the balances and found wanting. One sees what a wretched, ruined, polluted sinner he is. The doctrine of works is not what he wants. Why? Because he has come to the end of his own strength, and knows that he is not able to perform any deeds which would merit the favor of God. He knows how Paul felt when he said, "For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." (Romans 7:18) Dear one, have you traveled this path? If so, you have been brought by a way that you knew not. "I will bring the blind by a way they knew not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known — (Isaiah 42: 16)

The law is brought to a sinner to show him what he is. The law is righteous and holy; but something is wrong. The flesh is weak, and is not able to meet the just demands of the law. When one sees that he has sinned and come short of the glory of God, and knows something about the weakness of the flesh, he does not cry for justice because he knows that he does not have any good works to stand upon. There is a cry and a plea from his heart. He is not pleading his own merits, but he is pleading for mercy. You know that one cannot really cry for mercy until he feels the need of mercy. When the burden is laid upon the heart of one, he feels the need of mercy. He knows what the publican felt when he cried out: "God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18: 13)

In due time one experiences a sweet deliverance from this sad state. Is not this a wonderful deliverance? Think of the song that Moses sang after God had delivered them from the bondage of the Egyptians. (see Exodus 15) David speaks of this new song that was put in his mouth, after he was delivered from the horrible pit. (Psalm 40: 1-3) As we think of this sweet song of deliverance, we know the theme is singing praises unto this God for this wonderful salvation. We read, "Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise thy name." (Psalm 142: 7)

May we think on these sweet and

precious things, and render all praise and honor and glory unto this wonderful God. May the Lord give us strength and fresh courage to press on, and may this thought rest upon our mind: The world does not have any use for the doctrines of Grace. It is very foolish to them.

No preaching will be wasted. His word will not return unto him void. Let us think: Where is the beauty of the Church of God? It is not attractive to the natural eye, but the beauty is within. There is food there, and it is something that a poor sinner is earnestly seeking, and this is what will satisfy him. This is what causes many to travel far and near to meet with those of like precious faith, to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to hear the preaching of the cross which is to them the power and wisdom of God. Dear one, is not this preaching a joy and comfort to you?

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"GREAT MEN ARE NOT ALWAYS WISE"

"But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth it understanding. Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgement." (Job 32:8-9)

This scripture is the first of many wonderful testimonies given by Elihu unto Job and his two friends, setting forth the power, wisdom and majesty of God. He always ascribed all the praise and glory unto the Creator, who made all things for himself; and whom no man can call in question, or say unto him, What doest thou? Elihu spoke after the others had ceased speaking unto Job, because Job was righteous in his own eyes, and refused to be comforted by them. They had tried to console Job in his afflictions, but he told them that they were miserable comforters to him. They could not comfort Job because the whole of their advice to him could be

summed up in this one statement: "If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous."

The reason that this message was of no comfort to Job, was because his defense to them had been to maintain his own integrity. He said, "I will say unto God, Do not condemn; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Is it good unto thee, that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?" Also, "Not for any injustice in mine hand; also my prayer is pure."

This is not the testimony of one that sees himself a justly condemned sinner. Job was righteous in his own eyes; and as concerning the righteousness that is in the law, he was blameless. God's statement to Satan was, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, and one that feareth God and escheweth evil." Evidently there was something else that Job needed to have taught to him regarding God and his dealings with the sons of men. This is the lesson that all must learn, if they are children of God. And God alone is the one that teaches them. Saul of Tarsus said that he was a Hebrew and as, "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless," prior to his conversion. Elsewhere he testifies that the things that he did before Christ was revealed unto him, he did ignorantly in unbelief. Neither of them had had their understanding enlightened by the inspiration of the Almighty; and after they did, they both spoke the pure language of the children of God that the Lord promised in Zephaniah. They were each shown that it is not by the works of the creature that man gains favor with God.

This is true of every one of the children of God before they are given an understanding of things eternal. They are walking in ignorance and unbelief, regardless of how intelligent they may be in worldly wisdom. In each instance

the understanding is given unto them in a display of the sovereign grace, mercy and love of God for them while they are dead in trespasses and sins. How much more evidence could be given to one that it is of God that sheweth mercy, and not the works of sinful men. This understanding is placed lovingly, but firmly in the heart of the individual, and not just suggested to the natural mind. This is the law that is written upon the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased or changed. It cannot be erased because he who has placed it there, is God who changes not: therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. The preparation of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. It is everlasting, and will lead them in all the paths that are their's to tread. It will cause them to persevere in the face of all opposition, according to the will of him "Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." (2 Cor. 1: 22) If it has been sealed by God the Father, it is everlasting and sure.

Elihu had refrained from speaking sooner because he was younger than the others. He said, "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom." He found that this was not necessarily true, because these men were older, and should have been wiser. And yet they did not show evidence of the understanding of the Almighty in their conversation. He therefore spoke even though he was younger: and in so doing, testified with David, "What have I done? Is there not a cause?" David was younger than the warriors, yet he was one that the Lord had raised up for that hour, to stand in the defense of Israel. The Lord uses the things that please him to accomplish his purposes regardless of whether it seems right to man. Elihu had many other things to say that gave evidence that this understanding had been given him, such as, "When He giveth quietness who can cause trouble? And when He hideth his face who can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation or against a man only." And, "Harken unto this, O Job, stand

still and consider the wonderous works of God." The conversation of Job and his friends had been about what Job had, or had not done to bring this great trouble upon him. What a difference in that and the testimony of Elihu!

With the understanding comes faith in that which is understood. You cannot understand a thing to be true, and yet have no faith in it. The understanding and the faith are the gifts of God by his Holy Spirit, which quickens one into spiritual life when given him. This has ever been true: as it was in the case of Cain and Abel. Abel's sacrifice was made with an understanding of the true meaning and purpose of the offering. It was offered from the heart, which was prepared of God, in praise and adoration to his heavenly Father. We have the testimony that by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. The understanding and faith came from the Almighty since he had no example to follow.

Abraham left his home and went into a strange land because he had faith that he who had promised a land of milk and honey, was able to fulfill that which he had promised. By faith he offered his his only son Isaac upon the altar, understanding that God was able to restore his son to him, even though he slay him. This is a beautiful demonstration of how the understanding of the power and majesty of God, and faith in his mercy and grace work together for good to those in whose heart it is implanted.

Joseph was given an understanding above his brothers in the flesh, and it caused him much trouble and sorrow in his life. He was hated by them because he told them things that they did not understand. He was shown in a dream that he would have pre-eminence over them, and it caused them to be jealous of him and desire to kill him. There is a similarity in this with the experience of every child of grace. They are given to see things that the world does not understand. They are looked upon as ignorant, dreamers, old-fashioned, and anything else that is hurtful or unpleasant that can be said about or to them:

and all because they are blessed to see the truth. All of this is done unto them because they have been given the inspiration of the Almighty implanted in their hearts; and it is manifested in their conversation and walk, and causes the world to hate them because they do not understand it.

These experiences are repeated many times in the scriptures in the lives of those whom we have the testimony that they are the children of God. In each instance it causes a separation from things, people, and paths with which they have been closely associated in the past. It would seem evident, therefore, that this understanding which is given unto man, is not of the world: because it turns his mind away from the things of the world, and he no longer runs after those things in which he once delighted. He is indeed a new creature: old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality and without hypocrisy." These are the things which now fill the hearts of those who have been blessed with this understanding. Their desire is to live peacefully with their brethren in love and sweet fellowship, and to be delivered from the evil and strife that is this earthly life, as they now see it. They realize that they cannot accomplish these things of themselves, and each time they feel the evidence that they are blessed, their praise and adoration goes up to their Heavenly Father for his mercy and loving kindness on such as they see themselves to be.

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, even his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." This again is is but another testimony of the love and mercy of God for his children while they sojourn in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They feel to have been given an understanding of things they had not known before; and then this scripture

states that this understanding is given that we may know him; and that this is the true God and eternal life. These build line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, but all pointing toward one and the same truth. Everytime that understanding is expressed it is given from the Father of lights in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Therefore if one has ever been given an understanding of these things from the Almighty, he will just as surely receive all of the other blessings that are promised; and in the end eternal life. They will then experience the fullness of the peace, love, and glory of that home the Saviour has gone to prepare for them.

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect throughly furnished unto all good work." If we know our heart, our desire is to be given an understanding of the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. We hope that we have been given to see and experience some of these things as we are led in ways that we know not. May the inspiration of the Almighty ever be a light unto our pathway and a lamp unto our feet. When so blessed, we are being led in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, according to the great and precious promises of God who cannot lie.

Job's testimony after God spoke to him out of the whirlwind, is a far different language from what he was saying before. His total testimony then was, "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further." And again, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not: things to wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and declare thou unto me.

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Compare these few statements with the chapters of testimony that he had given before this time. It seems that he had a completely different understanding of God and his ways versus man and his accomplishments. He saw that in the sight of God, "All flesh is grass, and the goodness 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." Man's life is but a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away, and the deeds of the flesh vanish with the life, but the things of the Spirit endureth forever: and this is Job's acknowledgement.

May the God of all grace bless all his children with this understanding, (and he will at his own appointed time,) to comfort them therewith as they travel along in this veil of tears. This understanding leads them in all of their joys and sorrows, seasons of doubt and seasons of confidence, times of peace and times of trouble, periods of weakness and periods of strength, and into all of the things that contribute to the total experience of every child of God. They are all the things that work together for their good; and all are brought about by the understanding being given, or withheld, according to the divine will and purpose of Almighty God, to teach them their utter dependence on him for all things.

As Peter says, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertaineth unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Yes, this knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord is given unto each of his children, and is all that they need; and includes all things that pertain unto life and godliness. The realization of the magnitude of this precious gift being bestowed on one,

keeps him humble before Him in love. What grace and peace is theirs when blessed to stand still and behold the wonderous works of their Creator God! What joy when blessed with faith in, and understanding of, the triumph of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ over the sins of his children! And then to have evidence that they are included in that number. This Jesus Christ, "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: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

This is the whole desire of his children: to be given the understanding and strength to press on by faith to the time when they will receive the end of their faith, and realize the fulness of the salvation of their souls: the salvation which is treasured alone in Christ Jesus their High Priest, who has entered the holiest of holies for them, that they too may enter in because of him, when their earthly pilgrimage is ended.

What a precious legacy for those to whom the inspiration of the Lord has given understanding by measure to strengthen them along the pathway of their earthly journey — strength sufficient for the day.

In bonds of love,

Richard H. Campbell,
2761 Cochese Cove,
Memphis, Tenn. 38118

FIFTY YEARS

(The following is a portion of the tribute which we read on the occasion of a supper given by Bush Arbor Church, North Carolina, and her sister churches, on the seventieth birthday and the fiftieth year in the ministry of their pastor, Elder W. Curry King, on the first Saturday in May, 1967. — J. D. W.)

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding," said the Lord of all grace. (Jeremiah 3: 15)

We feel the church at Bush Arbor has freely received this blessing, and

we desire to give all honor, glory, and praise to His holy name this memorable year 1967 in the life of our pastor, as we pay tribute to our brother in hope, Elder W. Curry King, whom the Lord has blessed to serve a half century in the ministry.

Elder King was born within the shadows of the church at Bush Arbor on May 6, 1897. His father was called home while our brother was just a boy; and the way was hard. Yet, if God be for one, who can be against him, for in his youth he was given to look to God in his holy habitation, a father of the fatherless. At an early age he brought forth fruits meet for repentance, and was received by this church on the second Saturday in May, 1917; and was baptized the following morning by Elder B. F. McKinney. He was given permission to speak in a public way at the July, 1917, meeting; and was ordained to the full functions of a gospel minister the fifth Sunday in July, 1921, by the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Those who served in this ordination, and who now rest from their labors, were Elders J. W. Gilliam, T. A. Stanfield, M. B. Martin, and brother J. E. Simmons.

Elder King accepted the care of Bush Arbor Church in April, 1929, and he has labored long and hard as watchman and overseer of this flock. His stability is through a God-given wisdom and knowledge; and the fear of the Lord is his treasure by which peace at home has been his first concern. For fifty years he has humbly gone in and out before a people whom we hope were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world — this fifty years is more than many of us have lived. We think of how one generation passes away and another takes its place; and of the precious memories he must have of baptizing the forefathers of this generation. No doubt many times he has gone into the liquid grave with the trembling ones, feeling as John felt as he baptized the Saviour. Of these there were five ministers, Elders Ernest Oakley, Harvey Smith, Kenneth Key, Wallis Smith, and

Donald Smith; with Brother Leonard Key liberated to speak. Elder Harvey Smith has been called from our midst.

As we think of the ensample and ready mind of our pastor, we wonder how many times through him the poor have had the gospel preached to them; and how many times he has gone in and out before the flock in illness of body, or with bowed head and heavy heart; and how many times he has asked the Lord for guidance and wisdom in the oversight of the churches. Many of us have felt him God-sent when he prayed for mercy over our beds of affliction — for which we are most grateful.

After the death of Elder T. A. Stanfield, Elder King was chosen Moderator of the Upper Country Line Association. This was in 1942, and he has served each session since.

The brethren at Bush Arbor feel at liberty to say on behalf of our sister churches which are served by Elder King — Greensboro, McCray and Prospect Hills, along with this association, that by God's grace he has been a faithful servant of the Lord. We are thankful for his fellowship in the gospel, and for the willingness to share his abundant blessings from the giver of every good and perfect gift. May grace be unto him, and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

We would also pay tribute to our precious sister, whom we feel is an inspiration to the brethren. Her's is a God fearing walk and an humble spirit, and her love for the churches is manifested. She has been a faithful companion to our brother for more than 45 years, as well as a sister in hope. Sister Brona King exemplifies Proverbs 14: 4, "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband."

Our prayer for Brother and Sister King is for a peaceful moment at God's appointed time to call them home. May they be given to say in a meek and quiet spirit, 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 at the appearing of the Lord.

Submitted by Brother Clifton Robertson

1160 Halifax Road,
Danville, Virginia 24541

Dear Editors and Associate Editors:

My subscription expires this May so I enclose \$5.00 to renew two years.

Brother Ruston I would love to read some more of your writings again. I think of you and your wife often. I do hope you are well.

Brother Spangler, your editorial in the May issue, "Jesus Christ the Same Yesterday, Today and Forever," is so strengthening to me, knowing it is the truth written by one I have heard preach many times; it was such a comfort and consolation to me.

I haven't been well this year, and was in the hospital several days with arthritis in my limbs. I have not yet fully recovered, but am better. I give the Lord Jesus Christ the praise: he is the great physician. He is the same yesterday, and today, and I know forever, for he showed me many wonderful things with his outstretched arm, which are indescribable. "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God. (Revelation 19: 13) "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1: 14) I am with a sweet hope looking for him when he shall appear the second time. Won't it be glorious to see him as he is, and be like him?

The world is filled with so much false teaching, and so many believing it. It is said God is dead. Yes, he is dead to the ones dead in sin, and have not been made alive in Christ Jesus; who have not been born of the water and the Spirit.

I love the following hymn:

"The day is past and gone,
The evening shades appear;
O may we all remember well
The night of death is near.

We lay our garments by,
Upon our beds to rest;
So death will soon disrobe us all
Of what we here possess.

Lord, keep us safe this night,
Secure from all our fears;

Thy angel guard us while we sleep,
Till morning light appears.

And when we early rise,
And view th' unweari'd sun,
May we press on to reach the prize,
And after glory run.

And when our days are past,
And we from time remove,
O may we in thy bosom rest,
The bosom of thy love."

Leland

This hymn was sung at Malmaison Church April 2nd. I love that dear place. I have had a home there fifty years the past August, 1966; and many precious memories lie there for me. Now I remain with a hope in Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Trusting that God will bless each and every one of you, and bless you to continue to stand for the truth you now set forth in the **Signs of the Times**.

Mrs. Nettie A. Evans

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Editors:

I am thankful to God for the *Signs of the Times*. I do enjoy the articles you select for "Voices of the Past," Elder Wood; they have been so wonderful and edifying. Also Elder Griffin's article on "Deacons." All the writings were good.

In sending in my renewal, I want to express my love and appreciation for the work in getting the paper to us. And I would praise God for giving me faith to believe in him — for making me know him as he is: one who is above all, and does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He knows no failure; and Christ's shed blood accomplished his purpose. I am often unable to find words to express these things — truly we learn that of ourself we can do nothing.

May God richly bless all who contribute in any way to the *Signs*. Am renew-

ing for one year: use the balance as you wish.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

ELDER BUNN EXPRESSES
HIS APPRECIATION

Dear Elder Wood:

During my recent confinement in the hospital I received such a large number of beautiful cards and letters of condolence from brethren and friends, that I wish to express thanks to God, and to all those who remembered us with such sweet expressions, which meant so much to my dear wife and me; and their prayers also.

I feel it would be almost impossible to write each one, so if you would put this in the *Signs of the Times*, my or rather our thanks would reach more of the brethren and friends who read the paper.

I trust you are both well.

Yours in hope,
C. N. Bunn
8307 St. Charles Road
Richmond, Va. 23227

(We are glad that Brother Bunn is improved and able to be home now. We trust he will soon be able to be active again.—J. D. W.)

SMITH RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The **Smith River Association** is to be held, the Lord willing, with County Line Church, beginning on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1967, and continuing until noon on Sunday. The meeting house is located in Floyd County, Virginia, just off the Parkway on road number 635.

Those who believe and love the truth are invited to meet with us.

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The **Seven Mile Association** is appointed to be held with the church at Mingo Meeting House, Sampson County, N. C., beginning Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1967, and continuing through Sunday.

The Meeting House is located just off Highway 421 south of Dunn. We plan to have pointers in the nearby area, or visitors may inquire near Dunn.

We cordially invite our brethren and friends

to meet with us.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION MEETING

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Moore's Church, Wilson County, N. C., the 5th Sunday in July and Saturday before. The church is located between Pinetops and Wilson, N. C., on Highway 42.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held with the church at Old Beulah, Johnston County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in July, 1967.

The meeting house is located about two miles west of Bagley, N. C., which is on old 301 highway. Those who have a mind to attend, are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The Original South Arkansas Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Bethel Church the third Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. The church is located about two miles north of Bearden, Arkansas. Those coming from the east or west will come to Bearden on Highway 79. Bearden is a small town and most anyone can direct you to the church.

All interested brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Elder J. T. Everett, Moderator
Ross Watson, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

If the Lord so wills the Lexington-Roxbury Association will be held at Halcottville, N. Y. on Wednesday and Thursday, September 13 and 14, 1967. Those coming on Tuesay will take the Denver Road out of Kellys Corner, N. Y., then take the first left hand road to Windy Acres. Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to Halcottville. It is requested that those coming on Tuesday write Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kellys Corner, N. Y., where they will be entertained.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder A. J. Slauson

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Danville, Virginia August, 1967

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EDITORIAL

DEACONS

It is lovely when we desire to obey the Lord. However, obeying the Lord when we must disobey him in order to do it is not lovely at all. Appointing and ordaining brethren as deacons just because that the church does not have a deacon is not obeying the Lord. As far as I remember, He has not told us the first time to ordain or appoint makeshift deacons. I have known of it being done "because we did not have anybody to pass the bread and wine." We have brethren, whose interest and integrity and truthfulness I would never question, yet they think that it is a breach of good order for a minister to serve the bread and wine, They did serve it for sometime, and never were they commanded not to serve it anymore. They had waited on tables, administered to the poor, collected the alms, and similiar duties, and they were not told to quit it. They were told to arrange for deacons to do it so that they would be released from so many things that kept them from preaching. It was still orderly practice for them to do it, but it was not expedient for them to do it.

How much better it is for the pastor of a church to pass the bread and wine, and otherwise do these things, than it is for the church to put somebody in the office that is not fit. Let us remember, dear brethren, that the apostles were not told to select seven brethren, but seven brethren of honest report, filled with the Holy Ghost and wisdom. If language means anything (and it does to those that desire to follow the Lord) the Lord knew that some in the church were not qualified for the office. He did not tell them to take what you had, but to take **only** those qualified for the work.

There is a scripture that has a world of meaning in it to me. "Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Cor. 14: 40) I do not believe that the Saviour filled in all things that were to be done. I seriously doubt that the apostle would tell us all that we were to do, and then

do double talk by telling us to do all things in decency and in order. The scriptures does not tell us that a deacon must have one wife, but that he be the husband of one wife, that is, not two wives. This is important that he not have two wives at the same time, and it seems better for him to have one wife. I have helped ordain deacons that had not married or were widowers, but I felt that he was handicapped in his labors. I would ordain them again under these circumstances, but if a church had other brethren who were married to one wife, and were capable I would always suggest that this brother be preferred over the other.

What kind of a wife should a deacon have? Now I was not asked to use a modern encyclopedia in getting my data on this subject. I want, if I know what I want, to have a thus saith the Lord for the selection of deacons. If it did not matter as to her virtue, truthfulness, faithfulness, gravity, I feel sure that Paul would not have thrown a list of restrictions at the church in this serious step. If we are following the Lord, we must find men for deacons that have qualified wives. A man whose wife does not fit the requirements, is not qualified for a deacon. She must be a grave woman if she is to be a help-meet in this work. This does not mean to wear a long face; it does not mean to have a sanctimonious look on the face all the time, O no, that would hinder him more than a lot of foolish jesting.

She is not to be a slanderer. Regardless of how a brother's qualifications stand out, a wife that talks too much about those being served will hinder him, and spoil a good deacon. Being double tongued by the deacon and a slanderer by the wife, is a combination that would cause more gospel labor than all of the deacons, together with the pastor, could ever settle.

It certainly would seem that the early church would not be bothered by inebriety, but at that time, and now, women and men undoubtedly did look upon the wine while it was red. As the deacon could not do his work while

under the influence of strong drink, if his wife indulged in it, she could not help him and could undo all of his work.

Her faithfulness would make all of the difference between success and failure. She should also be honest and filled with the Holy Ghost, with some knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Were the deacons given the right to baptize? If Philip had the blessings of the apostles to baptize, then all deacons now should be baptizing at every turn when somebody meets them as the eunuch did Philip. Much writing has been carried on by our people trying to explain away this baptizing. It has been suggested that there was not anything wrong with Philip baptizing, but I have heard brethren say that they would not receive them into the church. I am sure that we could not be consistent with the other teachings of the New Testament and grant deacons this right. And yet, if we do not have something better, we must admit that they have a thus saith the Lord for the act.

Unless we can find some other reason that gave Philip the right to baptize, the right thing to do would be for us to admit that we have been wrong for two thousand years. I feel sure that I am not going to be agreed with in what I am going to present. I feel that I have as much scripture in favor of my views as we have for the way that we have been doing. I am sure that there are not any instructions to the deacons giving them the right to baptize. If they have that right, all members do also, for they were not delegated to baptize. If we say that they do not have the right to baptize, we are denying the scriptures as being inspired by the Holy Ghost. I do not feel that I can say that Philip, as a deacon, had any right to baptize; equally so, and I hope, as fearfully and prayerfully, I can not deny that he did baptize.

Let me introduce another side to baptism. It is only indirectly applicable and related to the subject of deacons, and yet that relationship is such that I feel to bring it forward. Is baptism only for

an entrance into the church? The answer to this is important, for if not, then by all means Philip had the right to baptize, and everybody else that is placed in like circumstances also has the right, regardless of whether they are deacons or layman of the ordinary type.

Manifestly, the church is the body of Christ. If we want to take the absurd position that there is not any organic body of Christ, then the giving of the ministry for the edification of the body of Christ is as much under obligation to preach and baptize anywhere without any regard to church order or apostolic practice. In the sending of the disciples into all the world, they were to teach, make disciples, baptize. Nothing was said about them joining the church. Does that mean that they were not in the church?

In each gospel there is much delightful matter concerning the baptism of Jesus Christ. Nothing was said about him becoming a member of the church. Does that mean that he was not in the church? Does that mean that he was not a regular baptized member of his own body? Does that mean that he was not an example for the believing children of God to follow?

Saul of Tarsus was on a journey to persecute the church of God. (Acts 9; I Cor. 15: 9) The Lord arrested him and sent him down to Ananias' house, and there he was baptized. Was he in the church? Was he a member with Christ in the organic body of Christ? Or did the Saviour operate without a system? Did he carry on his work without an organization? Not a thing was said about him joining the church; not one word was said about him being added to the people that he had formerly persecuted.

Peter had a vision which ended in him being sent for by Cornelius. The apostle preached a wonderful sermon and the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word. They were commanded to be baptized, and they were. Were they baptized into the organic body of Christ? Remember, not a word has been said

about them joining the church. If they were not baptized into the organic body of Christ, there is not any such thing as being baptized as a prerequisite for church membership. If this is true, then some long practiced mistakes need to be changed.

On several occasions the apostle preached and baptized. (Acts 16: 14, 15, 33; 18: 8; 19: 5) Were these people baptized into the church in its organic state? Nothing was said about them joining the church; nothing was told them that by the way of baptism in water was the way into the manifest or organic body of Christ. Have we been practicing something that we do not have a thus saith the Lord for? Has all of our ministerial work been vain and useless and in disobedience to our Lord?

There is not a sure way of knowing how long before Christ that Joel prophesied. It was undoubtedly several hundred years. He told what would be done as well as who it would be accomplished upon. It came to pass. The house of Israel gathered at the day of Pentecost. It all came to pass as prophesied. In every detail, the prophecy of Joel was carried out on Israel. This work brought them to ask, Men and brethren, what shall we do? It was told them what to do. It ended in them being baptized. Were they baptized into the organic body of Christ? Did they join the church? Or did Peter and the other apostles and disciples just baptize them and turn them loose? Did anything come of this act, or do we have any record one way or another?

The Old School Baptists in our generation have been castigated and malignantly abused and ridiculed because of our allegiance to our body being THE organic body of Christ. These three thousand people that were baptized, what became of them? What was their status after the coming of Pentecost? Were they loose amidst and among the ones that called the apostles drunk? Were they united to anything? Were they joined to anything?

In Ananias' baptism, in Peter's baptism, in Paul's baptism, nothing was

said about anybody becoming a member of the church until on the day of Pentecost. I may seem to have tantalized you, dear brethren, about this serious matter. I may have been leading you to think that I did not believe in people being baptized into the church; I may have led you to think that I did not believe in people joining the church. I was not after you, dear brother, but I was laying down an irrefutable account of just such an event as people being added to the organic body of Christ, of people obeying the gospel, or of people joining the church. On the occasion of which I treat, three thousand joined the church. I am well aware that they were added, and I am well aware that they acted as they were acted upon by the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them.

I have heard it said that this is the only account of receiving members in the church. There is only one pentecostal day. In the Acts of the apostles is found the history of the church of Jesus Christ. The day of Pentecost was not the beginning of the church, but it was the first manifestation of it in action after the ascension of the Saviour. ON THAT DAY MEMBERS WERE RECEIVED INTO THE ORGANIC BODY OF CHRIST, AND BAPTISM WAS THE DOOR INTO THAT CHURCH. This church left there in unity. Those that were in when the day came were satisfied about those that joined, or, if you prefer, that were added, and those that were added were satisfied about their baptism. They continued in the apostle's doctrine, and new members were added daily.

Unless this can be torn up, (it can not be), baptism is to be administered by ordained ministers of the gospel. This case and this example like the communion, is to be practiced until the return of the Redeemer. If it has been changed, or if a change is likely, I insist that we have scripture to support it.

Now it has been necessary for me to bring this before you, because I was asked specifically if the ordination of

Philip gave him the right to baptize, that is, his ordination as a deacon. I answer, if it does, I repeat what I have already said, the Old Baptist church has been off the beam for a long time, even many hundred of years. We have been holding our deacons back; we have not followed our Saviour at all, for, mark my words well, if we have a thus saith the Lord for deacons baptizing, it must come from the direct instruction of the King or his princes whose rule extends until the coming back of the King. Thus I am forced to say that I do not think that Philip, the deacon, had any right to baptize.

Please go back with me to this scripture: Let all things be done decently and in order. Is it thought that the Lord would manifestly bring his church to Pentecost without a decent way for baptism to be administered? Is it thought that he would ordain ministers for the welfare of the church, and then also authorize deacons to baptize? If so, where do we get it? Is it thought that the New Testament is a complete account of every ordination? If so, please give us an account of the ordination of the seventy. Where would we find an account of the ordination of Barnabas? Silas? Apollos? We do not know when nor where nor by whom that these many were ordained. Would we desire to say that they were not ordained?

Now I have known of several that had been ordained a deacon that later were ordained as a minister. I do not see any scriptural reason for one who had been ordained as a minister not to be ordained as a deacon. If not, the same *not* that would keep it from being thus would also be applicable in ordaining deacons as ministers. Philip was an evangelist. This gift was one given to the churches; it was a work enjoined upon Timothy. All of these elders (some of them being teachers, pastors, apostles, prophets, evangelists) were ordained according to the instructions given, even though the time and manner was not given. If this is not grant-

ed, then Paul's charge to do all things decently and in order is worthless.

Now, since it must be granted that all ordinations are not recorded, and that the usual custom in the scriptures (and since, for that matter) is to ordain before performing a certain work, and that the deacons were not authorized to perform baptismal services, it must either: 1st. Be admitted that Philip had been ordained sometime before being chosen as a deacon; or, 2nd. It must be admitted, if the above is not true, that we have left off something that the deacons were given the right to do. If it is not granted that many things were done which are not recorded, and that we have not failed and neglected one of the basic works of a deacon, then please let us have an article to explain just where we are at in church practice.

Now once again, I have consulted with a well read brother, and he objects to my surmising about Philip being ordained to preach. We are on the best of terms, and I often lay my problems before him. Therefore, when he pointed out to me that I did not have any scripture to back up Philip having been ordained as a minister, I pointed out to him that we did not have any scripture to give authority to Philip to baptize. In conclusion, the only scripture that I have to cause me to take the position that I have is based on the following: All things are to be done in decency and in order. It is order and it is decent to think that Philip was ordained to minister to the saints because he baptized, and every other case of baptism was performed by one who is credited with being ordained. Having to present an account of man's ordination before it could be valid, will, if we will examine the scriptures, make much of the work done in the New Testament as invalid. And if it is necessary in one case, it does seem decent and orderly to think that it would be in all cases.

If Jesus, who is the center of every article and sermon; who is the Founder and Keeper of His church, did not

have all of his words and deeds recorded in the New Testament, why would it seem necessary that every word and deed of his followers be recorded? Therefore, I say unto you in what I trust is humbleness before my superiors that a deacon is not qualified to baptize from a scriptural standpoint; that since Philip did baptize, that he was sometime before being appointed as a deacon, ordained as an elder.

To my precious brethren in Kentucky and in Memphis, Tennessee, as well as the household of faith everywhere, I submit these articles on a deacon's duties in its different aspects. If they are contrary to the principles of the doctrine of God our Saviour, reject them, and please bear with your weak brother.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

EXODUS 13:17,18

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt."

When God delivered the Hebrews from the house of bondage and broke the Egyptian yoke of their captivity, his wisdom as well as power was most strikingly displayed. Such is the unlimited power of God that he could have released his people from bondage by the waving of his hand, or the utterance of a word; he could have instantly crushed the power of Egypt, and stripped the imperial throne of Pharaoh of all its regal strength, or he could have softened the heart of Pharaoh as easily as he could harden it: but his wisdom,

as well as his omnipotence was to be demonstrated before the world. And having humbled Pharaoh and effected the release of the Israelites, he was able to conduct them in what way he pleased to their final destiny in the promised land. Having all power and all wisdom he was abundantly able to execute his design in any way that seemed good in his eyes.

But in the redemption of Israel from the house of bondage, and their conduct through the wilderness, and their ultimate possession of the promised inheritance God evidently designed to show forth the redemption of his chosen people from the bondage of the law and their ultimate entrance into the glorious liberty of the gospel. He therefore chose to lead them about. Instead of selecting the shortest route, or that in which the least impediments to their journeyings would require to be encountered, it was his pleasure, for a purpose worthy of himself, to lead them about in a circuitous and meandering course, which would constantly require the display of his power and wisdom, his cloud by day and his fire by night, to guide and protect them, and to show their entire dependence on him in every step of the way. Thus setting forth in the figure, first, that the salvation of his chosen people was in a way by him ordained, and their redemption from the curse, the bondage and dominion of the law, from the guilt, pollution and consequences of sin, and from the powers of death and hell, was together above the wisdom and power of men, and in a way in all respects baffling the wisdom and humbling the pride of the sons of men; showing that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Second, agreeing with the experience of all the saints, every saint can witness with the inspired psalmist that when God broke their yoke of bondage and released them in a spiritual sense, from the grasp of Pharaoh, and set them free from their bondage; when he took them up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and put a new song in their mouth, and set their feet upon a rock, that he also

established their goings. Had he allowed us to choose our own way, perhaps we would have desired to be conveyed by the nearest way, and on flowery beds of ease, immediately to the mansion of glory. Perhaps all the saints have struggled more or less against the way the Lord has been pleased to lead us about, especially when he has led us by the hand of Moses by the way of the Red Sea, hemmed in on every side, the sea before us, the enemy in hot pursuit behind and towering mountains at the right and left. We, too, have murmured when led to the bitter waters of Meribah, and we were terribly afraid when he led us near to the mountain that might be touched only on pain of being thrust through with a dart, or destroyed. Like the Hebrews, we have feared that we were brought thus far to be destroyed, but still God has led us in a way which we knew not, and in paths we had not known. Truly he has found us in a waste howling wilderness, like Jacob, and he has led us about and instructed us, and yet he has kept us as the apple of his eye.

"God led them (the Hebrews) not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war and they return to Egypt." The Philistines were a people with whom Israel was never on good terms of friendship, they were enemies, and always on the alert to draw them into difficulty and bore about the same relation to Israel that the Arminians do to the church and people of God; and although, according to the natural geography of that country, a straight line from Egypt to Canaan would cross the land or territory of the Philistines, it was not the pleasure of the Lord to lead them that way, as it was a way of temptation too strong for the resistance and fidelity of the Hebrews, therefore to avoid the influence of the Philistines on the Israelites which God foresaw would have a tendency to ensnare them, and to bring them again into bondage, he led them by another way. How happy for the children of God

is the lesson here taught that God has established the goings of his redeemed people, and that he knows exactly what amount of temptations his grace shall enable us to bear, and orders our course accordingly. So it is said of the saints, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."— 1 Cor. x. 13.

God provides against all **peradventures**, chances or uncertainties, in all the provisions which he has made for the deliverance and salvation of his people. This form of expression cannot imply that there are peradventures or uncertainties with God, but that he has provided infallibly against them. He knew, as he only could know, what would have been the consequences if he had led them through the land of the Philistines: they must have seen war, and they would probably have been tempted to repent that they had left Egypt, and inclined to return thither. So in the way of life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, God has ordained that none can come to him but by Christ, who is the way; there is salvation in no other way. Men cannot be justified in God's sight by any works of righteousness which they have performed, by any obedience to the law which they have or can render. When they are delivered from bondage and the yoke of their captivity is broken, the saints frequently show an inclination to lay their course through the land of the Philistines, that is, they have in them a natural inclination, after having received the Spirit, to be made perfect by the works of the flesh. The Arminian conditional system presents to their inexperienced eyes a smoother path, a shorter distance, and there are many allurements to draw them into the popular thoroughfares of the legal system, but God by his Spirit never leads his people in that way. Paul said to the Galatians, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." If for any purpose God suffers his children to be-

come entangled with the yoke of bondage, and to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, they always see war; for as certainly as the Spirit of truth is in them, they will find a principle of opposition to the corrupt principles and works of the flesh, and all the hosts of the Philistines will oppose the law of the Spirit of life which they possess, and all the powers of their flesh will adhere to the legal tendencies of the Philistine or Arminian doctrines, and, as the poet has very justly remarked, they

“Strive with a Do this and live,
To drive them to Egypt again.”

“But God led the people about.” He leads them, it is not his method to drive them. When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they hear his voice, and they follow him, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. As God led the Israelites from Egypt, and through the wilderness, going before them in the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, so he goes before his spiritual Israel, by day and by night. Instead of scaring or lashing them along, after the Philistine or Arminian fashion, uncapping hell, and showing them the horrors of the damned, to urge them on, he goeth before, and causes them to behold in him such irresistible attraction that they feel sweetly constrained to follow where he leads. He gives them such confidence in his wisdom to lead them, that they desire no other leader, and their experience enables them to say, He leadeth me into green pastures, beside the still waters. But he leads them by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, not because that way is the nearest, or smoothest, or most flowery, but because in that way he will be glorified, and his people shall be taught many important lessons which they could not so well learn in any other way. What important lessons did he give them in the wilderness and at the Red Sea? How was his mighty power and discriminating grace displayed, when he made a path for them through the Red Sea, on dry ground, and when the same

miracle by which their deliverance was accomplished, destroyed all their enemies? As he led the Hebrews, so he leads his spiritual people, often into wilderness trials, where the beasts of the forest prowl, and where their howlings sometimes alarm them, and to the sea where their way seems, to all human sight, cut off, the enemy advances, and they are hemmed in, and they think there is but a step between them and death, but how seasonably his help comes; his rod is extended, the sea divides, the way of escape is opened, and a song of deliverance breaks forth from their joyful tongues.

“The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.” Not in the panoply of military warfare, for God himself fought their battles, and gave them victory. The manner of their harness is described in chapter xii. 11, “And thus shall ye eat it (the passover); with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s passover.” In this manner of harness they ate the passover, and immediately left the land of Egypt, and their harness did not become old, or require to be repaired or replaced during the forty years of their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Here again we have a vivid figure of the way in which the Lord strips his people for the race, and in which he harnesses them for the christian warfare. They are not clad in the armor of men, in coats of mail, nor armed with implements of carnal warfare, for they are not to fight against flesh and blood; the warfare is a spiritual warfare, and their weapons are spiritual, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. They are well harnessed at the outset, for they have on the whole armor of God, having their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith they shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is

the word of God. (Eph. 6: 13 17.)

As the Israelites went up out of Egypt harnessed, and wore the same harness all the way in which the Lord their God did lead them until they had accomplished their whole journey and entered the the promised land, so the redeemed family of God whom he has redeemed from sin death and hell are called to be marshalled under the banner of the great Captain of their salvation, and all their armor is of God, their weapons are spiritual and mighty through grace, and they cannot decay or wax old, nor will they ever require to be superseded by any newly invented armor. As the Hebrews went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt, we may rest assured that not one of all the sons of Adam shall ever go up out of the land of Egypt, or be delivered from the house of bondage, in any other harness, nor without this harness. True, men may make profession of religion, they may display much zeal and courage, they may impose on the saints, but until God breaks their yoke, and puts on them the harness, they have no discharge from bondage, and can never know experimentally the glorious liberty of the sons of God; they are all Ishmaelites, and under the covenant that gendereth unto bondage.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe
March 1, 1862)

OBITUARIES

SISTER IZORA RAINEY

Sister Izora was born March 27, 1879, and departed this life February 26, 1967. She is survived by six daughters and one son: Mr. Buford Toy, Bradenton, Fla.; Mrs. Lillie Main Russell and Mrs. Lester B. Davis, Lyles, Tenn.; Miss Homa Rainey, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. Laurance McFarland, Centerville, Tenn.; Mrs. Dan Mayberry, Prima, Tenn.; and Mrs. John M. Lee, California. Her husband passed away many years ago.

Sister Rainey joined Willow Spring Church October 11, 1924, and in December was chosen church clerk and remained clerk until that church was disbanded about twelve years ago. She moved her membership to Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., and re-

mained a faithful member until death. The writer was her pastor about thirty years, having served Willow Spring Church until it disbanded.

Sister Rainey was very strong in the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Her faith was in God who works all things after the council of his own will. While her passing is our earthly loss, it is her eternal gain.

The writer conducted the funeral service at the Taylor Funeral Home, in Dickson, Tenn. May the Lord bless all who mourn.

Elder R. L. Biggs

DEACON A. E. SORRELLS

Deacon A. E. Sorrells, better known as "H," died in a Dothan, Alabama, hospital March 28, 1967, after a short illness. He was born December 15, 1886, and married Miss Mattie Braxton December 31, 1905, who survives him, after 61 years of devotion to each other; and 53 years active life in the church. He was received, along with the writer, into Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church on September 19, 1913, and was soon ordained a deacon. He visited many Primitive Baptist associations in this section, and was active in the Western Primitive Baptist Association for many years.

He is survived by six sons: Johnie, Willis, Buford, Fonzy, Oneal, and Joseph; five daughters: Edith, Blondell, Voncie, Lilliah, and and Lorie. Surviving also are four brothers: Frank, Elder Ed. R., Robert L., and J. S. Sorrells; 28 grandchildren, 37 great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. He was the son of Deacon and Mrs. R. S. Sorrells, who were prominent in their day.

In late life Brother "H" with his wife, became members of Ephesus Church, Slocumb, Alabama; and their home was open to all Primitive Baptists. He was active in school and community affairs, and will be sadly missed in Alabama, Florida, and Georgia where he attended many meetings. An unusual feature of this family was that up to last June, five brothers lived with their wives more than 50 years; but was broken first by the death of Mrs. R. L. Sorrells, a member of Mt. Gilead Church; and a short time later Mrs. Alice Sorrells, wife of Elder Sorrells, a member of Ephesus Church, died; and now the third couple is broken after 61 years of marriage. Almost at the moment of Brother "H's" death the writer, who was almost like a twin brother, saw in a vision the saints marching in, and a mighty panorama of the church in all its glory. Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions," and "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." We have suffered a

great loss, but it is his gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Garden Chapel Funeral Home by Elders J. Y. McCormick, and V. C. Hartzog of Florida, with interment in Hartford City Cemetery.

J. J. Collins

GEORGE ELMER MURPHY

Brother Murphy was born in Lisbon, Arkansas, January 28, 1896, and departed this life July 24, 1966, at the age of seventy years. He was the son of the late Thomas Edgar and Martha Ballard Murphy, both members of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church, and was married to Miss Lois Yocum November 27, 1921. To this union three children were born, Major George E. Murphy of Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, Mrs. Marie Nowlin of Bryant, Arkansas and Mrs. Relda Burton of Smackover. Also surviving are three sisters and three brothers and ten grandchildren.

Brother Murphy was a native of Union County, Arkansas, and a retired dairyman of the Smackover community where he spent his entire life. He was a veteran of World War 1 and was a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church, having united with the church in 1948. He was a faithful member, and a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone.

May God's blessings be upon his wife, children and grandchildren and all who feel their great loss; yet we feel it is his eternal gain, for Brother Murphy died in the hope of eternal life; and we believe he is now asleep in Jesus, waiting for his second coming; when he, together with all the saints, shall come forth clothed in perfection, to see Him as he is, be like Him and be satisfied.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor at Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church with interment in Salem Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the family; one to the Signs of the Times for publication; and one put on our church records.

Done by order of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church in regular conference, Saturday April 8, 1967.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Neila Ryan, Clerk

ROBERT A. GAMBRILL

Robert A. Gambrill was born October 1, 1896, and departed this life on February 3, 1967, making his stay here a little over seventy years. He was the son of the late James E. and Martha Ellen Gambrill. He was married December 15, 1917, to Minnie Estelle

Evans and to this union was born one son Robert Allen Gambrill, Jr., who survives and lives in Fort Worth, Texas.

He is also survived by his widow and one brother, William Gambrill of Mardela, Md., and two sisters, Mattie Bull of Baltimore, Md. and Cora Phillips, of Hebron, Md. There are also two grandchildren who survive, Patricia Ann and Robert Allen the 3rd who reside with their parents in Fort Worth, Texas.

Mr. Gambrill was a veteran of World War I and for many years served as a trustee of the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church.

He was not a member of the visible Church but when he attended meetings, he attended the Old School Baptist, and many times the meetings were held in his home. He always seemed to enjoy them and would say come back again. The writer has heard him say things, and heard of things that he has said to others, that showed that he believed that salvation was by grace and grace alone.

Funeral services were conducted at the Holloway Funeral Home by the writer in Salisbury, Md. February 6, 1967, and his body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Mardela, Md. May it please the Lord to reconcile all who mourn the loss of this dear friend to feel that their loss was his eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

KATIE MAE MORTON

Sister Katie Mae Morton was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Minnie Morton, and was born November 23, 1909, in Onslow County, N. C., and lived there all her life. She died January 31, 1967.

Sister Morton was twice married, and blessed both times with a faithful husband. Her first husband died June 10, 1957; and to this union was born a very sweet daughter. Her second marriage was to Victor Morton, but the Lord saw fit to call her home after only a short time. He was a kind and loving husband who stood by her and did what the Lord blessed him to do.

The Lord brought her before the church July 6, 1953, and she was a faithful, kind and loving member, and always filled her place in church when her health permitted. She was a member of North East Church. She was ill just a short time and was blessed to endure it with patience. She was always glad for brethren and friends to visit her, and talk about the goodness and mercy of our Saviour. She often said that if she were saved, it was by the grace of God. We feel that her absence from her kindred and loved ones, is her eter-

nal gain; for we believe that God called her home where there is no sickness, sorrow, pain, or death — where all will be love, joy and peace forever.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder L. L. Yopp.

May the Lord enable her family to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. We know there is a vacant place in your home and in your hearts. May the good Lord reconcile all of you in your great loss.

Done by order of North East Church in conference the 3rd Saturday in February, 1967. Written by an unprofitable sinner, living in hope of eternal rest in our Lord and Saviour,

J. H. Morton
Jacksonville, N. C.

WILLIAM ARNOLD CREECH

Brother William Arnold Creech was born in Johnston County, North Carolina, on Dec. 22, 1908, and departed this life October 10, 1964, at the age of fifty-five.

He was the son of the late Reuben D. Creech and Lou Delia Stancil Creech. Left to mourn his passing are his wife, Sister Mary Creech, four daughters, four sons, six grandchildren and one brother and all his many friends.

A native of Johnston County and life-long resident, Brother Creech united with the Creech's Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1959. He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone and this doctrine was a comfort to him as long as he lived. He was faithful to attend the church as long as he was able.

Brother Creech's funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the morning of the resurrection when Christ shall come to call and gather His children home to reign forever with Him.

Sister Nellie Hocutt

SISTER JANE MOORE

Sister Jane Moore, 94 years old, was born January 17, 1872 and was taken from us by death June 25, 1966. Elder D. B. Stokes assisted by Mr. Jim Parker conducted her funeral at Creech's Primitive Baptist Church, and her body was laid to rest to await the coming of the Lord at the family cemetery on Route 2, Selma, N. C.

Sister Moore's husband, Billy Moore, preceded her to the grave by many years, but she was blessed with children who loved her and

were faithful to take care of her in her old age through her afflictions. To this union in marriage, there were five children, Senie Bailey Woodard, Everitt Moore, Lizzie Corbett, and Lawrence and Carmon Moore. Lawrence and Lizzie also preceded their mother in death. Sister Moore had twelve grandchildren, twelve great grandchildren, and three great, great grandchildren.

The life of our dear Sister was a wonderful testimony to God. She always seemed happy in the Lord, always thankful to Him for the many blessings He had bestowed on her. In her trials and afflictions she remained cheerful; happy in the faith that Christ had died for her. A visit with her would lift the most depressed person as she rejoiced in the goodness of God. We miss her, but we are thankful that God sent her this way for 94 years.

By Margaret C. Johnson
Creech's Church

JOHN W. CREECH

Brother John W. Creech, 78 years of age, died January 23, 1966. We feel that he showed a love for the Church long before he was able to be baptized. Brother Creech united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1965.

We feel that God has called him home to be with Him, and has taken him out of his illness which he suffered with great patience.

He left behind to grieve for him Sister Cora Creech, his wife, and two daughters, six sons, and many grandchildren who loved him dearly and miss him. The Church misses him, but we realize that our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder D. B. Stokes, and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Submitted by Nellie Hocutt
For Creech's Church

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the church at Pleasant Grove, wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father in removing by death a beloved sister, Evelyn Walker. Sister Walker passed away at Cone Memorial Hospital January 12, 1967.

She was a faithful member as long as her health permitted: she was so afflicted that she spent several years in bed. She wrote poetry, and one, "A Rose," was read at her funeral. She was an example of Christian humility.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That in the passing of this dear sister we feel our

loss very keenly, but bow in submission to One who doeth all things well; and

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family. May God's blessings be upon each one who mourns her passing — upon her sons and daughters and all who were near and dear to her; and

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread on the church book; one sent to the family; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference February meeting, 1967.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk
(Written by Sister Lena Walker)

A ROSE

Do not buy a costly casket,
Nor a dress of blue.
Put some flowers in a basket,
Just a rose will do.

Please don't shed tears of sorrow
I was passing through.
While you wait for God's tomorrow,
Just a rose will do.

Lay me in the old church yard,
There I'll wait for you.
And upon the earthy clod,
Put a rose or two.

Ah! In life I loved the roses,
They mean "I love you,"
O'er a form that decomposes,
Just a rose will do.

May the wild rose ever blossom,
In the sparkling dew.
There I soon will be forgotten,
So a rose will do.

How I long to see a garden,
When my work is through.
Where no earthly beast has trodden,
Just a rose will do.

Evelyn Walker
April 1, 1953

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Upon request of the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, it is indeed with tear dimmed eyes and a heavy heart from a standpoint of nature that I attempt to pen a few words in memory of one whom I loved so dearly; my precious grandmother and our beloved sister, Sister Nancy Daniels. Yet, I trust I am grateful to our blessed heavenly father for the divine crumbs of reconciliation that I feel have been fed to me from the Master's table. The

merciful acts of God that I was blessed to experience throughout our lives together, and the mercies shown in those last few hours of her illness and departure far out number the tears of sorrow and of grief, a recipient of man's nature. I do have a desire to give all praise and honor to God for the crumbs of comfort and reconciliation for me, for all who were near and dear by the ties of nature, and for all who loved her in Christ's name; that love that binds the happy souls above.

Grandmother entered this life on December 25, 1894, and was called home on February 2, 1966, thus making her stay upon this earth 71 years. She was the daughter of the late Jim and Nancy Groves Roberson, and spent most of her life as a resident of Martin County.

Grandmother united with the church at Skewarky the second Sunday in May, 1933, at the water's edge. At this time she along with my grandfather, the late John Luther Daniels, was baptized by Elder B. S. Cowin; Thus she held membership for approximately 33 years.

Grandmother was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and professed a precious hope in an all wise, powerful, and merciful God. Although she bore afflictions the last ten years of her life, she was most faithful in attending her home church, in visiting the sister churches, and enjoyed until the end the sweet privilege of entertaining the brethren in our little home.

Grandmother was a widow for approximately 30 years. Surviving are two daughters, one son, eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. Also surviving are one sister, one brother, and one half-sister.

Her funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by Elders E. C. Harrison, D. B. Stokes, and W. E. Grimes. Interment was in the Skewarky Church Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a token of the esteem in which she was held.

May I express my appreciation for the many expressions of sympathy that were shared during, and have been shared since, the passing of my precious loved one. Many of you have observed down through the years and were aware of our devotion toward each other. May you be given a mind to remember a poor unworthy sinner in your prayers.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark*, *Old Faith Contender*, and *Signs of the Times*, and that a copy be sent to the family, and a copy be placed on the church record.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in February, 1966.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Written by one who loved her, a grandson,
Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1967

NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

BEHOLD THE LAMB

To us is given a chosen Lamb,
Salvation is his name,
Slain ere the day-star ever was,
But yet remains the same.

There is but one God-given Son,
Nor ever will there be
Another sacred Lamb of God
To set our spirit free.

The cross, the blood, the dying Lamb
Came from His sacred sphere,
Lay in the tomb, his second womb,
Where all His chosen were.

He loosed his shroud, he thundered loud,
"Salvation full and free,"
What a great love, sent from above,
To save a wretch like me.

He could not stay another day,
Grave clothes aside he laid,
I heard him say to me that day,
"Tis I, be not afraid."

Some glad day we'll fly away,
Like birds from captive free,
And on that mount, drink from the fount,
O! glory, glory be.

J. M. Bailey, Sr.
1511 Oak Street
Kenova, W. Va.

789 E. Paxton Street,
Danville, Virginia 24541

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for the **Signs** for two more years. I don't want to miss a copy, for I enjoy reading the truth the **Signs** advocates, and I fully believe.

I am now eighty-four and a half years old, and if I should miss the paper I would feel lost. My health has not been good since September in 1966, and I can't get to church as regularly as I have been, and the paper is so much comfort to me. Sometime I feel that I am at church hearing the preaching of the brethren of the **Signs**: Elder George Ruston, Elder Wood, Elder Lambert, and others, for all the writing is sweet to my soul, and is sound, if I know the truth.

A sister in hope,
Sallie B. Hall

Pine Bluff, Arkansas
October 7, 1888

Dear Brethren and Sisters,

The elect of the earth, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus before the world began; and called in time.

It has been on my mind to write for the **Signs of the Times** for a long time. Being at home today, I concluded to write you a few lines on the Doctrine of God our Saviour.

I believe He declared the end from the beginning: and will it not be as He said it will be? Surely it will. Is not this then absolute predestination? If not, I do not know what predestination is. God declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." This means all time things; and God has said just how they shall go. Oh yes, he said that all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he will separate them as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. He has said that he will say to those on the right, "Come, ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founda-

tion of the world." But to them on the left he will say, "Depart from me into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Will this be so or not? I say, God is not slack concerning his promises, but all will come to pass just as God has said.

Well, dear brethren, does this mean only the church? I say, No. It means all things; for God works all things after the counsel of his own will: and all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, and are the called according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. I say that our God declared the end from the beginning. He determined it to be just like he declared it would be. If this is not absolute predestination, I wish you would tell me what it is.

Does not God command to preach the truth? Others will say, If what you say is so, you make God the author of sin. But not so: that is what you say. I say, Not so. I will give you another text, which you can find if you read your Bible. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist," "All things were made by him, and for him." Dear brethren, did God make all things, and have no eternal purpose in view? Will you come to the text that says he declared the end from the beginning, and say with me that it will come to pass just as he said it would? Well, dear brethren, if God made all things, where did sin come from? Sin is an act of a thing. The Bible tells us that by the disobedience of one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. So you see that Adam is the author of sin, and not God. If you make sin a thing, then you make God the author of sin. It was the act of Adam in transgressing the law. Some will ask, Did God know that before he made man? Surely he did, or he could not have declared the end from the beginning; for we learned from the Scriptures that God made all things before he made man. He then formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of

life, and he became a living soul. He placed him in the garden of Eden, and gave unto him the law, saying unto him, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Did God know he would eat of the fruit of the tree? He surely did, or how could he have declared the end from the beginning?

We learn that Jesus Christ was a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And again, "Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" Of a truth they were gathered together against the holy child Jesus, to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel determined before hand to be done. Jesus was delivered by the determined counsel of God into wicked hands, and was killed and buried; but God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand. "Let all the house of Israel know this." That which God has said by all the prophets and the apostles, and his Son, will come to pass; yea, everything. As he declared the end from the beginning, so shall all things come to pass. Let all the house of Israel know this, that he has declared the end of all things, even when time shall be no longer, saying, "Surely as I have thought, so shall it stand; and as I have purposed, so shall it come to pass." "I am God, and beside me there is no Saviour." "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

So fear not, dear brethren. It is your Father's pleasure to give you the kingdom, which he has prepared for his dear children. Stand fast in the faith, and endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. When the chief Shepherd of the sheep comes, he will carry you home to rest forevermore.

D. Westall

(Copied from the Signs of May 8, 1889, and sent to us by Sister Donaldson, of Star City, Arkansas, who said, "I have heard my parents speak of Elder D. Westall. He had very little formal education, but was richly blessed when he stood up to preach." — J. D. W.)

CONFIDENCE IN FLESH
COULD NOT STAND

907 North Rusk,
P. O. Box 207,
Weatherford, Texas 76086

Dear Editors of the Signs,

And the brethren and sisters in hope of eternal life, who believe that all of the blessings of God are in every way, entirely and completely, by the grace of God. You who can say, "Amen" to this, I desire to call you my full brothers and sisters; for we can be together and enjoy the fullness of the gospel of God. Those known as limited Primitive Baptists, without any desire to cast a reflection upon them, I beg to call them "half brothers."

In Genesis 35:22, we read that the sons of Jacob were twelve, but they were half-brothers to Joseph, except Benjamin, who were full brothers, having the same father and mother. So Joseph was especially favorable to Benjamin; but when put to a test of his love for his brethren, he favored all of them greatly. This was by grace — an unmerited favor, after they had sold him to the Ishmaelites for a small sum of money. Jesus was sold for a small sum of money, of which Joseph was a type. His coat of many colors was stained with blood, yet the ones who had stained it went free, and were not punished for their great transgression; but in life were preserved. Joseph told them, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, o save much people alive." And he comforted them, saying, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither."

As I began to say, Benjamin was especially favored; and in giving the food to his brethren, Joseph ordered Benjamin's mess five times as much as any of the others, and to each of them he gave changes of raiment, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of raiment. The only reason I can give for him being especially favored, is that he had the

same father and mother that Joseph had: Was that not by grace and grace alone? Did Benjamin do anything in choosing who his father and mother would be?

Dear Brethren, you that are the very salt of the earth, don't you realize that when you are with your full brothers and sisters, you get five messes instead of one, and five changes of garments; but you have nothing to glory of except in the Lord: it is entirely by the grace of God, since it is a fact you could not choose who would be your parents. I usually say, and I have to say purposely of God, I was with my half-brothers for about ten years, the limited Primitive Baptists. They have the same Father I trust I have, but not the same mother in the sense of church affiliation.

Nearly one and one-half centuries ago the Baptists were all one people, but many were swallowed up by the earth and became an earthly institution. If it had not been so, look what we would have on the inside of the church. "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Rev. 12:15-17)

As I see it, the earth will always swallow up these institutions. God has always taken care of the Church of Jesus Christ; and we can't do it, nor tell him how. He will build his church: he is the legal owner of the church "Which he hath purchased with his own blood."

A little while ago I went to hear the Old Predestinarian Primitive Baptists preach. I was so surprised to hear them preach the complete sovereignty of God and his completeness in power, saying that all power was of God, and what so ever his soul desired that he did. It

gave me much consolation and restful comfort, as I was taught to trust Him in all things; yet it made a big tearing down of my "big ideas" which I had in the flesh. Their testimony, with my experience, showed me plainly that I could not make the confidence I had in the flesh stand. Peter was told by Jesus, "When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." He had to learn that he could not stand of himself, no matter how much he had avowed he would be with Jesus unto death. He couldn't do it, and it was proved to him by the cock crowing. That cock crowed a sermon that brought Peter to bitter tears of repentance.

In conclusion let me say, Take courage, though the flesh indeed is weak, the Spirit is as strong as ever. May we be enabled to ever preach and teach repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; but never, never, faith in ourselves. We have worn our old flesh garments threadbare, trusting in them: if, and or, but. Yet, evil will be present with us so that we cannot do the things that we would. Jesus said unto them, ". . . have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou has perfected praise?"

A weak and imperfect brother,
if one at all,
W. C. Purdy

FELLOWSHIP

How sweet it is to have fellowship with God! And that we have that hope within us that God has given his children: the gift of his grace that they are walking in the light as he is in the light.

How sweet is the hymn that says,

"What is there beneath the skies,
In all the paths thou'st trod;
Can suit thy wishes or thy joys,
Like fellowship with God."

We understand that all must first have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, before they can have fellowship one with another. And, this fellowship must come as a

gift from God, as does grace, and one's faith.

We believe that one must have fellowship one with another to have a mutual sharing of an experience: something that is to be felt toward each other. We understand that God's children have fellowship one **with** another and not just merely **for** one another. This fellowship would surely have to be **with** one another or they could not be a member of, or added to the family of God.

If we say we just have fellowship **for** someone, this doesn't go very deep with me. The word, "for" does not have that much of a meaning to me. The only application of the word that I can think of in connection with fellowship would be "Assigned to," and God hasn't made his children only "assigned to" (the meaning of for) but has made them "among," "associate or member of," "counted with others" (the meanings of with). If we don't have fellowship **with** God's children, then I certainly don't see how we can have it **for** them. If He has graced us to be counted with others, then our fellowship is with them, not for them, and not something we can present them if we wish, or withhold if we wish.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; . . . That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." (I John 1: 1, 3, 4.)

In the first chapter of First John, Christian fellowship is expressed fully. He tells how it is possible for believers to have fellowship one with another by saying "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you."

For what purpose did the apostle declare this unto you? "That ye also may have fellowship with us." Then he makes known of a truth by saying, "And truly our fellowship is with the

Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

The apostle had seen and heard that which was from the beginning with their own eyes. Their hands had handled of the Word of life. The apostle had been given the eyes and ear of understanding by the Holy Ghost, and he speaks to those of like mind.

You will find the word “fellowship” in only thirteen scriptures in the Bible. The apostle shows how that fellowship is to be had with all believers: those that have seen and heard and handled the same thing that the apostles did by the Holy Ghost — how that they tasted and handled of the Word of life.

This is the message which the apostles of Christ have heard of Him (Christ) and declare unto you. You that have tasted of the goodness of Christ, you that have ears to hear and eyes to see, that God is light and in Him (God) is no darkness at all.

Fellowship is not just a gathering of friends, but fellowship with the Great Head of the Church, whose fellowship is truly with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches plainly what true fellowship is and to whom we can fellowship. The one and only requirement is “if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

In everyone that is made able to know that Power wherein they are made to walk in the light, true fellowship abides without any mention of Church, Creed, or Class. Fellowship is to all who walk in the light as he is in the light. It is then we have fellowship one with another for the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed us from all sin.

Fellowship is not something that can be put on or off at man’s own will. It is like faith. First, fellowship must be **with** God, and this fellowship must flow through fellowship **with** Christ before one can have fellowship with God’s people. We are either in fellowship with God and with his people or we are not.

Fellowship is worked in God’s children by his grace, and is felt only as

He works in them. For it became him (Christ) in bringing many sons unto Glory. This was the work of Christ, and he who has become our fellowship is not ashamed to call them brethren. All that has been done was done in Christ — in him all fullness dwells and exists. He (Christ) is the first in all, the first born among many brethren, that the family of God be conformed to the image of him; to be made like him.

Fellowship is wrought in the family of God according to the power of God in them. Then, this is felt, handled, and seen according to the gift of his grace.

Elder R. O. Simmons,
Rt. 1,
Elora, Tennessee

Rt. 7, Box 118
Christiansburg, Va. 24073

Dear Brother Spangler:

I desire to write you a few lines, and hope you and Sister Spangler are well. We think of you often and of the wonderful gift the Lord has given you. I well remember the first time I heard you preach, it was about 1925. You were a young man and I was just a lad, but it stayed with me, though I do not remember your text. I remember you spoke of the coming of the Lord. This I believe, and look for his coming the second time without sin unto salvation.

All that I knew then was that I was a sinner, and that if I died I would be sent to hell. I knew I was the guilty one, and that was what I deserved. I was not able to quit one bad habit. As I grew older, the Lord showed me a little here and a little there. I mourned and groaned until I was twenty-four years old, when the Lord spoke in me and around me, and said, “If God be for you who can be against you?” I felt that he would be with me for ever. I saw things there that I have never been able to tell; but I was made willing to be anything God would have me to be.

I tell the people that there are two

kinds of people in the world today, and they are both sinners: One is dead in trespasses and sins and do not know it; the other has been quickened and know they are sinners.

The Lord has been good to me, and so have the brethren. What more could one wish for in this world? I hope you will have a mind to come our way this summer, for the brethren speak of you often.

Your little brother,
James Leroy Agee

DESIRES TO BE KEPT HUMBLE

Nags Head, N. C.
Box 295,

Elder E. M. Smith,
Rt. 1, Box 303
Elm City, N. C. 27822

Dear Elder Smith:

I am attempting to write what is on my mind, and if it is in accordance with God's will, it shall be finished and reach you regardless of all opposing powers on earth. That is what I hope I believe, but so much of the time I am asking myself, Do I really have a hope? or is it that in my sinful ways, I am just imagining things: Am I in my poor, weak, and peculiar self, trying to convince myself, and at the same time attempting to deceive those people I hope I love, into believing false things concerning me. I have desired, hoped, and tried to beg that I never be allowed to deceive the Old Baptists concerning myself, and what I hope to believe. For, if I know anything at all, I believe those of you who come declaring the greatness of God and the helplessness of man, compose that church under consideration when God said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And, if I know my desire, it is never to do anything to cause hurt to any member or part of that church; for Jesus said that whatsoever thou doest to the least of them (my children) thou

doest it unto me. If not deceived, I believe, sometimes with all my heart, that those of you I have reference to are declaring and professing the very same doctrine Jesus Christ proclaimed while walking upon the earth; and in so believing, I desire to be just some small part of it, and if it could be His will that I be made to pray, I feel right now that I would beg to be placed and kept at the feet of His children, and be prevented from causing disturbance among those I hope I love in the name of and for the sake of Jesus Christ, the one and only begotten Son of Almighty God, the Maker of many, the Father of a few as compared to the number of vessels made by Him.

Please try to overlook my rambling method of writing my thoughts: I am only a poor worm of the dust in confusion and sin most of the time, trying to search for food: not for my body, for God has for fifty-four years abundantly blessed me with that, but food for my soul — one more little crumb, so that I might have more strength upon which to feel that my hope is in truth a hope for a better place after this life.

Following this are written some of my thoughts as they entered my mind; do with them as you wish. When you are made to pray, if it is in your mind, ask that I be placed and kept at the feet of those of you whom I desire to love with an everlasting love.

Troy G. Shepard

If I am wrong in what I believe is the doctrine which the Old Baptists proclaim, I stand to be corrected. I understand their whole concept of all things as they be and do, are based solely upon first of all, and through unto the end, and through eternity, that there was, is, and will remain to be an absolute Sovereign God over all things that were, is and ever will be, in that He did in the beginning make and totally complete all his purposes for every thought or act ever to be throughout each and every instant of time. As I said

this is my understanding of their belief, and I hope my understanding is right, for if I know what I believe, that is it.

God was never, nor will ever be surprised or disappointed, or confused concerning anything. He saw and knew from the very start all time and events to take place, even what this sinner is doing right now; and furthermore did plan for it to be, and declared that it shall be. If it be, (even the falling of a sparrow is mentioned,) then he must have considered every event, no matter how small or unimportant it might seem to men, important in carrying out the overall operation as he determined it to be, with absolutely no alteration or side-tracking from it. The confusion, uncertainty, disappointments, etc. are completely confined within the minds of men only; and this also is exactly as he planned it should be.

In believing these things I hope they are in accord not only with what Primitive Baptist profess, but most important the teaching of Jesus while he was in the world. If I know my feelings I have a love for this doctrine, and those people who believe it. I am not ashamed to confess, when I feel as I do now, that I love those "hardshell" Baptists with a love so deep that it reaches to the very center of my soul; but much of the time in the consciousness of my own nature, these things seem distant and dimly lighted, so much so that I fear the light will completely disappear from me. Sometimes it seems that my love for these people and those things which God gives them the strength to proclaim, is so strong that I would gladly (if I could) give what remains of my life here on earth, for just a few moments of time in which I could truly mix and mingle with them as their brother. But I feel so unfit that I fear that I am deceived in it all, and in turn if they should receive me as such, deceive them. Each time I consider this possibility, my mind centers upon what God has said: What thou doest unto the least of mine, you also do it unto me. I hope it is that love I have for them which gives me a deep desire not to hurt

them in any way; for I believe they are those for whom Jesus said that he was going away to prepare a place for them. The only hope I have is that I might be their brother in Jesus Christ; and if this could be so, that God would give me a short time in this life to mix with them as their brother.

Knowing myself as I do, I know of myself I am undeserving of it; but if it could be the will and purpose of my Creator that I have this great privilege, I desire to be placed and kept at no greater height than at their feet: then maybe I could never be a hurt to them. But how unfit I am to speak of these things, for I feel so full of sin and the things of this world. Yet sometimes I feel to know that surely He must have dealt with me in some way, for if he had not, I would still be relying upon my own strength — a strength I now know is non-existent. At times I feel my total helplessness, and that I am solely dependent upon Him for all strength; and if I am not to spend an eternity in hell, it is brought about only through and by mercy allotted me before he laid the foundation of this world. This is my only hope for a place in that city on high when my life on earth is finished.

There is one thing that I feel to know for sure, that my sins are so unsurmountable that if it should be that a man is judged by the sins committed, and the good things he does himself, I would have no hope at all; but my home after this life would be an eternal hell. I feel sure that I have never on my own done any good thing, but have in truth and in fact, every moment of my life when not guided by His merciful hand in the other direction, always taken the left fork of the road which is wide and well traveled: that road of the world which gives the false impression that it leads upward, when in truth it leads ever downward to the pit — the place where there is no help except the grace and mercy of Almighty God takes one out. Sometimes I believe I am a witness to the horrors of that pit; and if not deceived, can witness to the sweet de-

liverance from it — which is an experience too great to describe.

Oh, that it might be His will to raise me to that height so great as to just reach up and touch the feet of his little children; and, if his will, to just let me ever stay there, without a desire for a greater height. Right now I want to be there, stay there, and die there; for I feel if that were so, I would not mind leaving this world. I feel that the light shining upon my hope, would be bright enough to overcome the darkness of doubt which abides with me so much of the time. Oh that I might be kept in a complete state of humbleness all the remaining days of my life, for it is only when in that condition can I be sure of not being a hurt to others as well as myself. When this is not the case I am filled with foolishness and ready to lash out with my tongue filled with things of this world.

If it is God's will, please beg for me. From one who desires to hope that he has a hope of that city where all are brethren forever in peace and love, and praise to the ever merciful King.

Troy G. Shepard

THE WIND AND THE SPIRIT

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

How true and wonderful is the comparison. The wind we cannot see, neither can we see the Spirit. The wind has a great power that no man can control; so does the Spirit, for men cannot control the Spirit. He cannot see where the wind comes from, neither can the natural eye see where the Spirit comes from; or where it goes. But one can see where the wind has been, or see its work, or what it has done, and the effect of it. There is nothing that man can do to hinder the wind: How true it is with the Spirit! One can see where the Spirit has been, and the effect of it; but there

is nothing one can do to hinder the work of the Spirit. Man cannot promote the wind or cause it to blow; neither can man promote the work of the Spirit, to cause it to move or carry on its work at his will.

So, as the wind goes at its will and where it will, (at God's will), the Spirit goes where it will, and at its will, (as God wills). We understand that both the wind and the Spirit are under the eternal God's control: the wind travels on both land and sea, east, west, north, and south. It is the same with the Spirit in all directions, in every nation, kindred, and tongue under heaven.

The strong wind moves whatever it takes hold of, and takes it in the direction it is traveling. It is the same with the Spirit: when it lays hold of a person, that person is going to go the way the Spirit is traveling. Dear ones, we have not always been traveling the same direction we are now, (and have been for a number of years.) Have you found this to be true; I feel that I have. If the Spirit crushes me down at the feet of Jesus, then I cry, "Lord help." If the Spirit fills my heart with thankfulness and praise to His great and holy name, then I groan in Spirit; and am filled with praise to God for all his great goodness and mercy to me; and the eye of faith beholds Him as the Father of all my blessings: for the Spirit is traveling in this direction.

The apostle Paul found that he had to preach Jesus, for the Spirit was moving in that direction, and he could not resist it. Paul was as helpless as he would have been in a strong wind: he had to obey, and become a part of that great building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. There was a great change: He was **not now giving orders; but was taking orders**, saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

How true with us! We humbly pray the Lord to instruct us to do that which is pleasing in his sight. When Jesus writes his law in the heart and puts it in the mind, and one is being drawn by the cords of His great love, then the Spirit is traveling that way, and the

little child of God goes that way. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. David said that He made him to lie down in green pastures, and led him beside the still waters. The Spirit with its power was traveling that way with David. The new man, or Spirit, was stronger than the old man, hence the old man was bound: and David could say many times over, "Praise ye the Lord."

The Spirit was moving David in the way nothing else could. No tree, the huge oak or the sturdy maple, is so strong or so deeply rooted but the powerful wind can uproot it or break it down. It is the same with man: none is so strongly rooted in fleshly pride and worldly lusts, but that the powerful Spirit can break him down and uproot him from fleshly self and his own good works and pride, and make him as a little child, to walk humbly and softly, fearing and trembling before God the remainder of his days.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson,
46 Cedar Street
Kingston, N. Y. 12401

CIRCULAR LETTER OF
STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION
1967

To the Messengers, ministers and friends that compose the Staunton River Association.

Dear Brethren:

You appointed me to write the letter addressing and welcoming you to meet with us at Union Church on the 7, 8, and 9th of July, 1967.

We hope the God of all Grace will meet and manifest his love and mercy to all that meet with us at this association, and trust that the ministers who come will be laden with the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We know that God rules in heaven and in earth and has all power. Man is just a worm in the dust and has no power, except what God gives him.

What I am going to write may not belong in this letter; it is a part of the Lord's dealing with me. When I was in my twenties I had a dream that has been very precious to me over the years. Jesus and I were flying, and I said I didn't know that I could fly; and I fell into the swamp and mire and Jesus came to me, lifted me up and said to me, "If I don't hold you up you will be sure to fall."

I believe I have been taught and shown these things. So brethren, press on; the same Jesus that was seen going up will in like manner come again to carry you home to Glory. I know that I will not be with you much longer but I want to be at your feet as long as I am here with you.

I hope that God will give me faith and strength to praise his name as long as I live on earth.

In Hope of Eternal Life,
Your Brother I Hope,
S. A. Slaughter

307 E Pine Street
Winsboro, Texas 75494

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is time for me to renew my subscription, and I am sending \$5.00 for two years. I enjoy reading the **Signs of the Times** so well, containing all the good letters from the brothers and sisters. I hope I am among them.

I pray that God will guide me through this life, for that is all I have to look to: I know that without Him we can do nothing, and we are dependent upon him alone. We are weak and do change, but He never changes. Isn't it good to trust in a Saviour who never changes? He knows every step we take, and knows all about us.

I belong to the Good Hope Church, and was looking forward to your preaching for us. Hope you can some day.

In Christian fellowship,
Mrs. Morris Hewitt

NOT AFRAID TO
PREACH SOUND DOCTRINE

Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120
Rt. 2, Box 134,

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I would like to let you know that I enjoyed the sermon by Elder Stanley Phillips in the last issue (July) of this beloved paper; and also Elder Lambert's Editorial, and I have written him telling him so. Oh, praise God for such men who are not afraid to stand and proclaim sound doctrine: If God has called them to preach his glorious truth, they will stand unafraid in Him, and Him alone.

I heard it said in my own living room, that you could go and hear all, and spit out what you don't believe. I want to state what I believe about it: If God has called a man to preach his gospel, and has opened a people's ear to hear his gospel, I do not believe you will have to spit any of it out. I hope this is not too old "hardshelly" for any one.

I hope, brethren, that I have been blessed to believe in an absolute God; one who has absolutely fixed all men's walk on the face of this earth, and we don't have one ounce of strength to fix ourselves in anything. I believe that God rules the old devil, and that the devil does not hold the keys to the kingdom. God rules over every thing, every animal and every creeping thing — every human being on the face of this earth.

Man does not have any power of his own; and never will have. Thank God for showing me these wonderful truths, not for my sake but for his precious Son, who has given me a little hope to anchor my soul here in this troublesome land of sorrow and grief.

An humble one, begging for a crumb from the Master's table,

Mrs. Lewis (Pauline) Spencer

OFTEN HAS DOUBTS AND FEARS

Rt. 2,
Elon College, N. C. 27244

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I am enclosing three dollars to renew my subscription. I look forward to its coming each month, and enjoy it so much. I enjoy reading the experiences of the writers, and am disappointed when I do not find them. No doubt many are like me: I feel so weak and unfit to write to such a people as they are. I wish I could feel fit to be at their feet, but I am so full of doubts and fears that I can hardly go on sometimes. Yet the Lord has all power, and gives us strength to keep going as he sees fit; and without Him we can do nothing.

I often wonder if I know anything at all. My hope gets so small and I long to know more and more, and to hear the gospel preached. I think so much of the closet, when I wished I could be in it behind the pulpit and hear the preaching and rejoice where no one could see me. I wanted to keep it hid, but couldn't. The Lord blessed me wonderfully when I knew it not.

When I was about nine years old was the first time I remember calling on the Lord for help, when I was frightened by a big light, which was the Northern Lights, I suppose. Then again when my mother was very ill a few years later, and I was afraid she would die, and I didn't see how we could live without her, I just had to leave the house and go to the feed barn in the mule stable, (where my father died later from a bolt of lightning,) and tried to pray for her to get better and live; but the doctor and medicine had to be blessed from above.

After we were married and had a small family we would often go up home; and I once dreamed of being there with all the family sitting in the yard in a circle, and I had a song book marching around them singing "Jesus Lover of my Soul," and that song has meant so much to me. I say again that He blesses us when we know it not. Once while in the hospital I prayed for strength to go through with the operation, if it was he Lord's will; and if not, I hoped I was ready to go. Elder Donald

Smith came the night before and offered prayer; and I feel that it and all others were answered.

Remember me in your prayers,
Mrs. W. Robert Apple

REPORT OF UNION MEETING

Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:

I feel impressed to send for publication a few lines about our Union Meeting of the churches of the Soldier Creek Association while in session at the New Providence Church, west of Murray, Calloway County, Kentucky, June 16, 17, and 18.

We were blessed to meet a few members of the churches of this association, and friends of the principles of the doctrine which the Old School Baptists contend for: this same doctrine being God's doctrine. Our visiting ministers were Elders J. N. Darnell and W. Y. Chandler from the Little River Association; Elder Herbert Prince from the Memphis Church; and Elder R. L. Biggs from the Bordeaux Church, Nashville, Tenn.

To be gathered together and permitted to sit in heavenly places where our Saviour is proclaimed to be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, surely is a mercy extended from the Heavenly Father to poor beggars. While listening to three or four sermons each day, and at night meetings at Brother and Sister Paul Poyner's home, we felt to be in another world from the one where we go about hearing the news of the world, the complaints of this one and that one, and seeing and hearing about material things concerning natural living. Yes, it was another world, a peaceful place to rest and hear good news; to see and know that fellowship abounded in our midst — faith to faith, friend to friend, knowing nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Elder Prince took for a text one time, declaring that the lot was cast

into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof was of the Lord. Elder Biggs used for a text one day, "Laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desiring the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." Surely in this meeting malice and envy, hypocrisies and evil speakings were forgotten. Peace abounded and fellowship felt. Elder Poyner used in the Introductory Sermon, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not."

How well we know that the religious world does not know us, who are called, "the can't help it" Baptists, the despised "Absoluters". Yet the world hated our Lord before it hated us. We are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto him against that day, as Paul the Apostle declared.

Paul knew whom he had believed; and this people meeting in our Union knew too whom they had believed, and were still believing — trusting not in their own righteousness, but the imputed righteousness of Jesus their Saviour, their Wonderful Counselor, their Everlasting Father, the Prince of their Peace.

Effie Bowden

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 5,
Reidsville, N. C. 27320

Dear Lovers of the Truth:

I will try in the best way I can for a poor sinner like me to write some of my experience of grace and hope, if I have any and am not deceived.

When I was a small child and growing up, I would worry so much about the end of time, and would dream about the end of the world coming. I would always dream that the fire would burn on over me, but did not burn me at all. After I was married, and before my second little

girl was born, I dreamed of seeing a big book open in the east with a hand shaped under it; and after she was born I got into so much trouble. There were many clouds and thunder storms in April and May of 1936, and I felt that the lightening was going to strike me, and I would sure go to hell. I believe I went to the bottomless pit. I went to Pleasant Grove meetings regularly on Saturday and Sunday then. On the third Saturday in April or May, Elder Stanfield preached from Isaiah, which was the first sermon I had ever heard in my life. I had such a desire to join the church, but haven't until this time. God only knows why. I was still in trouble, and felt like when I went to sleep at night I would never see my husband and babies again. One night I dreamed that my husband was down at the barn close to the house, and inside the hog lot there was the prettiest woman and little children sitting on the pretty green grass: she had a large book in her lap, and was writing my husband's name in gold letters in the book; and when I walked up she wrote my name also. After that I went for years not fearing death; then about eighteen years ago, I had what was suppose to be a serious operation. My sister-in-law told the doctor that I wasn't afraid to have the operation; and he said that I got along better than anyone he had ever performed that operation on. But I did get so afraid the night before the operation that I started to get up and slip out of the hospital. I was in my room all alone, and I heard the Lord's voice (I really believe it was the Lord's voice), and it sounded from one end of the hall to the other, and said, "Fear not, I am with you always, even until the end of the earth." Then I did not fear the operation the least bit.

How many times I have had my feelings hurt from others than Primitive Baptists, about not joining the church! How I would like to be a member; but am sure there is a set time for me to join; but if I am never a member, I feel I was made afraid to die, and then not afraid to die. I go to Wolf Island

Church and love it there, and I go to Pleasant Grove Church and love it there. I pray to live long enough to see the associations and churches in peace, love and fellowship; and I feel that all the children of God would like to see it. This has worried me much, I hope I am one of His little ones, and am like Elder Stanfield, he loved peace more than anything on this earth.

As great a sinner as I feel to be, I will close by asking the prayers of everyone.

Your unworthy one,
Mrs. Rena (Cobb) Smith

THE KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to be held with Concord Church, Creswell, Washington County, North Carolina, first Sunday in October, 1967, Saturday before and Monday following.

Elder B. D. Handy was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder I. S. Conner, his alternate.

The Church is located on the road to Cherry, about 2 miles South of Creswell.

The Association is to be held in Creswell School building on Saturday and Sunday. Those coming from West 64 Highway, turn right upon entering town, follow black top road one block, turn left, go one block, and turn right.

We extend a cordial invitation to our Ministering Brethren, Brethren, Sisters, and friends.

E. C. Harrison, Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1967 session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association is appointed, the Lord willing, to be held with the church at Healthy Plains, Wilson County, N. C., beginning at 11 o'clock on Friday before the 4th Sunday in October, and continuing through Sunday.

The church is located at the intersection of Highway 581 and rural paved road 1129, between Bailey, N. C. and Buckhorn. If Buckhorn is not shown on the map, it is the intersection of 581 and 42 highways. Those coming by way of Wilson take 42 highway west out of Wilson for approximately 7 miles, turn on rural paved road 1142 at Rockridge Sign, follow for 2 miles and turn right on 1129 three miles to the church.

All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Association is appointed to be held with Nassaonga Church, Wicomico County, Maryland, October 18 and 19, 1967.

The meeting will be held in the Old School Baptist Meeting House in Salisbury, Maryland. Those arriving on Tuesday will contact Sister Mildred Dykes, Mt. Herman Road, Salisbury; or Brother William Adkins, Mardella, Md.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

D. V. Spangler

CORRECTION

On page 178 of the August issue, the second line under the heading "FIFTY YEARS" should read, "which was read on the occasion of a supper," etc. The word "we" should have been "was". — J. D. W.

PLEASE NOTE

Any corrections in the CHURCH NOTICES must be in our hands by November 25th, and should be sent to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va. 22110. — J. D. W.

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Association convenes with the church at Damascus, in Pitt County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1967, and continuing through Sunday. The church is located in the city of Farmville, N. C.

All lovers of truth are invited to meet with us.

E. M. Smith, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 303,
Elm City, N. C.

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The 1967 session of the South Ouachita Association will convene with Bethel Church, commencing Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, 1967, and continue three days. Bethel Church is located about seven miles north of El Dorado, Arkansas, on Highway 167. Turn left at Kozy Kitchen Cafe and go about one fourth mile.

Lovers of the Truth are welcome.

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr., Moderator
Eugene Patterson, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, which is located on U. S. 50, about one and one-half miles east of Aldie, Virginia, on October 11 and 12 (Wednesday and Thursday).

A cordial invitation is given to our brethren and friends to meet with us. Those coming on Tuesday will come to Manassas to Elder Wood's home.

Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

Danville, Virginia September, 1967

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ANOTHER EDITION OF
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Another edition of the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books in the shaped notes has been ordered, and should be received about the first of September.

Prices, including 2% tax, delivered will be: Single Book, \$3.52; one dozen, \$38.25.

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EDITORIAL

ISAIAH 60: 13.

"And I will make the place of my feet glorious."

Some time ago, having spoken upon the above text, we were asked to write the substance of our discourse as an article for the Signs of the Times, but owing to our pressing duties we were not able to do so at that time, and now feel we have very little of the sweetness left that we then felt, to stimulate us in our endeavor. While we shall fail to present the same matter, yet we hope to present some views of the glorious travel of Immanuel, which being interpreted, means God with us.

The work of the eternal Son of God, and the glory of his kingdom, has been testified to by the writers of the Old Testament, and was set forth in types and shadows in the legal covenant. Moses in blessing the children of Israel, gave glory unto the Son of God, for he saith, "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words." It was in David's heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and we find in several of the Psalms reference to the place where the ark rested, as the footstool of God. It was there at set times that the people were gathered, and their sacrifices were offered and the atonement made, and there they learned God was Judge himself. It was there judgment began. Within the temple the

woodwork was from the finest trees of Lebanon. These had grown on the mountain of Lebanon for generations, but when converted into timber for the temple their life was gone, and they, like all types and shadows, were doomed, sooner or later, to perish and vanish away, but Isaiah in prophesying of the true temple of God that shall never perish, and true to type, the glory of Lebanon shall come unto it, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary. The trees of Lebanon were of God's planting, man had no hand in placing them there, they dated beyond the memory of living man, and towered above the high places of the earth, and were ever fresh and green. One meaning of the name Lebanon is "incense," and what is more wonderful than trees that have weathered the wind and storms of centuries, towering majestically towards heaven with the roots deeply entwined in the earth and rocks beneath them? Israel was to grow as the lily, and strike forth his roots as Lebanon, and with Lebanon's fresh mountain air filled with fragrance of the budding vine and rich odors from trees and shrubs it wonderfully agrees with the words of Solomon: "The smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon." The glory of Lebanon was to be given unto her, and as the days of a tree so are the days of my people, saith the Lord. The trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, glorify him in the church of our God, the temple of his holiness, their everlasting testimony to the life of God in their souls and the motions of supplication and praise under the moving influences of the Holy Spirit, rise as sweet incense to perfume the place of God's sanctuary.

This sanctuary to which we refer is the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man, and here it is well for us to consider the person of Christ, who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch

as he who had builded the house hath more honor than the house, and he that buildeth all things is God. Jesus of Nazareth was Lord of all, and was before David; while he was David's son, David in spirit said, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." In the fullness of time the eternal Son of God came, took upon him a body, became the Son of man, made an atonement for the sins of his people, died the Just for the unjust, was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. It is this blessed person who declared, "I will make the place of my feet glorious." Malachi declares, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple. * * * But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appear-eth?"

His coming meant sweeping away of the types and shadows, the fulfillment of the law and the bringing in of an everlasting righteousness. As the Sun of righteousness his brightness was to eclipse the glory of Moses and the prophets, and, contrary to our natural sun, he, the Sun of Righteousness, would not withdraw his light. He came as a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, he trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him. He gave his back to the smiter and his face to them that plucked off the beard. He prayed his Father and declared that he was glorified in his church, prayed: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world (Jew and Gentile) may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." John tells us, "We beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." None knew

him but those to whom he was revealed by the Spirit of God. That which the apostles testified and wrote of him, was all by revelation. It was a revelation of Jesus Christ and his glory, which glory was to fill the temple, and they testify unto us that the church of God is his husbandry, his building. To-day this truth must be revealed to us, it is not a matter of speculation, but of revelation. The Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, testifies of Jesus, and that same Spirit which also convinceth of sin, stops men, women and children in their mad career as he did Saul of Tarsus. It is the Spirit that makes one, even though he be a Pharisee by nature, to pray the publican's prayer, and before ever we aspire to the name of christian we do well to examine ourselves by the Word of God, and not by the standard of morals that other men have set, even though they be called good by the world. Are we convinced of sin? Hath sin become unto us exceeding sinful? Do we still cling to the law of Moses, or have we learned that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight? Thousands cling to the law, but if ever the Lord lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, they will, like the king of old, find that they are weighed in the balances and found wanting. Wanting of him who is the Alpha and Omega of true religion, Jesus Christ.

Not long ago, one who called himself a minister, invited a child of God to hear him preach; after his talk he asked how she liked his sermon. She replied, "You built quite a fine house, but you left out the foundation." How many are leaving out this blessed foundation to-day? They are innumerable, yet every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up, but those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

To return, it is a wonderful mercy if we can say that the law has brought us to the footstool of the Judge of all. We believe that all flesh will be brought before him, either now or hereafter. Looking back, some of us remember the

distress of soul we were suffering when awakened by Sinai's awful sound, when the commandment came with conviction from the Almighty. "We felt the arrow of distress, and found we had no hiding-place." It was Sinai's awful sound that made the earth to tremble and made sin exceeding sinful. The way many act, even those who talk of sin, show by their fruits that sin to them is not exceeding sinful, for they roll sin under their tongues as a sweet morsel. Dear brethren and friends, if we cannot do that the reason is plain, we have learned the bitterness of sin, and have seen Jesus die. The world cannot come in here, the Egyptians all went out when Joseph made himself known to his brethren. We can never weep for the afflictions of Joseph if we do not learn by his Spirit that we have sold and slain him. This is the place of his feet, at his cross, and they shall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn for him. The wounds of Jesus are very tender to the living in Zion, and we are certain of this: we cannot have sweet fellowship with Mary in washing her Savior's feet with her tears, if we think lightly of sin. Dear Joseph Hart sings:

"Behold that pale, that languid face,
That drooping head, those cold, dead eyes!
Behold in sorrow and disgrace,
Our conquering Hero hangs and dies!
Ye that assume his sacred name,
Now tell me, what can all this mean?
What was it bruised God's harmless Lamb?
What was it pierced his soul, but sin?
Blush, christian, blush, let shame abound;
If sin affects thee not with woe;
Whatever spirit be in thee found,
The Spirit of Christ thou dost not know."

All under the condemnation of sin are bound as in prison, and blind to any way of salvation for them, and it is the Spirit that reveals to them Jesus journeying that way. Mary washed his feet, because she had seen her own vileness, and by that could realize in her measure what his sufferings were and the rough road his feet had traveled to come to where she was. What an awful place for the feet of God's darling Son, yet he traveled in the greatness of his strength glorious in his apparel, "clothed in a

body like our own." Think of it, he was marred more than any man, it was there he had to come, the almighty God, in the likeness of sinful flesh. This is where the greatness of redeeming love comes in, and it is here the Father by his eternal Spirit must bring us, the promised seed (just as Abraham brought Isaac up the mount to the place of sacrifice that God showed unto him), before ever we see the cruelty of sin, and the depth of the sufferings of Christ. It is there, and there only, we learn rightly, that it is through Jesus we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Although the halt, the maimed, the lame, the blind and the Gentile outcast, had no way of access to the altar in the temple of old, yet these are the very ones Jesus came to seek and to save. They are enabled by his Spirit to come boldly unto a throne of grace, and through the flesh of our glorious High Priest have entrance into the Holy of holies, which is heaven itself. There is not a place where his people go but he is with them, and the place of his feet is glorious. His presence, a fourth like unto the Son of God, was that which turned the furnace into a glorious place. We find Peter on the sea, sinking; but Jesus walked on the sea, and it was Jesus' hand alone that enabled Peter to walk with him there. He stands in the covenant of grace as our Surety, our Prophet, our Priest and our King. As our Priest, by one offering, even of himself, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, forever doing away with Jewish offerings, and now there remains no more sacrifice for sin; so this man, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. As a Prophet, his testimony swallows up all the testimony of the legal covenant, as Aaron's rod swallowed up the rods of Pharaoh's servants, and so wonderful is he that his word is forever settled in the heavens. As a King, he is firmly seated on the right hand of God, and shall reign till all his enemies be made his footstool. Now it is his presence in his people that makes the place

of his feet (the church) glorious. Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Again, he saith, "Christ in us the hope of glory." All his elect are glorified by his presence in them.

In the ordinances which he hath commanded them to observe, when they come telling their hopes and fears, what do the brethren look for? They desire to see if Jesus, the Shepherd of Israel, has brought his lambs to the fold. If he has, then the place of his feet will be glorious, the testimony will be of Jesus and his love. Jacob of old and Jacob today will both say, The Lord found me in a waste howling wilderness, and they will both bless the Lord because he journeyed that way. His sheep cannot be deceived by the crooked tracks of man, they know not the voice of a stranger, neither is there any track like His track, it is marked with blood, not like that of Abel's which cried from the ground for vengeance, but his blood speaketh peace with God to all those for whom he died. Are his children thinking of baptism? Why are they troubled about that? Is it not a despised ordinance? Has not the devil introduced a more accommodating substitute? It is because he has walked that way, and many times his saints have felt that place, for it was where his feet went, glorious. In his church there are those who by nature are like wolves, bears, lions or leopards, yet his presence walking their way makes them to be easily managed, so that a little child shall lead them. Yes, it is his presence that makes brethren tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them. As he trod the wine press alone, so it is when we are alone that he comes, and what a blessed place that is. If we never go through the deep waters how can we possibly know of his glorious feet coming that way? Mountains are wonderful to behold, but the feet of man may stumble on the dark mountains, but not so with Jesus, for it is written, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." Doctrine is good, but how beautiful to see the feet of the

Lord there and to feel that he trod that way for us. No wonder at times one can sing,

"If on my face, for thy dear name,
Shame and reproaches be;
All hail reproach, and welcome shame,
If thou'lt remember me."

Every time he appears prisons will palaces prove, and poor perishing sinners are lifted up and set among princes. In the den of lions, he stops their mouths, and such a place is glorious.

In conclusion, the church, because of what the Lord Jesus has done, sends forth a sweeter fragrance than Lebanon ever did, in the humility, meekness, gentleness, forbearance, brotherly love, faith, hope and charity, which proclaims, even in this dark day, that Jesus has made the place of his feet glorious.

(Editorial by Elder George Ruston March, 1931.)

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

Dearly Beloved Brethren: — In the second epistle addressed by the apostle Peter to those who had obtained like precious faith with himself, and all the apostles of the blessed Lord through the righteousness of God and the Saviour Jesus Christ, he said in the beginning of the third chapter that one subject which he had in view in writing both of his epistles to them was to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance, that they might be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Three times in the first chapter of this epistle he uses the word "remembrance," declaring first, that he will not be negligent to put them in remembrance of these things; second, that he thought it meet to so do as long as he was in this tabernacle; and third, that he thus endeavored to do that they might have these things in mind after his departure.

Paul in both of his epistles to Timothy also exhorts him to be careful to put the brethren in remembrance of the things of which he is speaking, and Jude likewise declared that he desired that his brethren might have the things of which he wrote in remembrance; and it is manifest that to this end the apostles both wrote and preached the word again and again to the churches and brethren.

From all these scriptural examples and testimonies it appears to us that we have full warrant for the writing of such letters as this for all personal correspondence with regard to the things of God among brethren, and for spreading abroad the teachings of the word of God through the press, or in any other way by which we may communicate one with another, which things we have learned by the teaching of the Spirit, and have seen recorded in the Bible, which is the revealed word of God to us. It surely is important that we all give heed to the word of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." It has been the glory of the church of God in all ages that they have demanded a "Thus saith the Lord," written in plain terms in the Bible for all that they believe and practice.

For the past few centuries this has been one particular thing which has distinguished the people known as Baptists, and now, in the past seventy-five years, this has been specially insisted upon by all those known as Old School Baptists, or as Primitive Baptists, in this land. But as the people of God are still in the flesh, that flesh which lusts against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would, they are often prone to forget the word of the Lord, and that they have been purged from their old sins and that they are now the Lord's, being bought with a price, and therefore ought to always glorify God in their body and spirit, which are the Lord's; and for this reason, in infinite pity and love to them,

the blessed Lord has ordained pastors, teachers, evangelists and other gifts for their instruction and to put them in remembrance of these things, together with the ordinances of his house, such as prayer, singing, baptism and the supper. In all these things the blessed Lord has remembered his chosen in mercy, and in these things he has designed to come to them in blessing. We all know that again and again has the preaching of the word, praying in the spirit and singing with the spirit, together with the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, been blessedly applied to our souls, so that we have thereby grown in knowledge and understanding of the word, and have felt our hearts and thoughts lifted above the things of time and sense and fixed upon things above; there can not be a greater blessing than this.

All these things are but putting us in remembrance of the things which are first written in the Bible, and then, as we trust, written in our minds and hearts; and because the people of God realize with sorrow their proneness to forget the truths revealed in them they count it a blessed thing to be put in remembrance again and again of them. The Lord's people, one and all, can say of a truth, I love to hear preaching that tells me of my faults. Seeing and hearing their faults they come to rejoice in that preaching which sets forth Jesus as the sum of the gospel and the only name whereby any are saved. Of all these things the apostle desired to remind his brethren, and of all these things the brethren desire to be reminded. There is welcome in all such hearts for the blessed word of salvation and deliverance and also for the word of exhortation that they walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called.

But the special things of which the apostle was here writing embraced, beside that which pertains to a personal experience of salvation, references to wicked men and wicked deeds of men. The apostle here describes the condition of the ungodly, who know not God, as

well as the hope set before the saved in Christ. He speaks of false professors and false teachers who speak great swelling words of vanity. Of these teachers he would have his brethren beware, lest they be led away and forsake their steadfastness in the faith and order of the house of God. It was needful that the pure minds of the brethren should be stirred up by way of warning against that which was evil, as well as with regard to the faith and order of the house of God. Not only would he seek to guide their feet in the way of peace, but also to point out the ways of error; not only would he point out those who truly worship God in spirit and in truth, but also those who professed to know God and did not. It seemed needful in his view to declare that which was contrary to God and to Christ as well as that which is approved of God. We say that it seemed needful in his view to do this, and this means that it was needful in the sight of God also, by whose inspiration the apostle wrote all these words.

Nothing is unimportant in the Bible, which, we must not forget, is God's book. There is not one word in the Bible which God would not have there, and that which he places there cannot be of little or no importance. The world, that is, the religious world to-day, counts the teaching of the Bible as of little force unless it agrees with their boasted reasonings. We all, for many years, have been accustomed to hearing such expressions as this concerning some portions of the word: That is impossible to understand; Why dwell upon deep things when there is so much in the Bible that is plain? But when we come to examine this apparent solicitude for the simple, plain things, we always find that it arises out of hatred of the strong statements of doctrine in the word. It is nearly always the very plainest statements of truth in the word which are by these false teachers declared to be hard to be understood. As Old School Baptists our people have always protested against such teaching as this. The people of God claim and

assert that not one word of God is in vain. It has been and is their faith that when the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto any one, that one will see that all the Scriptures say is real and vital, and there will be begotten in that soul a great reverence for every word that is in the Bible. All that our God has given his inspired servants to write is and must be true. It must be true that Satan said just what he is recorded in the book of Job as having said. It must be true that Job's friends said just what they are recorded to have said. The historical statements in the Old Testament concerning Israel and concerning the heathen nations round about them, must be just as narrated there. The words of Satan and of the friends of Job were not true, they were not God's words, but they were said just as is recorded. The writer was inspired, so that the words which he wrote should declare the exact facts.

Now while we insist that it will not do for men to treat any portion of the word as being trivial, and not to be regarded or preached, let us also beware lest we fall into the same error. There is absolutely nothing in the Bible that is not important to be considered and that ought not to be preached faithfully by faithful men. It is as important, for instance, that the first three chapters of Romans should be presented as that the rest of the epistle should be insisted upon in our preaching. It is as important to preach the total depravity of all men as it is to preach the perfect righteousness of Christ. It is as important to preach the fact that sin is in the world, and that death comes as the penalty of sin, as it is to preach that there is righteousness in our Lord Jesus Christ, and life through that righteousness. It is as important to proclaim the penalty of sin as it is to proclaim that there is salvation in the Lord. It is as important to declare that election means nonelection as it is to preach election. If it be important to preach salvation from death and hell, from final destruction and everlasting punishment, secured to the elect through the finished work of

Christ, it is also important to declare that all others are left to this destruction and this punishment; it is as much the word of God that the wicked go away into everlasting punishment as that the righteous are received into everlasting life. The only way in which we can come to know either of these truths is because it is in the testimony. If it be in the testimony of God, then it is important, and if the revealed word of God has declared either of these things then we are to receive them with reverence, and to talk about them, to teach them and to preach them, that the pure minds of the brethren be stirred up to remember them.

The servants of God are to preach the gospel; but to preach the gospel is to preach salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ; this is the gospel. But what are men saved from, and what are they saved to? It is a truth beyond all controversy that no man can preach the gospel without also pointing out the law. No man can proclaim a finished righteousness without pointing out why there must be such a righteousness. If it be declared that the gospel reveals such a righteousness, it must also be pointed out that the law of God demanded it. Our failure under the law must be pointed out, if the gospel of the finished and perfect work of Jesus is to have any meaning to us; and when it is preached that men are saved, it must also be declared that they are saved from sin, death and hell. The full glory of salvation cannot be understood, only as we come to see the things and the state from which we are saved. As sin becomes magnified in our view, so will salvation from that sin become magnified. If the penalty for our sins is presented to our view, then our salvation from that penalty will be magnified; and how wonderful will that salvation appear when we come to remember that it is not only from present condemnation and sorrow, but also from everlasting punishment.

The preaching of the gospel will take in all these things, and all that the Bible teaches. It cannot be reiterated too often, "To the law and to the testi-

mony;" and when we remind the brethren of the testimony of the word of God, with regard to anything that is presented there, we are calling their attention to the things which concern them. The fallen and lost state of mankind concerns them, for they were by nature children of wrath even as others are. When we preach that they are redeemed from sin, death and hell, this also concerns them, for without election and redemption in Christ they would have abided in sin, death and hell forever; and when we declare that the unredeemed portion of mankind do still abide in sin and death, and that they shall be everlastingly punished, we are simply pointing out that from which saints are saved. By all these reminders the pure minds of believers are stirred up to greater thankfulness and wonder; and seeing their own lack of merit over others who perish they will say again and again,

"What was there in you that could merit esteem,

Or give the Creator delight?

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

But after all, surely it is not needful to reason upon these things; it is sufficient for every good minister that he finds any truth declared in the Bible. He knows that the truth cannot be of little importance, and that if God declared it, and inspired prophets and apostles preached and wrote it, he must not say it is unimportant.

That natural religionists make use of any truth and abuse it, is a still greater reason why believers in the Lord should hold to that truth and not abuse it. If men hold the truth in unrighteousness, this furnishes all the greater reason why believers should steadfastly hold to and contend for the truth in righteousness. Some men pervert the doctrine of predestination and seek to take shelter behind it when they sin, saying it was predestinated and they could not help it, and therefore are not to be blamed. Shall we therefore fail to preach this glorious doctrine? Some men have per-

verted the doctrine of election, seeking to justify themselves in their careless life by it. Shall we therefore fail to proclaim it and to show that in it is all the hope of right living that any sinner can have? Some men pervert the doctrine of the everlasting punishment of the wicked, especially those who are called revivalists, seeking to frighten men into a profession of religion that they may thus escape and be saved. Because men thus pervert the truth embraced in the teaching of the Bible regarding this doctrine shall we fail to insist upon it, that the people of God may be stirred up to still more gratitude, love and praise for sovereign mercy? Rather, concerning all these principles of truth, the fact that men pervert them furnishes all the greater reason why men of God should proclaim them, setting them forth in their true light as reasons for praise, love and obedience to that God who has done such great things for us and has had such compassion upon us.

Following the words quoted at the beginning of this letter, the apostle also said to his brethren that one reason why he thus wrote them was that in the last days scoffers should come, walking after their own lusts, and denying the simple teachings of the word. Lest his brethren should be ensnared by such falsehoods, it was needful that these principles of truth should be firmly impressed upon their minds, and so in both epistles he wrote of them. In like manner did Paul in all his epistles and in all his ministry. So did the Master teach his disciples by parables, and in all other ways. To this end the people of God are enjoined not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, and not to fail to speak one to another and stir each other up by exhortation. That we may thus do is the chief object of these meetings which we call associations, and they are profitable to us just so far as we are reminded in them of the words of God, spoken by the prophets and apostles as recorded in the word.

Now, dear brethren, in all your gatherings from day to day, and from

week to week, for the worship of God publicly and in your homes socially, may this blessing abide with you, that the name of the Lord may be magnified among you.

D. M. Vail, Moderator

Cyrus Risler, Clerk

Wm. Hobensack, Assistant Clerk

(The above was written by Elder Chick and was the Circular Letter of the Delaware River Association of 1908)

OBITUARIES

AZARIAH HUTCHINS MASSEY

On March 15, 1967 God saw fit to remove from us our highly esteemed brother, Azariah Hutchins Massey, at the age of 70 years, 11 months, and 11 days.

He united with the church at Bush Arbor at her June meeting, 1916. At the time of his departure he was the oldest male member of the church. Brother Massey was highly respected not only by the church, but held many highly respected positions, having served as chief of police at Mebane, N. C. and Gibsonville, N. C. He also served as deputy sheriff of Alamance County for some years. Brother Massey was a veteran of World War I. All these positions of trust he served faithfully.

His suffering was of long duration, but without complaining. He spent much of his time in singing the old hymns of Zion and talking of the goodness and mercy of God. We feel that our loss is his gain. May each of us say "The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Brother Massey leaves to mourn his departure his wife, Mrs. Nannie Byrd Massey; one daughter, Mrs. Willard Walker, Route 3, Mebane, N. C.; three sons, Empson T. Massey, Roanoke, Va., Monroe H. Massey, Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C. and Willie F. Massey, Route 3, Burlington, N. C.; 11 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren, five sisters, 4 brothers, and a host of other relatives and friends.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder E. F. Oakley at Bush Arbor Church where a large crowd of his friends had gathered with the family to pay their respects to one they loved. His body was laid to await the coming of Christ in the church cemetery beneath a floral offering seldom excelled.

May God's richest blessing be upon Sister Massey and all the family, and a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy sent to the Signs and a copy be filed on our church record book.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her

July meeting, 1967.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JAMES MONROE BAKER

The spirit of Brother Baker was called home to be with God on April 19, 1967, at the age of 63 years.

He united with the church at Bush Arbor on September 7, 1963, and attended the meetings regularly as long as his health would permit. His body was laid to rest at Mt. Zion Church to await the coming of Christ who shall change this mortal body to that of immortality.

Brother Baker leaves a wife, Margaret Tingen Baker; four daughters, 4 sons, his mother, Mrs. Nannie Warren Baker; one sister, six brothers, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Brother Baker's funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Mr. John Wiley and Mr. James White.

May God's grace be upon all that mourn his departure. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Be it resolved by this church that we bow in humble submission to God's will and that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy sent to the Signs for publication, and a copy be spread on our church record book.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her regular conference meeting in July, 1967.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

JAMES HENRY NORRIS

The Lord of Heaven and of earth, at His own time and good pleasure has removed from our midst a very dear and faithful brother, James Henry Norris, who was born in Harnett County, N. C. June 29, 1877, and passed from this life February 14, 1967, making his stay here almost ninety years.

Brother Norris bore with much patience his severe afflictions in his last several years of life, and until the very last set his affections and love upon the church and God's mercies and love, as he steadfastly continued to stand for the sound doctrine, Salvation by the grace of God, and for that faith once delivered to the saints. He was baptized in the Primitive belief at Black River Church, Dunn, N. C. the third Sunday in June, 1922, by the late Elder W. G. Turner, and with the many doctrines preached in this world, yet he was unmoveable from that faith he was baptized in and was faithful to the church, always hoping for peace among the brethren, attending services until physical health failed him, and

then at his bedside desired the word of God with prayer. And now we feel as the Apostle Paul described that assured and precious hope that brother Norris possessed, "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." (2 Cor. 5:1) So we can feel assured that our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Norris was married to Sarah Elizabeth Bass on April 12, 1903, who survives, and to this union were born seven children, five sons and two daughters, as follows, Carnice, Flonnie, Paul, Murphy, Alene, Belmon and Lathan. All of whom survive, together with twenty-two grandchildren. These are a wonderful family of children. It can be truthfully said they neglected not their father and kept in close touch with him, in his many years of severe afflictions and rendered every needed service that would be to his comfort and also to help their mother, who is much afflicted. She too is a wonderful mother in Israel, believing in a supreme God and has been faithful to every duty in life and still desires the word of God and prayer is well cared for by all her children. Much more could be said concerning this wonderful and God fearing family if space would allow.

Now to the bereaved family, you can rest assured that the once head of the family, is now resting from all his labors and his works do follow him.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Church and all lovers of the truth bow in humble submission to the will of the great God and Creator of all things, who doeth his will in heaven and earth, And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be recorded on the Church records, a copy sent to the family.

This done by order of the Black River Church in conference.

Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

WILLIAM R. CRATT

William R. (Billy) Cratt born in Martin County, North Carolina, February 29, 1887, passed from this life January 24, 1967.

He was married to Lella Bailey July 7, 1915. To this union were born eight children: Mrs. Lennie Burnette, Mrs. Verner Harrison and Seth W. Cratt, Bear Grass, N. C.; William D. and James W. Cratt, Robersonville, N. C.; Joseph D. Cratt, Williamston, N. C.; Luther M. Cratt, Cary, N. C.; and Mrs. Harvey Mathias, Albany, Georgia.

Brother Cratt joined the Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church on the third Sunday in

August, 1960, and was baptized the following Thursday, August 23, 1960, by Elder A. B. Ayers. Brother Cratt loved his church and manifested it in his quiet, gentle and humble manner, filling his seat whenever possible.

Funeral services were held January 26, 1967, at Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, assisted by Mr. Charlie Hamilton. He was laid to rest in the Cratt family cemetery.

We, the church at Bear Grass, bow in humble submission to God's will; and may He comfort the family in their great loss.

Done by order of conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in February, 1967.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Elmer B. Peel, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Now that it has been God's will to take from us our dear brother, Jimmy Harris, we desire to write this Respect.

Brother Harris was born November 2, 1893, and was 73 when he died. He joined the church August 1, 1963, along with his wife, and they were baptized together. He was faithful to the church, and attended as long as he was able. He enjoyed having the brethren visit him while he was sick. We believe it was a blessing when God's will was done in taking him out of his suffering. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we send a copy of this Resolution to the family, place one on our church record, send one to the *Signs of the Times* and one to the *Landmark* for publication. May God reconcile his family in their loss, which we feel is his eternal gain.

Done by order of Conference at our May meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
ELDER J. O. CONNER

We, the church at Mountain View, Floyd County, Virginia, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who called from our midst our dearly beloved pastor, Elder J. O. Conner, December 26, 1966. He had served this church twenty-one years.

With sadness we try to write a tribute to his memory, which will always linger in our hearts. We recall the last sermon he preached in the Mountain View pulpit: he said that his humble desire was that some of the younger brethren would be drawn in his footsteps; and this is our humble prayer also. He often quoted the following scripture, "Desiring to

walk worthy of the vocation wherein ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness of heart."

He told us while in the hospital the first time that his love for the church was so great. He was so faithful to us. His passing was so painful to us, but God knew best. Our loss is his eternal gain.

"No more to sigh or shed tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God and Christ and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

We mention the following in Elder Conner's call to the ministry: "Go preach the word I bid you preach." He humbly begged the Lord to take this burden from him, for he felt unqualified for the task to stand in that most sacred place. We feel that he was wonderfully blessed with power from on high.

May God bless and comfort his bereaved family, is our prayer.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be given to the family; one placed on our church records; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference the 4th day of June, 1967.

Mrs. Ora Conner, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF THEIR PARENTS
WILLIAM A. AND LUTIE E. WOMACK

William Albert Womack was the oldest son of the late Newton R. and Ruth E. (Owen) Womack, and was born June 30, 1885, near Star City, Arkansas, and departed this life July 5, 1965, making his stay here eighty years.

Lillie E. (Wilkes) Womack was the daughter of the late James C. and Martha A. (Matthews) Wilkes, and was born May 1, 1886, near Star City, and passed away June 23, 1964, making her stay here more than seventy-eight years.

Our parents were married January 11, 1906, in the Wilkes' home. They spent their entire lives in Lincoln County, where father engaged in farming, and later as rural mail carrier. To this union six children were born, all surviving: W. C., Ellis, and Orville Womack, of Miami, Fla.; Mrs. Max Carter, DeSoto, Mo.; Mrs. Ferd LaRue, St. Louis; and Mrs. Havis Donaldson, Star City. Father was survived by three brothers and four sisters; mother by one brother. Surviving also are seventeen grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Father united with the Predestinarian Baptists at Providence, in Lincoln County, in August, 1915, and was baptized by their es-

teemed pastor, Elder J. H. Blythe. In September, 1915, he was appointed church clerk, and served for about forty years. In September, 1922, he was ordained a deacon of the church. He was a strong believer in the true doctrine of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, upholding the church against deceivers. His trials were many, and at times the way seemed lonely, but his hope was in Jesus. He attended meetings of the true Old Baptists far and near as long as his health permitted. He gave the land where the church now stands on highway 81 at the edge of Star City. He loved to read the *Signs of the Times*, and to talk with people of the Old Baptist faith. When his eyes failed he was not able to read much, but his thoughts were on the church. His favorite song was,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

He passed away suddenly at our home, and was laid to rest beside mother, in Holly Springs Cemetery July 7, 1965, with Elder David Turner, of Bastrop, La. conducting the service.

Mother was raised among the Old School Primitive Baptists. Her grandfather Matthews and great grandfather Cook were Old Baptist preachers. Elder Cook was one of the founders of Providence Church. Though mother did not unite with the church, she had a great love for the Old Baptists, and enjoyed having them visit in their home, and loved to attend the meetings. She was a strong believer in the truth of Salvation by Grace, and the sovereign mercy of God. She loved people, and helped care for several elderly people, including her mother and sister, who were helpless for several years.

Several strokes left mother helpless, and her suffering was great, but she never complained. She had confidence in her "Dr. Petty," whom she believed was given power to do all that could be done for her on earth; but her hope was in Him whom God raised from the dead. She quietly slipped away with her husband, doctor, children and others at her bedside. She was laid to rest in the Holy Springs Cemetery June 25, 1964, with Elder R. L. Miles conducting the service.

We are never ready to give up our loved ones, but we hope our loss is their eternal gain. We would not want them to suffer as they did in their last days.

A daughter,
Mrs. Havis Donaldson

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Joseph Addison Bird, of Hurricane, West Virginia, a faithful friend of the cause of Christ, and a true friend of Providence Primitive Baptist Church, was born April 3, 1881, a son of the late Joseph Bird and Elizabeth (Wiley) Bird, and fell asleep in Jesus March 7, 1967 — lacking one month of being 86 years old.

He was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Experimentally he had long since been weaned from trusting in the cursed arm of the flesh; and of a truth it can be said of him that his trust was implicitly settled in the mercy of a covenant keeping and Holy God; and the Lord Jesus Christ was his hope. He never felt worthy of asking for a home in the church, yet his faithfulness in attending meetings, and his concern and interest in the welfare of the cause, was and is a shining example for us who are reckoned as members, to desire to emulate.

On August 19, 1905, he was united in marriage to Malinda Mae Spears. Sister Bird died January 31, 1951. Left to mourn are three sons and seven daughters, a great number of grandchildren and several great grandchildren; and two brothers and two sisters. We at Providence Church shall be conscious of his empty seat, yet we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Mr. Bird was a farmer during his active life, industrious, and lived an honorable life before men. There was a bond of closeness which cemented us together, and by the many sweet conversations with him I feel I know what he believed, and what was the ground of his hope.

We of Providence Church desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our great God in calling one we loved so well from our midst. At his request funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer at the Providence Church house, near where he had spent his life, and where I humbly hope I was blessed to preach the doctrine he surely believed. Burial was in the Bird Cemetery beneath a mound of flowers, in hope of the resurrection of the dead.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be tendered to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be filed in our Record book.

Done by order of Providence Church while in conference March 25, 1967.

May God visit the grace of reconciliation upon the bereaved family, and all who mourn.

In hope of that blessed immortality,
H. J. Bird

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1967

NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Isaiah 61:10)

This is the robe the Saviour wrought
To cover all the elect;
He came to save them from their sins,
The sanctified to perfect.

By his obedience unto death,
He did weave "the best robe,"
The justifying righteousness
Of the saints on this globe.

It is their right and title to
Eternal life on high,
Where the Lamb in all his glory
They will for ever eye.

Jesus is the heavenly Lamb
The Lord Jehovah sent,
And in weaving the royal robe
His holy life was spent.

This robe is the wedding garment
That all the saints shall wear,
When rising from the tomb to meet
Their Saviour in the air.

O to see the King in his beauty,
And be for ever blest,
To behold the glittering bride,
And enjoy the promised rest!

"Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil, and see
The saints above, how great their joys,
How bright their glories be."

The preceding verse of a song
Was once so sweet to me,
While en route to a certain city,
That tears of joy flowed free.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

"HE HATH SO FULFILLED"

Rt. 1, 1741 Davis Rd.
Maineville, Ohio

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I want to give some of my views on the scripture recorded in Acts 3:18, "But these things, which God had showed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

There are many references that may be brought in connection with this subject, but I will be brief so as not to take too much space. I believe Christ came into this world for a specific purpose, and it was written by the prophets what that purpose was. The sovereignty of God is not a popular doctrine, and is fought by arminians and free-willers; but those who hold to God's sovereignty are called a little flock, and it was the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom, which is the church; and I believe, the Old Baptist Church. There are a few Old Baptists who have refused to join with the modern way of worship, and who have inquired for the old paths. They still sing the old songs of Zion, and preach the sovereignty of the all wise God.

To declare that God is sovereign, is to declare that he is almighty, the possessor of all power in heaven and in earth, so that none can defeat his counsel, prevent his purposes, or resist his will.

Peter said, "For a truth 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) This counsel was for a purpose, and the specific purpose was to save his people. This brings us to consider the fall of man: which I believe was included in the counsel. Some say that the law was given to be kept, and some say that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, but I don't believe either is true. The law entered that sin might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. God's people, his elect, fell in Adam, and are totally depraved of will or power to recover themselves from their fallen state. Christ was set for that fall, and for someone to say that Adam could have stood, is denying the foreknowledge and counsel of God. The determined counsel of God was revealed to the prophets, and they wrote of the death and suffering of our Lord; and what his death, burial and resurrection would accomplish. And Christ fulfilled their prophecies to a jot and tittle.

In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah the prophet spoke as if the prophecies had already been fulfilled; and in the mind of God and according to his eternal decree, it had already been fulfilled. The prophet said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." And this was before our Lord died upon the cross.

The angel of God was sent to Joseph in a dream, and spoke in harmony with the prophets, saying that Mary should bring forth a Son, and that his name shall be called Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins. Christ declared that he came down from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. Primitive Baptists preach that Christ finished the work he came to do: he fulfilled the prophecies that were written of him.

No man has ever suffered as our Lord did. No man hath greater love

than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. All of these things were spoken of by the prophets, even to the price of his betrayal. The poet wrote, "At his bitter groans all nature shook." The sun refused to shine on this faultless Lamb of God and see him die. These things were not by chance, but according to the determinate counsel of God; and were spoken of by the prophets beforehand. Christ said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause he came into the world." The cause was the everlasting love he had for his children: he was bearing their sins, paying the debt his children owed, making a complete atonement for them.

Brethren, he arose a conquering King over death, hell and the grave, having obtained eternal redemption for his people, and went back to the right hand of the Father, and is there making intercession for his people. My Father's children, I know you get down in the valley sometimes and feel so far from God, and feel that you haven't a friend on earth; but your eternal security is just as sure as God is. It makes me think of dark winter days: when the icy winds are so cold, and the sun was hidden by the dark clouds; but the sun was there, though you could not see it. When the season rolled around, the sun returned in his strength, and the dark clouds and icy winds were gone. Then we can witness with the prophet: the winter is gone for we have heard the voice of the turtle doves in our land. The dove represents the return of the Holy Spirit which drives the dark clouds from our skies; and it is then we can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer lives."

I do not get to be with the church very often, since I have so far to go. This bothers me sometimes, and I think that if God has called me, surely I could get to go to see his people more often, and hear them praise his name. But I have a hope that in the near future I will be with the whole family, where there will be peace, with no more

sad separations, no more death; but eternal joy.

I believe God showed me in a dream, how it would be at his second coming. I dreamed I saw the sky divide, and He was sitting on something with his left side to the world. I saw people everywhere I looked; and I knew in the dream that heaven was my home, and a voice spoke to me and said, You have had a hope; but now you know. I have heard men say that they had never been homesick enough to want to leave this world; but when I awoke I was homesick: I wanted to go on and be with the One I loved so much. Brethren and Sisters, how we ought to love one another. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. I love to see God's people live in peace. The Truth has never divided God's people, but it has always been false doctrine that causes them trouble. But the Lord said it would be that way.

Since my mind got on the troubles, fears and doubts we have while pilgrims here below, I got away from the subject; but Christ fulfilled all the prophecies concerning him, and what his mission here would accomplish. His work was decreed of God, and was carried out to the letter.

I read the *Signs of the Times* and read able men's writings, and while I can't write and use precious words with so much meaning as they can, I am glad I believe like they do. Some sweet day we will be taken home, to sing praise to the One we are now trying to serve. I love to hear from God's people; it lifts me up so much.

May God bless the Editors of the *Signs of the Times*, the readers of it, and all who believe this doctrine.

Your unworthy writer,
Garrett Wilson

"IT IS A FEARFUL THING
TO FALL INTO THE HANDS
OF THE LIVING GOD"
(Hebrews 10:31)

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

When first of the mind to "Search the Scriptures," and these words of the Apostle confronted me, I was somewhat "stunned" mentally as it were, feeling to know that God was the very essence of love and mercy, and had purposed to do so much for his chosen ones. How could it be said that "It is a fearful thing to fall into his hands"? When thinking on it at times, I could never come to a fair understanding of it; but if not mistaken, some enlightenment has been given me, and I feel to write something on the Apostle's words, which we must note were written to the Hebrews, those followers of Christ who "had received the knowledge of the truth," which is to me, proof that the unregenerate, worldly people are not to be included in this group that will fall into God's hands. It is a Spiritual change. Naturally speaking, all earthly men are in God's hands as creatures he brought into existence, but in the sense of the Apostle's words, only the elect are to fall into God's hands. At the time of the Resurrection, the non-elect will be taken over by God, placed on his left hand to enter their eternal state of darkness. This is a separate and distinct kind of fall we have in mind here. As I am given to see it, the Apostle's mind was on this time world only, and not beyond it's ending at the second coming of Christ.

Treating on the salient words, FEAR, FEARFUL, AND FALL, let us notice that the Apostle said it was a FEARFUL thing, and not a horrible, or terrible catastrophic occurrence, but rather an anxious concern, or dread of being in the hands and power of an invisible Being. The FALL the Apostle had in mind, surely was that of passing somewhat suddenly, and passively, into a new state of body or mind by being acted upon and affected by an outside force or agency. Being born again, is to put it briefly. Does not the child of God, upon being born again, see his

awful sinful state and become fearful of what God may mete out to him, and he begs for mercy? This writer's experience witnesses to such. More later as to the continuing of fear in the life of God's chosen ones.

Turning to Genesis, we find the first FALL of man right at the beginning of his existence. Adam was created by God and in his power, but his — Adam's FALL — caused him to come into God's hands, in the sense of the Apostle's words. Adam and Eve saw their sinful and naked state only after their fall into his hands, and God clothed them in garments of skins, a symbol of righteousness. Now then, we see the FEARFUL thing come to pass, — they were driven out of the Garden of Eden, barring their entrance to it forever thereafter. They went out onto a ground cursed by God for their sake and were to eat of it in sorrow all the days of their lives, — Genesis 3:17. There is no doubt but that Adam had great and constant fear of God thereafter.

Now those coming soon after Adam, to fall into God's hands in the Spiritual sense, were possessed with fear, for we note in Genesis 20:11, Abraham said, "Surely the fear of God is not in this place." Verse 12, — "The Angel of the Lord said to Abraham, — "For now I know that thou fearest God." On throughout the Old Testament, there are many references to God's chosen ones being fearful, so it is evident that those of olden times feared the Lord. David said in Proverbs 1:7 — "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Can any of the Lord's little ones say now that David's words are not true? Did any of us (if I am one) have any of that knowledge hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed to babes, until and after we had fallen into the hands of the Lord and made fearful of his power, and what should be our lot IF justice were meted out to us? Have we not diligently and fearfully sought after more understanding

and knowledge and assurance that we are His, being made to doubt and fear we are not many, many times?

Surely the Apostle's experience of falling into God's hands, caused him to know of what he spoke, or wrote. Being blinded for a time, and not knowing if his eyesight would ever return, was a most fearful occurrence to him. On thru his life and ministry, the stripes, months of imprisonment, sufferings and discomfort, was truly a fearful thing. Any of us today would dread and fear to go thru that which he did. Note that in I Cor. 2:3 he wrote, — "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." We see that the word TREMBLING had been added to the word FEAR. In Ephesians 6:5, he wrote, — ". . . With fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ."

Back to this fear and trembling continuing with his elect, throughout this lifetime. It was God's will and design that they should be poor and afflicted people:

"Poor and afflicted, Lord are thine,
Among the great, unfit to shine,"

and subject to be left alone, as it were, for a spell, causing them mental anguish and fear. Witness the words and pleadings of David when in this state of helplessness. Psalm 6 sets forth his awful plight. "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake," recorded in 4th verse. Many other similar sayings are among his writings. Fear was experienced by the hymnist who wrote :

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

There is another type of fear, or state of anxiety and fearfulness among the elect, if I am one of them, and given to see aright. When we view the multitude of worldly people going along content with the pleasures and treasures of the world and "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Romans 3:18) And among them are our dear loved and close ones, showing no

evidence the Lord has begun a good work in them, we are of a fearful and anxious mind about them. We greatly fear they may never "Fall into the hands of the Living God." We must go on, hoping and praying that their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, to be revealed to them in due time. Lastly, those who have fallen in the hands of the Living God, when meditating upon the Scriptures depicting the second coming of Christ after the terrible days — the very last days and hours of this time world, and we see, in our mind's eye, all this taking place, do we not become exceedingly filled with "fear and trembling" and asking ourselves, "Am I His or am I not?"

Even in this present day, are we not filled with fear and trembling over the present state of the world that is so near to an Atomic and Hydrogen bombing war, which, if it happens, could be the "beginning of the end" of this world?" It has been the mind of those knowing the capabilities of the destructive power ready to be released, that such a war would almost decimate mankind from this world, or leave the world in such a state as to be uninhabitable by mankind.

Then are not the elect truly thankful that they fell into the hands of the Living God, and that all the fear, anxiety, trembling, afflictions, sorrow and travail of this worldly life, are but trivial and of no moment as compared to the priceless treasures and glory of his love and mercies to usward. How happy and thankful are those who have, by and thru the will and mercy of a God of Love, fallen into his Holy and Powerful Hands. I hope and pray that I am one of them.

Wm. O. Hall
P. O. Box 595
Mt. Vernon, Wash. 98273

THE LIGHTS OF HOME

(Dedicated to Mrs. Elizabeth Holloway,
Snow Hill, Maryland)

Many years ago, soon after I finished

school, I went to visit my brother in a strange city fifteen hundred miles from my home. I had very little money and it was decided that I should stay for a right long while, get a job and save enough money to pay my way home; which I did. It was a very pleasant city and the inhabitants were very friendly, although only a few spoke my language. But as time went on, I made many fine friends, got a fairly good job, took some interesting trips; and altogether, I was happy there and would have liked to stay, except for one thing: frequently I would feel a tugging at my heartstrings and a longing for home. I received messages from my parents which made me long to see them face to face. Time passed, and finally, a message came from my parents, telling me I had stayed long enough and that I must prepare to come home. The day came to leave and many of my friends assembled at the station to bid me farewell. A few of them wept because they expected we should see each other no more. The train moved and I was on the way to my home.

Sometimes along the way, there would be delays and I would become impatient, but in each case the train conductor, who for some unexplainable reason seemed to have a liking for me, assured me that, although the hours seemed long and tedious to me, I would arrive home at the appointed time. Finally, the timetable and my watch informed me that I was approaching the end of my journey. It was night and very, very dark, but suddenly in the distance, I began to see lights — oh, such beautiful lights. In the cities through which I had passed, I had seen lights, many lights, but never any like these, so soft, so inviting, but so steady and so very bright. No lights I had ever seen compared with these, for these were "the lights of home." As the train slowed down, I could see through the window the dear faces I had wanted so long to see, the faces of my dear parents with arms wide open to welcome me home — and I was satisfied.

A long time ago now, unless the wicked one has been permitted to deceive me utterly, an Unseen Person led me to, and placed me upon a road — a road which will take me to my eternal home, where, unless deceived, I shall see my blessed heavenly Parent face to face. I am now a pilgrim on that road, often weary; the end of which may be only a few steps ahead. The timetable and my watch inform me that I am approaching the end of my journey. Sometimes, I receive messages from my heavenly Parent which make me long to see him as He is, face to face. One of these days, I shall receive a message telling me I have stayed long enough in this strange land; and I shall bid my friends farewell and fly away home. When I approach the homeland, the light will be very bright because my Blessed Redeemer is the light of that city. My eyes, undimmed by tears or clouds, will see Him face to face, and I, who am now so stained by sin, shall be spotless like Him, and I shall be satisfied.

Sometimes, I become impatient, but my heavenly Conductor, whose great and unexplainable love for me has guided me all the way, assures me I shall arrive home at the appointed time. I am persuaded that on the other side of the great river which separates this strange land and me from my eternal home, I shall behold my Heavenly Parent there to welcome me home.

This strange land I now inhabit becomes increasingly strange. Fewer and fewer there be who speak my language. But just one thing enables me to press forward: in the distance, sometimes very bright, sometimes very, very dim, sometimes near and sometimes far, far away, I believe I discern through the darkness of the night *The Lights of Home*.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mount Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

THINGS HID FROM THE WISE AND PRUDENT

3514 Oscar Avenue
Ft. Worth, Texas 76106

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I know my subscription is past due, and I appreciate your sending it on to me. I enjoy reading it very much. I haven't been doing so well lately, but through the mercy and grace of an all wise God I am back on my feet again.

I have a few things on my mind this morning that I would like to write, if the Lord is willing. The scriptures I have in mind are:

"As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:9-12)

As I read this scripture this morning, I thought of the many smart men in this world with high standards of education, and classed as Doctors of Divinity, who know so little about the Bible and the teaching of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is a wonderful thing to know that these things are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. They do not believe in the God that I hope I believe in. Their God has to be let before he can do anything. The God that I hope to believe in has all power in heaven and on earth, and no man can stay his hand. He is a God of wisdom, power, truth and love. He declared the end from the beginning, from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying his counsel should stand, and he would do all my pleasure.

The Apostle Paul in writing the above scriptures, was made to believe

that all wisdom comes from above; and all the teaching he had received of men, availed him nothing. He was a chosen vessel of God, and was not one of those forgers of lies, or physicians of no value that Job spoke of. It gives me much comfort when I read of Paul's trials, and of his trying to reach perfection — which he could not do. When he prayed to God to remove the thorn from his flesh, the messenger of Satan, God answered him and said, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

May the God of all grace have mercy upon all of you, if it be his will. The writings of you editors have been wonderful. Ford Wall of the Sulphur Fork Association lives here in Fort Worth: we have been having some very nice visits.

We have a scripture we would like for some of you to write on, if you have a mind to: Revelation eleventh chapter, concerning the two witnesses. We would appreciate anything you might have on this scripture.

Enclosed you will find my remittance.

Your brother I hope,
U. V. Wallace

Check, Virginia
January 1, 1959

"Confess your faults one to another."

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

As this scripture has been on my mind for some time, I desire to write a few lines concerning it, hoping that it may find witness in your hearts.

I call your attention that it does not say confess someone else's faults. When I am conscious of my own faults, they are so many that I cannot see another's faults; but one of my biggest faults is that I can't see my own at all times. With the carnal mind I serve the law of sin; and when I am in this state of mind, I find myself trying to find faults in someone else.

I believe the Apostle Paul was a wit-

ness to these things, and made confession of them in the 7th chapter of Romans. If I am not deceived, I am a true witness of them — not because the Apostle said so, or someone preached it that way, but by the Lord making it manifest, or revealing it unto me. With the Apostle, "I was not taught it of man, neither received it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Now I refer to the 14th verse of the 7th chapter of Romans. I am not using this scripture to try to justify myself, or use it as a blind to hide behind, for we have no cloak for our sins: "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." What did he mean when he said he was carnal, sold unto sin? He was speaking of the "old man." The carnal mind of the flesh, is the same.

Elder J. O. Conner

(Elder Conner, now deceased, wrote the above January 1, 1959.)

SOURCE OF COMFORT

109 W. Vine Street
Salisbury, Md. 21801

Dear Editors:

Again I am writing to renew my subscription for two years. Enclosed you will find a check for eight dollars; please use the three dollars as you see fit.

The *Signs of the Times* are a great source of comfort at our house. When we have finished with them, I pass them on to a dear sister in the church who does not get them. She lives alone, a widow, and seems to appreciate them so much. Then when she is through with them, I pass them on to a friend who attends our church. He returns them back to me: I do like to keep them.

I have most of my father's copies. As far back as I can remember they have been in my family. I do not want to think of being without them.

Hoping the Lord will continue to bless

you editors to write the comforting truth.

In bonds of love I beg to remain.

Mrs. Ruby E. Parsons

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 134,
Meadows of Dan, Virginia 24120

Dearly Beloved:

For some time I have been thinking of writing some of my experiences, and if you think suitable, to publish in the **Signs of the Times**. I hope I am not deceived, or will deceive anyone in this matter, for I have learned it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. These things are very precious to me.

I would like first to mention some things in my early life: When around ten years of age I went to a baptizing, and as these two people were led in the water, I saw so much beauty around, and it seemed I was being lifted on high; and I became afraid and held my mother's hand tightly — afraid I would be raised off the ground, and never come back. This feeling stayed with me until they came out of the water; and I didn't know what all this meant.

After growing into womanhood and marrying, we would take our two children and go to the movies. Upon returning home one night I suddenly became very ill, and after getting out of the car, I told my husband I was dying, and I sank to the ground. He broke off some wet leaves and was washing my face with them. I said in my heart, Lord if you will let me live, I will never go back to that place again; and I soon regained strength to ride home.

I had never attended a "holiness" meeting or a tent meeting where they rolled on the ground. One came to our vicinity, and my husband telling me how they acted, I decided to go and see for I could not believe him. Before the meeting was half over, I arose and said, "Let's get out of here." Everybody was

staring at me, but I did not care. I got out of there; and my husband told me I acted awfully bad. I thought if God would let me get out of that place alive, I would never go again.

These are a few of my actions while a child and a young woman. The first time I saw myself a sinner, was when Elder Garland Allen was preaching, when he said, "If the love of God has been planted in your heart, you won't be found in the worldly places." O! dear ones, here is the place where the pain began in my heart. It seemed a knife was thrust through it, and left its cutting mark that I was a sinner. I had quit attending the worldly places, and thought I had become better all the time; but his words were like a sharp knife cutting in my heart. I began to mourn over my condition; and as would hear the turtle dove call, I would cry because I was a sinner, and couldn't help myself. I thought she was calling for her mate to come to her, and I was mourning for someone to erase the sins from my heart. But where could I go? My husband was no help; there was no help, for my sins were many. Now we had lost two little baby girls, one at six months and the other at birth. Both of them were afflicted . . . I began to think these two were sent to us and were afflicted for something sinful I had done. I finally asked my dear father-in-law, Elder Lee Spencer, if I had done anything wrong for these two little babies to be sent this way. He read the verses in the Bible (John 9: 2-3) where Jesus was asked, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither . . . but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

This relieved me for a while. At times I went still grieving because I was a sinner, and couldn't help myself. I finally decided to get a job and work away from home. While at work I would try to pray for myself and all the family. Sometimes I tried to be jolly and gay, but my grieving would return; and I would think I had done more sinning in trying to be gay. I was taken suddenly

ill in the night, and was taken to the hospital, where I learned I had gallstones and would have to undergo surgery. By next morning I was better, and told my nurse I wasn't going to have the operation, and was going home. I felt it would be my appointed time to die on the operating table. But the doctor said I needed the operation badly; and I finally said alright. I thought it was appointed once to die, and after death the judgement. I didn't fear death, but the judgement; for I knew Hell would be my doom. But I felt to know that if my soul were sent to Hell, it would be His just and holy will to do with me as He pleased, for I was such a sinner.

But the night before the operation a calmness came in the room and surrounded my bed, and was with me all night. I didn't fear the operation; and to my amazement, I found myself back in bed, and my husband by the bed weeping, for I had written him my last letter before going to surgery. I had surely thought I would see him no more, and wrote telling him some of my feelings and of my love for him. He was reading my letter and weeping when I awoke. I improved fast and went back to work; but my mourning returned, and I would walk out among the trees, refusing to have lunch with any of the friends I worked with. I had heard a rumor that I was losing my mind, and my girl friend became upset over my condition, and couldn't understand why I would not eat with her at lunch. But I couldn't tell her why, for I was such a sinner I did not want to make her sinful for being with me. Sometimes I would have to stop when driving home from work, because tears dimmed my eyes. I had the worst of all diseases — I was a sinner and could get no help from a doctor, or anyone else.

One night I had laid down to die; I felt that when morning came, my husband would find me dead beside him. But in the middle of the night a great pain engulfed my body, and I knew it was the death angel, and I must die. Something seemed to say to me, Arise

and prepare to meet thy God. So I got up; and my husband asked me what was wrong. I told him I had to go out and meet the Lord; and asked him to help me get ready. I wanted to look as good as I could, thinking maybe the Lord would have mercy on me. I had made a new black dress, which had never been worn. I told my husband it just suited my black sinful soul; and combing my hair and putting on the black dress, I went out through a roadway and came to some rough old boards stacked about two feet high. I fell across them, and cried with a loud voice, Oh! Lord have mercy on me; a vile sinner is pleading for mercy.

I do not know how long I laid there, but it seemed a great power came down, and a beautiful light fell around me, and I found myself back near my home, walking among the flowers and holding the blooms in my hands. They all looked pure as gold, and I was praising my God. My burden of being a sinner was gone; and I thought gone forever. I had no burden now, for a powerful operation had been performed, and no man had done anything to help me. I knew God had done it all.

I felt better for a few days, but on lying down one night, something said, You have been deceived: you are yet a sinner. I began to feel troubled, and a cross appeared before me, and I could see people placing a man on it, which I thought was Jesus; and I felt myself being lifted and placed there with him, and nails were driven through our hands and feet. But I did not feel any pain; and I was amazed, because Jesus was bearing all the pain for me, and I was not suffering any; but I knew he was. We were raised up and the cross stood up with us on it. I thought this surely showed me that He died for me and suffered for me; and gave me a blessed hope that I would be raised with him when he comes for his precious jewels.

Now the command soon came, to go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you. No, I would never do this, for I would bring a reproach on the people I loved.

I dearly loved the Old Baptist preachers, and thought the members were verily saints; and I surely wouldn't bring a reproach on them by offering. I was not worthy to have a home with them. But the command would come back, to go to the church . . . I became so troubled that I drove to Elder Sam Terry's home, and told Sister Terry I was afraid I was going to die, and afraid I would not live to be a mother to my children, but that I was trying to pray to live, but couldn't join the church for I was a sinner yet. She told me they felt to be sinners also; and I said that I did not think they took sinners in. She said that's exactly the way the true children join the church.

I came home, and went to my praying place in the woods, and tried to pray for the Lord to take my life so I wouldn't join the church. But to my surprise, I lived on, and tried to offer, but couldn't: until one Saturday meeting I went and had no thought of offering that day, but when the doors of the church were opened for the reception of members, I fell on the back of the seat in front of me weeping, and asking for a home in the church, telling them some of my experiences; and they received me into the church. I had dreamed there was a congregation assembled at the water where I was baptized, and I was on the bank looking down in this pure water, and that no one was worthy to go in that beautiful water and pollute it. It was exactly as I had dreamed when I got to the stream to be baptized. I stood with tears in my eyes, for I knew I was still unworthy, and I felt weak and hardly able to stand, wanting a sign to show me that I wasn't deceiving these people. As I was led in the water by our feeble pastor, the weakness left me . . . On coming out of the water, all the people looked like their faces had bright lights shining in them.

I would like to refer you to the dream that is printed in the June, 1966, issue of the *Signs*, which was given me a little while after being baptized, which is very precious to me. Many times I have gone to the church thinking I would ask them to take my name off the church

book; but so far my mouth has been closed. . . . Here is one that mourns over her sinful ways yet, and from day to day I am made mindful that I cannot direct my own way. I have heard it said that certain persons won't do this and that. Pray tell me dear ones, does anyone know the appointed way a person will take or go? I tell you over and over that no one knows what a person will do but our Almighty and Holy God. He knows every step we will take, and has always led his little children in a way they know not. I hope I shall be blessed to believe this wonderful truth as long as I remain here; and hope to hear it preached over and over by the Lord's servants.

When it comes the appointed time for me to leave this world, I just hope that God has prepared a little place for me, and if it is not in His presence, it will have to be just as God foresaw it and and fixed it before I was born.

Only a lump of clay,
Mrs. Lewis (Pauline) Spencer

2059-A Oakridge Drive,
Charleston, W. Va. 25311

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription expires with the May issue, so am sending check for two years' renewal.

I enjoy reading the paper, and look forward to receiving each issue. May God bless each one of you, and always enable you to set forth the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. He that climbeth up some other way is a thief and a robber. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Our salvation is of the Lord and not of ourselves, lest any man should boast. In him, through him, and by him is our hope. I feel to be the very least of all His saints, if one at all; and am very unworthy to even speak his name. All things are to his glory forever.

My thanks, I hope, is to the Almighty, Living God for enabling you to print the paper, and also enabling me to receive it.

A little sister in hope,
Nancy Clay

ENJOYS THE SIGNS

Rt. 3, Box 180
 Crossett, Arkansas, 71635

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription is due, and I don't want to miss any of the **Signs**. I enjoy reading the experiences of those whom the Spirit has visited; and I enjoy the Editorials and the **Voices of the Past**. Just wish I could express my feelings as well as others can; but God does not give us the same talents.

It is wonderful to know that One who is all powerful and rules over us to keep us in his will. Man devises his ways but God directs his steps. We are in no way our own keeper. I am glad that I have a hope in God who is all powerful and able to keep those who are predestinated to eternal life before the beginning of time. I am glad to know that I am a sinner, because Jesus came to save sinners, (not the righteous,) from their sins. I can say with Paul that I am the chiefest of sinners; and without a hope in Jesus Christ, I would be of all people most miserable. Sometimes I feel that I can't go on under my burden; then again I feel to possess a hope of eternal life: then my spirits are light and I want to sing praises to the most High God, who has blessed me so greatly.

May the Lord enable you to keep up the good work.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
 Lela Mae Flemister

 EXPERIENCE

Route 1, Box 52
 Wirtz, Va. 24184

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

If the Lord will bless me and guide me to do so, I will try to write some of my travels and experience in my life. First, I seemingly have lived in fear, even when I was growing up I had a fear of having some type of disease dying; and what would happen to me if

I did. I don't feel to be the worst sinner in the world as some confess to though I know that I and all are sinners in the sight of God. It seems that the grace and mercy of God has kept me from enjoying all the sinful things of the world all through life, as some do. I believe I was shown I was a sinner in a dream several years past. I dreamed the world was coming to an end, the Heavens were all lit up and I was down on my knees praying and begging God for mercy. I also had other dreams about that time that left me in fear. But in November, 1961, I saw what they call the Northern Lights in the sky. That night I dreamed I saw the face of Jesus and there were angels all around him. My fears were taken away and I was so happy. It seemed I was swept off my feet and I began to fly, and I awoke at that time. I was happy over that dream and I began to love the Old Baptist people more and more, and started going to church every time I could. But it seemed that I just couldn't talk with anyone about my dream. I believe I have had to bear my burden alone as the Bible says every man shall bear his own burden.

Then I dreamed of seeing someone carrying a heavy pole and I was trying to help. As I was awaking, "Take up thy cross and follow me," came to me. My burden got heavier and heavier to ask for a home in the Church, but it seemed I just couldn't go. I prayed and begged the Lord if it was His will to just give me a little more evidence, and I believe He did. About two weeks before I went asking for a home in the Church, my Father-in-law passed away. On the morning he was to be buried, I saw the prettiest, brightest star I have ever seen as I looked out my window to the East. It appeared to me as the star that shined over Jesus. Then I felt surely I can't stay away any longer. And on the next meeting day, I went before the Church, but I couldn't tell them anything except that I loved the old Church and couldn't stay away any longer. I was accepted and baptized which were two wonderful days for me. I feel that I

was lifted so high in the spirit that I hardly knew what I was doing. Elder Cecil Turner was visiting the Church the day I joined, and wonderfully preached from St. John 17-1 through 11 verse, followed by our Pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, preaching from the same text. I shall never forget it. After I joined, this vision of the star stayed with me and I thought so much about it. One day not long after that I picked up my Bible to read a little, and it opened to Revelation 22:16 where it says "Jesus is the bright and morning star." That was very comforting to me.

I would like to mention the old Church Sandy Level, Hardy, Va. which I feel I have been made to love so much. I understand that there hadn't been any Old Baptist preaching held there for about forty years prior to a little more than two years ago. I believe that the Lord sent our wonderful pastor Elder Leonard Brammer there to preach to us. I believe that it was the appointed time and place for me to join the church. When I joined there was only one other member, and he isn't able to be there. So no one knows how lonely I have felt being the only member there for almost a year. But I feel the Lord has been with us there and I can feel His presence that's all I need and all I want. At our last meeting, a precious wonderful sister came asking for a home with the church, which made me so happy and my loneliness is gone. I feel that I can't thank the Lord enough for all the wonderful blessings He has given me. But I know I can't give him anything.

An unworthy one,
Lois Meador

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I feel so little and unworthy to be writing to you, but it seems I'm not satisfied until I do. Isn't it wonderful to know we have such a wonderful Lord and Saviour to lean on when we are burdened with troubles. Before I joined

at Sandy Level Church, I was so burdened I couldn't half eat or sleep, and I did not want to be around any one; I felt that I would just as soon been dead as living. There just wasn't anything for me, it seemed. I thought everyone was against me.

One night I was ironing, and something said to me in a voice so low and sweet, "What are you afraid of, don't you know I'm with you and no one can harm a hair on your head?" From then on I wasn't afraid. I knew I had someone with me, and it seemed He put a protective shield all over me down to my ankles; and underneath that shield it was so warm and nice: warmth I had never felt before.

Then on February 19th when I joined the church, from then on it seemed He had His hand on my back, and it was so warm and guided me in everything I did. My work went off easier and I just got along so much better. I want to add I didn't know a love existed between people like this love you have for the brethren, and they have for you. It's such a deep and wonderful love we can't express it.

I feel this is too much to be writing, but it is so wonderful to me I want to tell you about it. I was over to my father-in-laws home, Elder Rufus Brown. It had rained the day before, and this day there were those pretty white clouds in the sky. I saw the prettiest picture I have ever seen. My wonderful Lord Jesus (I hope) and a band of angels seemed to be coming straight to me. It was for just a quick second, but Oh Lord, don't we wish we could see those pictures for ever and ever. I felt so much better after that, but I still felt like I wasn't worthy of all of this appearing before me. But I thank my Lord for being so good to me, and taking a poor old sinner such as I as one of his children, as I hope.

I know all of this is so little to what the others have, but it was so wonderful to me.

May I add, Elder Brammer, that I and

all the members of Sandy Level would appreciate your prayers.

A sister I hope,
Odessa Brown
Wirtz, Va. 24184

PLEASE NOTE

Brother Wood:

Please insert the following two notices for me in the *Signs*:

To any college, library or individual, that desires to file the *Signs of the Times*, I would like to say that I have many duplicate volumes nicely hand bound that I would be willing to dispose of at \$2.00 each.

W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road
Newark, Delaware 19711

Also,

After long, and I trust prayerful consideration of the matter, I have come to the conclusion that it will be a violation of the Scriptures and my conscience, to say nothing of inconsistency with our practice, for me to continue to take part with the worldly ministers in funerals. I will continue, as the Lord blesses me, to labor with any of the Old Baptists in this vital work, but beg our people in all places not to call me for mixed funerals. I do not feel that it is right, therefore I will not be able to serve.

Your servant for Jesus' sake,
W. D. Griffin

ANOTHER EDITION OF
THE HYMN AND TUNE BOOK

Another edition of the Durand and Lester Hymn and Tune Books in the shaped notes has been ordered, and should be received about the first of September.

Prices, including 2% tax, delivered will be: Single Book, \$3.52; one dozen, \$38.25.

Send orders to:

P. G. Lester, Jr.
2246 Memorial Ave., S. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24015

or

Masten H. Lester
814 30th Street, N. W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24017

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Smithwick Creek Church, Martin County, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October. Elder Leon Harrison was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

The Church is located eight miles south of Williamson, N. C. We cordially invite all who desire to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

APPOINTMENTS FOR
ELDER E. J. LAMBERT

Virginia Corresponding Meeting, October 11 and 12

Baltimore Church, October 15 (third Sunday)

Salisbury Association, October 18 and 19

Dan River Church, October 21 and 22, (Sat. night and Sunday)

Bush Arbor Church, October 22, at 7:30 PM (Sunday night)

Greensboro Church, October 23, at 7:30 PM (Monday night)

Reidsville Church, October 24, at 7:30 PM (Tuesday night)

Malmaison Church, October 25, at 7:30 (Wednesday night)

Gretna Church, October 26, at 7:30 (Thursday night)

Chestnut Church, October 27, (Friday night)

Roanoke Church, October 28 and 29, (Sat. night and 5th Sunday)

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held with Otters Creek Church, the Lord willing, Edgecombe County, N. C., on Highway 258 between Tarboro and Farmville, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr. Clerk
Tarboro, N. C.

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Association convenes with Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in November, 1967. We will be glad to have any that can come and be with us.

Elder E. B. Ault, Church Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 23
Weslaco, Texas 78596

A REQUEST

I find that I often need minutes of the various Primitive Baptist Associations for reference, and would be glad if the clerk or other member of the various associations would mail me a copy of their 1967 Minutes. These will be greatly appreciated.

John D. Wood, Editor
P. O. Box 186
Manassas, Va. 22110

Danville, Virginia **October, 1967**

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EDITORIAL

"THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED!"

"The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills."

(Song of Solomon, 2:8)

Many have been the hours that I have cried to the Lord with my voice. Many have been my days of trouble when my soul refused to be comforted. I am so troubled that all I can do is to complain. I have been exiled for hours trying to write but the brightest thoughts have been clothed in darkness. I have considered the days past and gone and have communed with my own heart to no profit. I call to faint remembrance some experiences that I once relied upon. They have lost their sweetness and richness to me. I am making diligent search for something — just anything, Lord, to prove to me that you have not cast me off forever. It seems that I can faintly hear the echo of the Voice I once heard. Somewhere in the deep recesses of my sub-conscience there is a voice. Is it the voice of my beloved? I am convinced that it is out of reach of my feeble mind. It has such an uncertain sound that I must patiently wait. ***

The paragraph you have just read was composed several hours ago. I am now ready to title this treatise and quote a scripture for a basis of my remarks. This voice that I wondered about was NOT the Voice of my beloved. The echo of the voice I heard had an uncertain sound. As long as there are questions relative to the origin of voices, you may know it is not His Voice. Sometimes it is necessary that our beloved leave us a while, exiled on a lonely rough island,

in order to teach us how lonely we can be without Him. Sometimes it is necessary that we stay awhile in Babylon, the city of confusion, and hear voices of confusion; in order that we appreciate the Voice of Peace. These past experiences are now real, lovely and precious. I feel to know what John meant when he said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a **great voice, as of a trumpet.**" Yesterday was my day to seek Him, but it was not the Lord's day to speak to me. Yesterday was the day I mused with my own spirit. Today, I trust, I am in the Spirit.

Yesterday was the day I cried because of grief; today I cry because of joy. The Voice I now hear is GREAT. I can now contrast it, and compare it, with voices I have heard heretofore. The voice of carnality deceived me. It spoke sweet nothings to me. It caused me to have great confidence in myself. It made me believe that I was superior enough to take on the greatest responsibility and persevere in it. This **voice of carnality** caused me to be pleased with my own righteousness. Another voice that acquainted itself with me was that of the law. The **voice of the law** was harsh, demanding, and judicial. It was a holy voice but it killed me. That voice sounded like thunder. It made me to know that the best of my righteousness was as filthy rags. The voice of the law brought me into the knowledge of my sinful condition. My attention was then turned to the **voices of the false prophets.** They taught for doctrine the commandments of men. One would say, "We all are sinners, yet God requires of us a few righteous acts on our part before He will pardon our sins." Another would say, "I know you need saving. If you will take the first step toward God, He will take a step toward you." Others said to me, "You are not a sinner. You just think you are." I heard one say to an earnest enquirer at a meeting one night, "You say that you still feel to be lost. If you will get up and shout to this congregation three times, "The Lord has saved me!" He will save you." This poor soul believed what the preacher said to

the extent that he began shouting, "The Lord has saved me." I was then so interested in the salvation of my soul that I asked him afterward if he felt better. He only shook his head and turned away. I heard the **voice of duty.** I thought if I would join a church I would feel better. I joined one. It didn't work. I thought if I could teach a Sunday School Class it probably would solve the problem. I tried it. It did not do any good. I resolved to speak publicly as often as I could in order to get relief. I was yet in trouble. I was ordained to preach. I preached as vehemently as I could but the greatest sermon I ever preached on duty condemned me. Yes, I am acquainted with all manner of voices but the **greatest Voice** I ever heard puts all the remainder of voices in the background. Have you heard this "Great voice as of a trumpet??"

The voices we have heard of carnality, the law, false prophets, and of duty; are so disturbing that only the Voice of Jesus can calm us. These other voices are confusing noises but the voice of Jesus is peaceful music. The voice of carnality brings false peace but the voice of Jesus brings true peace. The voice of the law demands more than you can ever pay, but the voice of Jesus assures you that He keeps the law for you, — and gives you eternal life. The voice of false prophets confuses you but the voice of Jesus drives confusion away. The voice of duty puts you under a heavy burden, yet the voice of Jesus lightens the burden and makes easy the yoke. This trumpet gives a pleasing clear sound. No uneasiness nor uncertainty are qualities of these tones. These tones have virtue and efficacy in them. Purity goes with the sound of this trumpet. The tones of this trumpet can unstop deaf ears, purify impure minds, quicken dead sinners, and comfort living saints. These tones are powerful, yet welcomed; loud and clear, yet soft and charming; commanding with authority, yet pleasing to poor hell-deserving sinners. This voice is so effectual that it never has sent its tones into a heart in vain. It always accomplishes that which

He pleases and prospers in the heart into which these tones are sent. When He says, "Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away;" there is action.

The church speaks in the dialog contained in the Song of Songs exclaiming excellence in the voice of the beloved. She then continues by saying, "Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." She heard His Voice, and then saw Him coming toward her. How different this is than the theory that we must start toward Him before He will take a step towards us. This voice not only calls but does the coming. He comes quickly. His call so attracts that we immediately respond by looking in the direction from which this clear, resonant, soft, gentle, and charming voice comes. I know that Jesus came almost two thousand years ago by making a great leap from Heaven to earth. I did not live here then. Those who were precious to Him then must have greatly rejoiced at His coming. That which has meant so much to me has been, and now is, His spiritual coming to me in my experience. If we cannot find our own experience in a text we have not properly tasted that text. I know from experience what it means for my Saviour to withdraw himself from me and be absent for awhile. As soon as He leaves, clouds of doubts and fears so enshroud me that He seems so far away. I am left with a sweet memory of communion with Him, but this gradually begins to fade. Hills and mountains come between us to separate us from the joy of His presence. What leaping Jesus did for our sake! He not only made a great leap from Heaven to earth but God became man! The Creator became a creature! The Word was made flesh! No one has ever been able to measure these leaps. As I think upon them these mysteries become more mysterious! These mountains and hills of our unbelief, ungrateful hearts, carelessness, worldliness, sinfulness, and selfishness as well as too many other things we could mention does not prevent His coming. How beautiful are the feet of Christ when every mountain and hill is

flattened by His coming! Strengthened faith takes the place where unbelief stood. Love fills the heart where hatred dwelt. Clouds of doubts and fears are removed and the Sun of Righteousness permeates our souls with its brilliance. There is now a shining light where there was gross darkness. Forgiveness, forbearance, and brotherly love as well as other fruits of the Spirit are in great abundance in the hearts of all who hear this voice.

What a great leap Jesus made when He came low enough to pick me up out of the miry clay of the horrible pit of sin and corruption. He never comes without bringing us gifts of the Spirit to lavish upon us. This sweet communion with Him always lifts up our drooping spirits and strengthens our feeble knees. There are many things He does for us and to us before He shows Himself. He does this in order to prepare us for communion with Him. We read in the next verse following our quoted text: "... Behold He standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice."

What is "our wall?" It must be that which protects us. Cities were walled for protection and security. The Church is walled with the shalls and wills of Jehovah. The Church is secured with God's will of promise or the new covenant. Jesus stands behind it. Should some one state that he is venturing upon a tremendous task and another noted person says, "I'll stand behind it;" you would feel assured that you had his backing, or help, in this project. Jesus must first strengthen in showing to you the certainty of the shalls and wills of God's promise. You must be re-assured that His promises are yea and amen. He brings back to your remembrance the sacredness of the marriage vow. He lets you know that you are securely walled in before He shows Himself. While He stands behind your wall you cannot see Him but you can see the protective shield which envelopes you. It is certainly contrary to carnal reasoning that you do not have the power or opportunity to see Him, even though He

is near, at your own will. "He looketh forth at the windows." When He hides His face no one can see Him.

There are windows in our walls through which the church is lightened and can be seen only when they are opened. I wonder if a true minister of the Word when blessed to powerfully preach the Gospel and give light to all that are in God's House, demonstrates that one of the windows have been opened? I wonder if another window has been opened when the Lord's people are blessed to sing songs of Zion with the Spirit and the understanding? I felt that when I was baptized that Jesus was looking forth at the window. When this window was opened floods of light filled my soul with joy. I have felt Him peering through another opened window when the church is blessed to eat the bread and drink the cup in commemoration of His death and suffering for us. Another window is opened when the Lord's little ones are blessed to follow the example of the Lord Jesus, in washing one another's feet. I have witnessed more tears of joy and sweet fellowship among brethren while being engaged in this humbling example of feet-washing than in any other practice among our people. Church windows let light into the souls of its constituents. Some of the Lord's churches may have more windows opened unto them than others. Some may be opened more often. If there be a window that is not opened to you, do not try to close it to others. You could not if you tried. You would not desire to if Jesus is near you.

Another expression we shall take up is, "Shewing himself through the lattice." Now, she is prepared to really commune with Him. When He shows Himself, all other persons and things move to the background. When this occurs, you have no knowledge of anything else. Jesus is your shepherd, husband, priest, resurrection, and life. He is your all in all. He determines the time and place that He shall show Himself to you. You do not determine it. His appearance is often enough for your welfare. When He appears, we are ready

to submit all to Him. We have been made ready to listen to Him. We are anxious and ready to do what He says. The person who thinks Jesus has shown Himself to him, yet feels that he has turned Him away, does not know JESUS, the King of saints. The true church welcomes His appearance and heeds His instructions every time. He appears more clearly, yet not as clear as He shall appear when time is over for us. We see Him at best here as through a dark glass. This is too glorious and wonderful for us to explain. We get as much rapture from this veiled showing of Himself as finite creatures can bear. If His appearance to us here in its most glorious manner is veiled, What will it be beyond this time? Sometimes we yearn for our departure from this sphere in order that we be with Him, be like Him, see Him as He is, and be perfectly satisfied!

We are anxious to hear His first words when He shows Himself through the lattice. What are these first words? We read them in the 10th verse of the 2nd chapter of Song of Solomon: "My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Yes we have been humbled so much so that we are down when He comes. This is a personal message that is said to each and every one of His dear ones who constitute His bride. This Word is just as effectual as the words of Jesus was to Lazarus while he was dead and had been dead four days. Jesus told Lazarus to come forth and he did. Why? Power went into the body of Lazarus as the word came forth from His mouth. It is not our JESUS who calls if the one called fails to respond, for where the word of a king is, there is power. We have been humbled, now He appears and exalts us. We have been sad because of His absence, now we rejoice at His presence. We have been drowsily sitting, now it is time for action. He says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Sometimes whole churches become slothful, backsliding, thus leaving their first love. Enemies invade them and cause confusion, trouble, and grief.

Sometimes churches go into heresy in both doctrine and practice. Ministers try in vain to bring them back to the old paths. Zealous members try in vain to get inactive members to participate in their activities. Great efforts are made to warn, rebuke, and even censor churches who turn deaf ears to their pleas. Yet, when Jesus speaks He gets the desired results. I have been concerned much of late over the decline in general of our churches. I have written and talked much about it. You know I have gotten nowhere. I have been laughed at, ridiculed, and scorned. Now, I am convinced that was exactly what I needed! I pouted because my pride had been hurt. I have just about decided that if Jesus wants a revival in the churches, He will do it by a personal visitation in the hearts of the constituents of these churches. Another thing I now know is that I have not known the ways of God in dealing with His churches. Jesus says to me, "Come away." I am to come away from my prison house of unbelief in what He can do. I am to come away from the state of confusion and self-judgment. I am to come away from my idea that the churches of Christ have no winter-seasons. I must come away from the thought that we can make one move toward right without Him. I must come away from association with those who tend toward trouble-making. I must come to Him for peace, sweet communion, and right leadership. I must preach Christ, the Way, Life, and Truth. I must come away from stressing some minor point of doctrine over which churches of Christ have divided themselves. I must realize that Christ is the only one who can receive a church or spue it out. I should not question His sovereign dealing with His people. Now, I am content to follow Him. I cannot walk in His steps because He took too long strides while He was here for me to imitate. I am like the little boy who saw his dad making tracks after a rain on his way toward the barn. The little boy rolled off the porch and put both feet in his fathers first foot-print. He looked over to the next track. The boy tried to

span it but he could not step that far. The boy made some tracks of his own before he reached the next step. The boy followed the steps of his father, however all of his foot-prints were not IN his steps. I must be content to make short steps. I want to follow Him, Jesus. I feel to have had both feet in some of Jesus' tracks at the same time. What a joy to follow Jesus.

What did He call me when He said, "Rise up, *** come away." He called me His love, His fair one! How can He call me fair when I am so black? He brings me the robe of His own righteousness. He washes me white with His blood so that I am cleansed from sin. He furnishes me with my wedding gown! He has not only washed me and clothed me but He has also sanctified me with His name and Spirit. He has set me apart for a specific service and qualifies me to perform this service. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. He will see to it that I honor His name and worship Him.

His words have just begun flowing from His mouth. He says in the next verse, "For, Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." Sometimes we are mistaken as to when the winter is past. A warm day or two will cause us to begin planting seed, ridding the house of necessary heaters, remove bed blankets, and do many other things that we find to be in vain. Winter is renewed, heaters have to be re-installed, and plants die because of another wintery blast. Jesus only can give the true statement that the winter is past. When Jesus makes His appearance everything seems gay, pleasant, and delightful. We have gone through a long spell of darkness, coldness, barrenness, and storms of devilish destruction. Some have seemed to slip away and hibernate from the society of the church. Storms of temptations have swayed the most stalwart and faithful. There has been no in-gathering into the church-fold. Churches barely have a name that they live. The zeal of the ministers have subsided. No real listening to the doctrine of God's rich and amazing grace. Love has waxed

so cold that brethren are barely courteous to one another. A spirit of Jealousy seems to have separated ministers of the gospel. What a winter!! Fires which we have tried to kindle flickered out without stirring up any warmth!! Is it not wonderful to hear that the winter is past! When Jesus speaks it He means it. The church prospers. Many are then added to the church. There is real rejoicing. Hearts that have seemed to be hard has been melted with divine love. What a lovely season for an individual, or a church, to experience.

We have just gotten into the real speech of Jesus to the Church. It is as difficult now to stop writing as it was to begin. Words fail me when I try to use them as vehicles to convey such wonderful and precious experiences. May the Lord wing them with power into your souls for a period of sweet and glorious meditations. I trust to be enabled soon to meditate more upon this wonderful revelation of Jesus to the church and to each and every individual composing the complete family of saints. At this time I will quote the remainder of what He said which is so wonderful to me: "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Song of Solomon 2: 12-13.

May the Lord of Glory bring the springtime into your souls is the sincere prayer of the writer.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

SELF-EXAMINATION

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobrates?" (2 Cor. 8:5)

The direction here given demands the especial attention of every one to whom it is directed, and can by no means be distorted to make it applicable to one who is not specified by the inspired writer of the epistle. It is manifestly absurd to suppose that the apostle was moved by the Holy Ghost to admonish unbelievers to make such an examination of themselves. By reference to the opening expression of this epistle it will be seen that both the authority of the writer and the characters addressed are clearly defined. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia." This limitation of the application of what is contained in this letter must ever be observed by all who would properly understand the things which are written for the learning of the saints. Throughout the letter the same peculiar people are described, and every word of comfort must be confined in its application to them. So also the severe reproofs and denunciations of carnality, by which the conduct of some is condemned, can be given to none but the saints to whom the letter is written. It is very congenial with the pride and self-confidence of the natural mind to regard these expressions of condemnation as belonging to the unbelieving world, and often the saints may be blinded by this delusive perversion of the truth. The best and only safe criterion by which to try the suggestions which appear plausible to reason is found in the effect produced upon the saint by them. Nothing in the testimony of Jesus is correctly understood if it fails to produce abhorrence of sin in the subject of divine instruction. Whatever truth may be expressed in the letter of any theory, it is not the faith of Jesus Christ unless it shows his infinite holiness in contrast with the exceeding sinfulness of the natural mind in the sinner in whose heart the light of that truth is revealed. This is an important fact to be remembered by the believer, not only as a test of sound doctrine, but for his own comfort. It is

a matter of personal interest to each one of the saints.

“Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith.” Blind reason perverts this admonition so as to make it require the follower of Jesus to seek some evidences of righteousness in himself. Failing to find any good thing in his flesh, the tired believer would sink in despair but for the abiding witness of that living faith which is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, and which never can be destroyed. Hence it is of vital importance to every saint that he should evermore abide in the assurance of that unerring testimony which is given for the support of everyone whose hope is in Jesus. Very often the result of this self-examination will show the troubled saint that instead of abiding in the faith of the Son of God, he has become entangled with legal bondage, so that he is endeavoring to attain to justification by righteousness of his own. When thus captivated by the delusive snare of the adversary, the bewildered pilgrim has unconsciously forsaken the strong defense of that faith which is inseparable from his hope in Christ; and in seeking for righteousness by the works of the law, he has denied the Lord Jesus as his only and sufficient refuge. While thus entangled again with the yoke of legal bondage, he is not resting in the faith. It may be that he has professed the belief of the truth, and that he would contend for the letter of the doctrine of salvation alone by the grace of God in Christ Jesus; but it is evident that he is not in that faith when he is looking for evidences of righteousness in himself, and cast down with despondency because he finds nothing in himself to justify his claim to acceptance in the sight of God. When the light of truth is applied to the experience of the saint he finds that his hope does not rest in his own righteousness; for it was when he was conscious of his just condemnation that Jesus Christ was revealed in him as the end of the law for righteousness to him. Only as he abides in the faith of Jesus can he rest in the confi-

dence of that comfortable hope by which he is saved from despair under the consciousness of the law of sin still working in his members. Therefore it is for the confirmation of their souls in the confidence of hope that they are to closely examine themselves as admonished in the text. When the saints are listening to the cruel suggestions of the adversary, and trying to find themselves some merit to authorize their claim to be the followers of Christ, there is nothing in their action to support the claim that they are in the faith. Their works deny the profession of their trust in the finished work of Jesus as the complete satisfaction of all the demands of infinite justice. So effectually bewildered are those thus captivated by their carnal reasoning, that it is only by the Spirit of truth shining in their hearts they discover that they are not in the faith. In every such departure from the faith the wandering saint suffers the loss of the strong consolation found in the sure mercies of David as ministered to those who trust in the everlasting strength of the Lord.

In the faith which was once delivered unto the saints there is a sure defense against every assault of the enemies of their peace. When the truth is assailed by enemies, either in the form of wicked men or evil spirits, there is no confidence to be reposed in the strength of reason for repelling such attacks. Only by the living faith of the Son of God shall the adversaries be turned to confusion. The doctrine is not dependent upon the ability of men for its defense; the Spirit of truth will take care of his own holy teaching. The very weakness and insufficiency of the little ones which believe in Jesus shall cause the glory of God to appear the more clearly in giving the victory to his truth in every conflict. There is never occasion for trembling lest the enemy should prevail against the truth. All the omnipotence of the eternal God protects his own doctrine. That protection also secures the preservation of all who hope in the salvation which God has revealed in Jesus Christ.

Then it is of serious importance to the saints to be firmly established in the faith. This is their strong tower of safety, in which they need fear no evil. Dwelling in this secret place of the Most High, every believer abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Secure in that holy habitation, it is written, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Surely no saint can afford to think lightly of this solemn admonition.

"Prove your own selves." The word prove in this expression has the meaning of test, or try. This is evident from the context, as well as from the letter of the text. It is a specification of how the saints are admonished to examine themselves. There is precious assurance to the believer in the fact that the Spirit works in the heart of each of them the most sincere obedience to this exhortation. While it is all the desire of the carnal religionist to get to heaven at last, the subject of divine teaching longs to be free from the pollution of sin, and to be perfectly conformed to the likeness of his holy Redeemer. He can never be satisfied until this earnest aspiration is fulfilled. The law of holiness is implanted in him; and it is his delight to work righteousness. He does not have to read the requirements of the law in tables of stone; the Lord has put his law in his heart, and thus works in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Since this is the work of God, there is no uncertainty about its fulfillment. Hence it is the infallible test in every case. The chosen people of God are a willing people. They are not able to deliver themselves from the bondage of sin; but they feel to cry for deliverance. No others bear this peculiar mark. In proving your own selves all who bear this mark are in fellowship with Paul and all the inspired servants of God.

Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? It is the very basis of the hope of every saint that he is so identified with the only Savior of sin-

ners that the life of Jesus abides in him. That vital principle of holiness produces hunger and thirst after the perfect righteousness revealed in Christ Jesus as the complete fulfillment of the law of God. Without assurance of this essential truth no conscious sinner could hope in the grace of God for salvation. However he may feel the need of deliverance from the curse of the law, no one who knows and loves the holiness of God can desire that the truth and immutability of divine perfection should be sacrificed for the sake of such a justly condemned wretch as he sees himself. The only source from which the love of holiness can arise in the heart must be the Spirit of Christ. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." This is the decisive test in the case of every one who claims to be interested in the salvation which is in the Lord Jesus. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." —Rom. viii. 9, 14. By this testimony of inspiration the Holy Ghost has defined the exact number of those sinners who are saved in the everlasting covenant of electing love. They are not ordained unto life because they are so submissive as to follow the direction of the Spirit of God; but it is because they are embraced in the eternal love of God that they were chosen of him in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. There is no revelation by which the cause of this abounding grace can be traced further than the eternal counsel of the will of God. In vain may reason strive to comprehend why God was thus pleased to reveal the inconceivable riches of his grace. He has given no account of this mystery to the comprehension of created intelligence beyond that which was declared by our dear Redeemer. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." The most bitter enemy against God is not more opposed than the carnal mind of the subject of electing love to the sovereignty of God in the display of his great grace in the salvation of his

people from their sins. While the saint is made constantly to feel the conflict between that law of sin in his members, and the desire and love of righteousness, it is only when the Spirit of truth manifests in him the light of life that he can see the abiding presence of Jesus Christ in himself. This witness is given only through that faith of the Son of God which reason cannot receive; nor can the natural mind discern the assurance of this spiritual testimony. Hence there is an unceasing conflict between the flesh and the Spirit in the case of every believer in Jesus. By faith he knows that he has passed from death unto life, having the witness of the love of the brethren. With the natural mind he can see no evidence to support his hope, since he still knows that sin works in him its awful development of abomination. When severely tried in this terrible strife the adversary often suggests the charge that he is mistaken in all his hope, and that he is a reprobate. This text is an effectual shield against this cruel charge. None can be reprobates who have the desire to be delivered from the power of sin. Only by the living Spirit of Christ dwelling in them can there be such a holy aspiration in the heart of any sinner. This is not merely a great truth to be learned by reference to the inspired testimony. It is clearly revealed in the individual experience of every one who is led by the Spirit. This knowledge cannot be attained in any other way but by the revelation of Christ in you the hope of glory. When the truth is presented as included in the doctrine of the gospel, without reference to his own personal case, the believer will not question the evidence of the indwelling of Jesus Christ in every one who loves holiness and feels sin to be a cruel burden. This knowledge cannot exist in any one who is not in possession of that faith which can only be the fruit of the Spirit. Therefore Jesus Christ is in every one who has the hatred of sin in his heart. No such character can by any possibility be a reprobate. The more deeply the consciousness of this bondage

under sin is felt as a burden, the more manifest is the testimony that Jesus Christ dwells in that heavy laden one. His deepest groaning attests his hunger and thirst after righteousness. He is thereby sealed as an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ to the heritage of infinite holiness unto which all the saints are appointed.

Instead of this exhortation being designed to set the saints to the hopeless task of finding in themselves such good works as should encourage them to hope in their own worthiness, it expressly directs the perplexed one to the only ground of his confidence, in the revelation of Jesus Christ as ever dwelling in each of his helpless and severely tried little ones. When they are by grace enabled to rightly prove themselves, they will always find the only ground of their confidence to be that they are justified freely by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh."

(Editorial by Elder William Beebe
June 7, 1893.)

SISTER HETTIE WEST

It has been well said that order is heaven's first law. While not in the Bible, it is a scriptural expression. To a man in nature, the order of heaven is *out* of order; to the man of God, the covenant of God's mercy is ordered in all things and sure. To poor finite creatures, the death of the saints is a horrible matter, but to God their death is precious. To us that know, it was a precious thing when the Lord called our sister to come home. She spent many lonesome years in solitude, and these years were spent in suffering.

Our sister was born in Worcester County, Maryland, on September 7, 1880, and died May 2, 1967, in Berlin, Maryland. She was married to Earnest C. West on February 1, 1905. She was the daughter of Burton and Hettie West, and has one sister, our dear feeble sister, Stella Parsons. Our sister left three daughters to mourn her passing, to-wit, Mrs. Margie Myers of Westminster, Maryland, Mrs. Mattie Apple, of Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, and Mrs. Mildred Davis, of Berlin, Maryland, and seven grandchildren and nine

great grandchildren; together with many friends and other relatives, and last her brethren and sisters in Snow Hill, Maryland.

Her devotion to the church at Snow Hill; her delight at the mention of the Lord's saving grace; her trust in his tender mercies will all be remembered fondly by the people of God. She joined the church at Snow Hill in 1924, and attended regularly as long as her state of health permitted.

Her funeral was held on Friday, May 5, in the Old School Baptist church in Snow Hill, Maryland, and was conducted by Elder David V. Spangler and Elder W. D. Griffin, after which her mortal body was laid to rest in the local cemetery there to await the glorious coming of the Lord in the resurrection.

W. D. G.

MARY ELLEN WILLIAMSON FULLER

On the night of October 23, 1966, my dear sister, Mrs. Mary Ellen W. Fuller, was summoned from the cares of this earth to the blissful realities of immortal glory; and we have sufficient evidence and reason to believe that she is asleep in Jesus from which none ever awake to weep.

She was born August 12, 1918, the daughter of Luther and Naoma Williamson. Her stay here was 48 years, 2 months and 11 days. She was the granddaughter of the late Elder A. H. Williamson who served many Primitive Baptist churches in Alabama.

At an early age in life she united with the Vernledge Methodist Church, but in later years as she grew older, she demonstrated a great love for the Primitive Baptist faith, and would go to their churches whenever she could. She often spoke of the hope she had of eternal life beyond the grave and that all things rest in God's power, and he makes no mistakes. He is the author and finisher of our faith.

She was married January 30, 1937 to Aaron Fuller. Surviving are her husband, Aaron Fuller, one daughter, five grandchildren, two brothers, three sisters, a stepmother, Mrs. Audra Williamson, and several nephews and nieces.

Funeral services were conducted October 25 by Elder J. P. Morgan and the Mr. Clifford DeLee, and she was laid to rest beside her infant son in the family cemetery, to await the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead. A large congregation and a large array of beautiful flowers was an evidence of the love she had for her many friends and her family.

She suffered only a short time and bore it with patience; and when her course on earth was finished the dear Master called her home

to inherit the kingdom prepared for her.

We loved her dearly but God loved her best. It was so heart breaking to give her up because she was so good and kind to her husband and family and she was so faithful.

Her sweet smile we shall see no more but we hope our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by her sister,
Ruby W. Briggs

MRS. ETTA OSBORNE RAYNOR

Mrs. Etta Osborne Raynor was born to the late Mr. and Mrs. William T. Osborne in Rockingham County, North Carolina, on November 16, 1881, and departed this life February 28, 1966 in Cone Hospital, Greensboro, North Carolina, at the age of 84 years, 9 months and 12 days.

She was married to the late James Riley Raynor on September 22, 1912, and to this union were born three daughters, Mrs. T. Oscar Ward, Jr., Mrs. Mary Sue Lashley, and Mrs. Walter W. Parrish. She also had seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. S. L. Rudd, all of Greensboro, to mourn her departure.

Sister Raynor united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro on the first Sunday in January, 1947, together with her husband and one daughter, Mrs. Ward. Sister Raynor was a faithful member and is greatly missed by her church.

Her funeral was conducted at Lambeth-Troxler Funeral Chapel by Elders Kenneth Key and W. C. King. Her body was laid to rest in Lakeview Memorial Park to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May God's blessing be upon all who mourn her departure feeling she had fought a good fight and had finished her course, and now sweetly rests awaiting to be made like unto her Precious Saviour, and to be gathered home, where she can see her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and be like Him, where sickness, sorrow and death can never come.

W. C. King

GEORGE W. JACKSON

Brother George W. Jackson was born June 14, 1881, and departed this life March 4, 1967, age 85 years.

He was a native of Fayette County, Georgia, and had made his home in East Point, Fulton County, Georgia, for a number of years. He joined Ramah Primitive Baptist Church, near Fayetteville, Georgia, August 10, 1912, and served as deacon for more than fifty years. At the time of his passing he was a member

of New Harmony Primitive Baptist Church near Hiram, Georgia.

He was married to Cora E. Hartley, November 25, 1916. She preceded him in death, April 18, 1964. He is survived by two sons, Reece Jackson, Rome, Georgia; Russell Jackson, Riverdale, Georgia; two daughters, Mrs. Helen Allen, LaFayette, Georgia; and Mrs. Estelle Olson, New Orleans, Louisiana; three sisters, two brothers and nine grandchildren.

Brother Jackson was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, ready to defend the Cause of Christ and to suffer for the truth's sake. He enjoyed a wide correspondence among God's people, and will be missed very much. We believe he has entered into that rest he was waiting and hoping for and that our loss is his Eternal gain.

The Funeral was conducted at Carmichael's Chapel in East Point, Georgia, by Elder Joe F. Hildreth, who was blessed to bring a very comforting message. Burial followed in Hillcrest Cemetery, near his home.

Written by request of New Harmony Church.

Glenn E. Ragsdale, Clerk

JOSEPH R. SORRELLS AND WIFE

J. R. and Judith Scott Sorrells, of Hartford, Alabama, were killed in an automobile accident near Ebro, Florida, May 29, 1967; less than two months after their marriage by Elder J. J. Collins at the home of the grandmother, Mrs. A. E. Sorrells.

Brother Sorrells is survived by his parents, Deacon and Mrs. Joseph Sorrells, of Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church, and three sisters: Mrs. Joyce Gilley, and Misses Linda and Kathy Sorrells; and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Hatfield, and Mrs. A. E. Sorrells.

Mrs. Sorrells is survived by her foster-father, W. D. Calhoun, and four foster-brothers, Glenn, Billy, and Sergeants Therman and Elton K. Calhoun. They were most devoted to each other.

An immense host attended the double funeral services at Garden Chapel Funeral Home, conducted by Elders J. J. Collins and V. C. Hartzog. Interment was in the Hartford City Cemetery. It was a most sorrowful funeral for the young married couple.

J. J. Collins

MARY F. McLANEY

Mrs. Mary F. McLaney of Hartford, Alabama, died April 8, 1967 after an extended illness, at the age of eighty-seven.

She is survived by one sister, Mrs. Ella

Sellers, of Columbus, Georgia, and many other relatives. She was the daughter of Deacon and Mrs. A. T. Byrd of Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church, and the widow of Dool McLaney.

Funeral services were conducted April 10th, by Elders F. A. and J. J. Collins at Mt. Gilead Church.

J. J. Collins

ORDINATION

Pursuant to the request of Bethel Church, on Saturday, October 1, 1966, the following Elders, J. R. Hollandsworth, J. L. Bocock, O. K. Tench, Posie Plybon, P. R. Ingram, Leonard Brammer, and Rufus Brown, were organized into a Presbytery by selecting Elder Hollandsworth, Moderator, and Elder P. E. Ingram, Clerk; with Elder O. K. Tench to lead in examination, and Elder Brammer to offer the ordination prayer, and Elder Bocock to deliver the charge. Deacon Albert Brooks was appointed by the church to be the church spokesman. The following deacons were with the Presbytery: Posie Lynch, Albert Hudson, Albert Brooks, R. L. Wright, Clifford Prillaman, and Seth Hollandsworth.

Brethren Posey Poindexter and Claude Johnson were delivered into the hands of the Presbytery, to be examined as to their qualifications as deacons; and if found qualified, to be ordained as such of our faith and order. Elder Tench questioned the church spokesman in reference to the scriptural qualifications of these brethren. His answers were satisfactory. Elder Tench also questioned both brethren relative to doctrine, faith, and order; and their calling. A motion was made and carried unanimously to proceed with the ordination with the laying on of hands and prayer by Elder Brammer. Then Elder Bocock delivered the charge in an impressive manner.

Then Deacons Posie Poindexter and Claude Johnson were delivered to the church, and the Presbytery was dismissed. To all churches of our faith and order, we recommend our beloved brethren. It is our prayer and hope that they may prove a blessing to our people, and be kept by His power, and thus hold out to the end as good and faithful servants of Almighty God. It is incumbent upon all the chosen of Christ to put themselves under His care and government in His churches; and it is the duty of those already in fellowship to obey those that have the rule over them, and to "submit themselves," and, God enabling, this we will do for Christ's sake, for the church's sake, and for our own sake.

J. R. Hollandsworth, Moderator
P. E. Ingram, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1967

NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE UPPER COUNTY LINE ASSOCIATION 1967

To the Upper County Line Primitive Baptist Association, convened with the Church at Monticello, and the various associations and churches with whom we correspond, greetings in the Lord:

It is through the mercies of a covenant keeping God that we are blessed to meet, face to face, with each other again.

As we review the past year, we are reminded that the Scriptures are being fulfilled before our eyes. We read of wars, and hear rumors of war, distress of nations, confusion of men in every walk of life. The signs of the times indicate that the day looked forward to by the saints in all ages is rapidly approaching. God's word tells us to lift up our head, for our redemption is drawing nigh. Time and space prevent entering into this subject, but every indication is that the day is rapidly approaching when the Lord of glory will come to take His people home.

While looking at the Minutes of our last association, (this is Friday before our meeting convenes) I noticed that I was appointed last year to write this Circular Letter. Suddenly I felt very helpless, and the scripture recorded in Matthew 15:25 came to mind. "Lord help me."

The help needed was not to write something that might interest the carnal

mind, or dwell upon some historical subject, but help to write something to the glory of God, and the comfort and consolation of His dear people.

The scripture quoted refers to a poor woman approaching Jesus, with the problem of a daughter grievously vexed with a devil. This woman was a Gentile from Canaan, a place where the apostles had been forbidden to preach the gospel, as Jesus had forbidden them to go among the Gentiles, or any city of the Samaritans, but rather to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

This poor woman had no legal ground of approach to Jesus, as she was an outcast, as far as the covenant of promise was concerned. She was without God, and without hope in the world, and could not plead that she was a daughter of Abraham. Yet God provides a way for every one who approaches Him, and their coming unto Him is because a God-given faith has provided that she come. He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Though Jesus did not immediately answer the woman, she continued to plead for help by approaching Jesus, through pleading her cause to the disciples, showing that a needy sinner continues to plead to God for help, though he sees no avenue of hope. Jacob wrestles with a man all night, and refuses to turn him loose until he receives a blessing; and though the sinner may be repulsed by the Lord, he continues to plead for help, knowing within himself, he has no ground to plead for help. It appears that the disciples were wearied with the woman's pleading for help, but Jesus is never wearied by the cries for help from a needy sinner.

Jesus repulses the pleader by telling her it was not meet to take the children's

bread, and give it to dogs, (having reference to the Gentiles who were not esteemed in any sense by the Jews), but she continues to cry. The withholding of an answer to her is only the trial of her faith, and the testing of her sincerity, but she continues to ask for help.

She now ceases to call Him the Son of David. Her faith brings Him clearer to view, not only as the Son of David, but as her Lord and Master. She now worships Him as her Lord, and we hear the cry, "Lord help me." She does not resent being repulsed, and acknowledges she has no right to expect a blessing, but shows that even a crumb, falling from the Master's table, finds a place in her heart.

The crying to God for help has been the mark of grace given to sinners in every generation. It is the manifestation of life, but acknowledge, that they are unable of themselves to accomplish that which they need, and even among the taught of God we hear the cry, "Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief."

Paul cries out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death;" and again testifying that the will is present, but how to perform that which he would, he found not. This cry for help signifies that one needs the strength that only God can give.

Peter as he begins to sink beneath the waves, cries, "Lord, save me." Here he learns how weak he is, but he also learns something of the love and power that would not let him sink. The dear children of God have learned many, many times while sinking down, who the Deliverer is, and when they are weak, then are they strong. After such evidences of His all abounding grace, they can exclaim, "My help cometh from the Lord, who made Heaven and earth."

While we sojourn here we will hear from the ministry the cry, Lord, help me, (give me a blessing) to feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost has made me an overseer, to be an ensample to the flock, to walk humbly before God and my brethren, and also to be bold as a lion in defense of God's

precious truth, to be wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove; and no greater blessing can come to one than to join with Paul in saying, "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."

The deacon will say, Lord, help me to live as an honor to the office, and to fill the office of a deacon well, and to purchase a good degree and great boldness in the faith.

The clerk, and brethren in general will cry for help, that they may be blest to adorn their profession with orderly walk and a godly conversation. Help me to live as becometh those who profess the name of Christ.

And all will join with the poet in saying, "Help of the helpless, O abide with me."

— Written by Elder D. V. Spangler

COMFORT DURING ILLNESS

This morning, while lying in Lewis-Gale Hospital in Roanoke, Virginia, this beautiful hymn came to me:

"I'm glad that I am born to die,
And from this world I soon shall fly;
Sweet angels beckon from on high;
Then, Oh, how sweet to die."

After thinking over my past and wondering what the future could hold, I began thinking on the line, "Oh, how sweet to die." This could mean two deaths, to me. How sweet to die to the worldly pleasures, and how sweet to die and be forever in the presence of my blessed Redeemer.

Remembering the death of all worldly things, how sweet to behold that all things had in some wonderful way become new to me. God was in every thing, and all praise was to him. Here was a death and a life that was so wonderful to behold. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Could this mean this new birth that God bestows on his precious ones at the ap-

pointed time and place — death to the world, but life everlasting in all its splendor. Then why this beautiful hymn was written, is no mystery. When pain becomes so severe and there is no ease for you, then I'm sure it will be sweet to die and go to the grave and rest in peace; but the spirit goes back to God who gave it. Oh, blessed thought, God gives and God takes away. My doctor said, We will have you well in no time; and I thought, If it is not the will of my Heavenly Father, you can do nothing to help me.

So weak from an infection, I cannot write more. But these thoughts keep pouring into my heart and mind, and it is the oil I need now; and I know all will be well whichever way the Lord has fixed for me.

Resting in His promises,
Pauline Spencer
Rt. 2, Box 134,
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120

Grants Pass, Oregon

Dear Elder Wood:

I see it is time to renew my subscription, and I am also sending a renewal and a new subscription . . .

I have just returned from the Salida Association, where I heard some glorious preaching during the four days . . . I went down on the bus to Elder Smart's, and he took me to the meeting, and then brought me back to his home, and I returned here on the bus.

I am now past eighty-four, and it was a little hard for a man that old; and I doubt if I get to go to many more associations. There is no church closer than 250 miles of Grants Pass. I do not know what I would do without the *Signs*. Elder H. M. Curry's article "The Will of Man" was worth more than the cost of the paper for two years. I had the great pleasure of hearing him preach several times at Lebanon, Ohio, over sixty years ago.

I love all the writings of the *Signs*, especially the "Voices of the Past." May

the good Lord continue to bless you all to keep the best paper on earth coming our way for many more years. Love and best wishes — saved by grace if saved at all.

C. H. Greathouse

AND HE WAS A SAMARITAN

In Luke 17, we read of ten men that were lepers, who met Jesus as He entered into a certain village. Knowing they were lepers, they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Jesus told them to go show themselves to the priests and it came to pass as they went, they were cleansed. All ten of them were cleansed, we read, but only one, when he saw he was healed, turned back, fell on his face at Jesus's feet and with a loud voice, glorified God. AND HE WAS A SAMARITAN.

Recently, the question was asked the writer "What about the nine?" In the past, I had given a little thought to this Scripture and had been pretty well satisfied with the interpretation most commonly set forth, that since leprosy is a type of sin and all ten were cleansed, all were the Lord's people, but only one gave God the praise for it, and this I answered. Sometime later, the question came back to my mind and I went to the Scriptures to see if, maybe, this interpretation might have missed the real import of the account, and I saw something I had not noticed before; and I wonder if the key to the whole thing might be in the words "And he was a Samaritan." I doubt very much that I shall be able to express what I hope I see in it.

At the time of this incident, Jesus was dealing with the Jews and had very little contact with the Gentiles, whom the Jews considered as heathens, and even as dogs. He said on one occasion that he was not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. I firmly believe He was referring to national Israel, whom God chose as an earthly people, to represent Him, for Him to dwell

among and to bring forth His Son, the Redeemer; but I do not intend to go into that. He fought their battles, fed them with manna and provided their clothing, and it was to Moses, an Israelite, that He gave the commandment to have the people build the sanctuary according to the pattern shown him in the Mount, **THAT HE MIGHT DWELL AMONG THEM**; and promised that there He would meet with them, and there He would commune with them. Every minute detail of that tabernacle was a type and a pledge of the Messiah-Redeemer who was to come. In the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son, the Redeemer, born of a Jewish virgin. The Jews, expecting Him to come as a king in power and great glory, rejected and crucified Him. But in the wonderful purposes of God, through that rejection by the Jews, the Gentiles were brought into the covenant of grace. The natural branches of the olive tree were broken off and the wild olive tree grafted in among them, and thus partook of the root and fatness of the olive tree. And so, the time of the Gentiles was ushered in. Jesus said He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, but He also said "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: **THEM I MUST ALSO BRING,**" etc.

This is where the leper who was a Samaritan came in. Samaria was a Gentile nation and the disciples, prior to Jesus death, resurrection and ascension, were instructed not to go to preach in any city of the Samaritans, but to the lost sheep in Israel. Their mission was to preach the gospel to the Jews. But even then, Jesus, on occasions turned to the Gentiles, as in the case of the Syro-phenician woman recorded in Mark 7: 24 to 30. This Gentile woman fell at Jesus's feet and beseeched Him to cast forth the devil out of her daughter. Jesus reminded her that it was not meet to take the children's (Jews) bread and give it to dogs (Gentiles). But then, faith spoke and said, "Yes, Lord (I note she called Him Lord), yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs;" and He granted her request.

I do not read of any instance where Jesus cast away anyone who sought Him in faith. I am not talking about the faith that men tell us we ought to have. I am talking about the faith which is the gift of God. I am talking about the faith of the Son of God transmitted to His people through their vital union with Him. I am talking about the faith which sees the promises of God as fulfilled, though not yet seen. The leper who was a Samaritan, was possessed of a faith which saw beyond the cleansing, and his worship was not merely thanks for the work performed, but adoration of his Lord. "The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear Bridegroom's face." The other nine saw only the cleansing. True, they had faith to ask mercy of Him, but only for cleansing. All the Israelites had faith to sprinkle their doorposts with blood and to come out of Egypt, but only two of all that number had faith to enter Caanan. This is a great mystery, but "Great is the mystery of Godliness." The nine were embraced in the Abrahamic covenant and in that sense were cleansed. They saw Jesus as a great man who could perform miracles such as healing, but did not see Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, therefore, they could not truly worship Him.

I believe that God has not cast off His people Israel; and by that, I do not mean the Church. The Jews were His earthly people and his promises to them were earthly. The Church, formed of Jew and Gentile, is an heavenly body and His promises to her are first, heavenly and second, earthly. I do not believe God is done with His people, Israel. I believe they, the Jews will yet look upon Him whom they have pierced, and there will be great mourning and a remnant will repent. He has chastened them, scourged them, and scattered them among the nations over the entire face of the earth; but there has always been and always will be among them a remnant according to the election of grace. Accordingly, in the days when Jesus was on this earth, there were, among the despised Gentiles, one here

and one there, who was given faith to behold the Redeemer-King in the man, who, born among the cattle in the manger, lived his life among the poor and lowly of the earth. Faith is the key that unlocks the mysteries of the kingdom — faith born in the vine and springing forth in the branches. That faith is by grace. By grace, through faith, the one leper worshiped his Lord. The other nine, trusting in the ceremonial law, saw no farther than the cleansing, which, to me, represents earthly blessings. Earthly blessings are not to be despised — they flow from the bountiful hand of Him who loves to give good gifts to His children; and when we are blest to see beyond the gift to the Great Giver, it is wonderful indeed. Otherwise, they fade away and die as do all things of this world.

May we ever be blest to worship not the gift but the Giver, as I believe the one leper did and the nine did not, could not.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

WHOLE TRUTH

When you view the scripture it is like looking at a house with four sides. Each side presents a different view, yet it is the same house. So it is with TRUTH as found in the Scriptures. Jesus Christ may be viewed as the Son of God bringing salvation down to men; and also He may be viewed as the Son of man giving in His holy humanity perfect obedience to God, and so becoming our righteousness. We may also view Jesus as a servant, as in Mark's gospel, serving under the law, and dying a sacrifice for sin. We may view in Matthew's gospel the Kingship of Jesus; His rejection by His people after the flesh (the Jews), yet a king nevertheless. But, while rejected by the flesh, He is accepted by His people spiritually, the Church of God, and is therefore King of Kings. It takes all four gospels to portray all these things.

We see doctrine in the Bible as well as

experience, also exhortation and prophecy, history and literature. So the Bible is a many sided book that cannot be viewed from one way and really get the whole TRUTH.

In this TRUTH we see no two people having the same experience in respect to the dealing of the Lord with them, yet the hidden truth is there which make up the pattern of the righteous. You of like faith know it is there when you hear one speak of their unworthiness, of their sinfulness, their fearfulness and questioning, for they come right where the Apostles were: where all of God's children are. To desire the words of eternal life and to hunger for righteousness are signs of living, and a hope in the eternal mercy and grace of Jesus.

May this eternal love draw the questioning child into the House of God, and while each case is viewed differently, the whole TRUTH as in Jesus Christ should make us one in the Kingdom of God, and cause Brethren to say, "Let us dwell together in Unity."

Sister Mary Hellings
Four Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN"

"The man to whom the Saviour addressed this language was a ruler among the Jews, who were very strict in their religion; and he, being a ruler among the Jews, was, doubtless, taught in all their religion. His religious training and character had not prepared him for the kingdom of God, hence Jesus said unto him. "Ye must be born again." Our children are gifts to us from the Lord, and it is our duty to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to train them up in the way they should go. It is doubtless true that parents can do much in forming the moral character of their children, and I fear that there is often a criminal neglect on their part in rearing and educating them. The most lasting impressions written upon our minds, and those that

have the most influence over us through life, are those received in childhood and youth. In a large majority of cases the character that follows us through life is formed around the hearth-stone of the parental house. The example and teaching of the father and mother, and the associations they select for their children, have much to do in moulding the character of the child, which will follow it through life. I often hear parents say, 'I cannot talk to my children,' and I wonder why it is so. If they live before them as they ought, and set that religious and moral example that is worthy of imitation, why should it be a task to them to talk to their children, and give them parental advice and instruction?

"Visit the man whose head is frosted by time, and who is just ready to fall into the grave, whose character is unstained by dissipation and crime, and ask him to whom of all earthly beings he is more indebted for the moral principles which have governed him through life, and saved him from disgrace and shame, and in a large majority of cases the answer will be, 'My mother.' . . .

"I verily believe that mothers can do more to mould the morals and form the character of the child than the father can. It is on her lap we receive our first ideas, and she breathes into us her own nature and character. There is a responsibility resting upon a mother that I fear is not always realized by mothers. Fathers have their responsibilities, for they are every day of their lives in their deportment and conversation, writing on the minds of their children moral sentiments that are to follow them through life . . .

"I would, today and at all times, use all the arguments I am master of to encourage parents to be untiring in their efforts to bring their children up in the way they should go when old, and they will feel themselves abundantly paid for all their labor, when in age they are surrounded with a family respected by all the good, and in their moral life and standing in society, reflecting honor on

the parents who reared them. . . How important that we should educate our children right, and as far as possible keep their minds free from all errors either in religion or politics. Religious sentiments imbibed in youth, and received from the lips of parents, are hard to throw off; and are apt to stick by us as long as we live.

"But when we have given our children all the religious and moral culture in our power, and have done all we can to form their religious and moral character, to prepare them for usefulness in society, we must not forget to impress upon their minds that this will not make Christians of them; that human culture and human instrumentality can never prepare them to see or enter into the kingdom of God. To be made a citizen of that kingdom, and enter into its enjoyments, a man must be born again. He must be quickened from his death in sin, and be made a new creature in Christ Jesus. When Jesus announced this doctrine to Nicodemus, notwithstanding his religious education, being learned in the law and prophets, he was astonished and made to marvel and wonder at the teaching of the Saviour. It looked to him unreasonable and contrary to the laws of nature: an impossibility; and when the religious Pharisee expressed his wonder at the unreasonable doctrine, Jesus simply repeated the declaration by saying, 'Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.' "

(The above is taken from Elder Gregg M. Thompson's *The Primitive Preacher*, in his sermon on "The Second Birth," which was published in 1888. We were especially impressed when we read his appraisal of the value of parental care and training, for it has long been felt that much of the decline in morals, with the attendant evils, comes from the gradual increase of indifference on the part of many parents in the training of their children.

But with however much moral training, we will still have much to remind us of the carnal nature in all of us. Those quickened to be aware of their natures, will realize that it is grace that restrains them, and keeps them from the many things to which the flesh is prone.

The very best in human nature cannot ad-

vance anyone into the kingdom of God. This is a matter of being born again — of being born of the Spirit. —J. D. W.)

LEXINGTON - ROXBURY
ASSOCIATION
CIRCULAR LETTER 1967

(Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger)

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Olive and Hurley Church of Shokan, New York, being held at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 13, 14, 1967, sends love, fellowship and greetings to the several churches with which we correspond.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord;

The sun has come up in the east and set in the west many times, and now we find we must greet you with a Circular Letter. We write prayerfully that the Lord will give a few crumbs from His rich storehouse of gospel food, that we may write comforting remarks to the household of faith.

We write to a peculiar people. A people circumcised in the heart to the pleasure and sin of this world. They have no desire to please the world and Satan's sinful lusts.

God in the vast expanse of eternity before time began elected Himself a people. He also laid out the way they should go. He set the bounds so that not one should be lost. God, being eternal, could see the end from the beginning and therefore see the journey of each of His elect.

God knew they would fall in Adam, so He made a way of salvation. He provided a Holy sacrifice to satisfy a Holy God. There is no time with God for He is the same yesterday today and forever. He is the Alpha and Omega.

God in His good pleasure provides for His elect people. David writes in the 37th Psalm, 25th verse. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread." God chooses his people, not that the people choose God. God

chose Jacob and hated Esau. Esau was the elder son of Isaac and therefore had the birthright, but God chose Jacob. God does not work according to man's way, but according to His own good pleasure. There were two nations born in Jacob and Esau. (Genesis 25: 21-26)

After the Israelites had sojourned in Egypt the appointed time, God raised up Moses to lead his people out into the promised land. Moses was born at a time of great tribulation for the Israelites. At a time when there was a decree out to kill all the male children of the Israelites. (The same thing was done when Jesus was born). Moses according to man's will, (the Egyptians,) was to have been killed, but it was according to God's will that he was raised, nourished and educated in Pharaoh's own household. God's decrees stand; man's do not. In Daniel 4th chapter we read where Nebuchadnezzar had thoughts of making all worship his image, but God soon made manifest His will. God governs human history to bring about His predetermined purpose for the welfare of His people. (Genesis 3rd chapter, 15th verse and chapter 12, verse 3). This develops through the wilderness promises of prosperity and protection in Canaan and the prophetic picture of the messianic glory, which would succeed God's work of judgment.

In Romans 8th chapter 29th and 30th verses we read, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. More over whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." All the saving grace given to God's people flows from the divine election in eternity.

The Jews were not the only ones to whom this divine election was given, for Romans 1st chapter 16th verse reads, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." In Acts 13th chapter, 47th verse

we read, "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." The 48th verse of this same chapter goes on to verify this election and free grace, and to nullify any works of man, for it reads. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord: **And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.**"

Brethren, where does any so called preacher find ground to get up and say, "Accept Christ as your personal saviour before it is to late?" If we were not one of God's elect before the world was, we were too late right at the start.

Man of himself does not merit this wonderful favor, for in man there is no good thing. It is only through Jesus the second Adam, who was the begotten Son of God, that we are become joint heirs with Him, and unto the glory and honor prepared for his saints. We only see as through a glass darkly now, but then face to face. It is not of works of man, but of God to whom all the praise and honor belongs.

Brethren, isn't it the love of Christ dwelling in us, that makes us travel many hundreds of miles to meet together? For Jesus says where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.

It will be a wonderful joy to be together with Christ in the New Jerusalem, which is above and is free, which is the mother of us all. (Galatians 4: 26)

When our sojourn in this world is over may we hear his gentle voice saying "Peace be still, it is I."

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be."

CHURCH LETTER 1967

To the Sister Churches of the Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, the Middleburg Church sends greetings.

The Bible is a wonderful book. It is the source of spiritual food for God's elect people. We find, when given an understanding mind, that one part explains another.

The Bible says that before the beginning of time God elected Himself a people. He did it in His own good pleasure. God is eternal and therefore could see the end from the beginning and know the travels of His people.

God's people, when awakened from sin and have a new birth, know and hear God's voice. Being awakened, they accept His word as truth and something to live by. They cannot do this of themselves, as sinful man can do nothing to please God.

It is by faith that we believe God and His word. In Romans 4:3, we read, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Therefore we find we must accept God's word for certain things. God is the highest authority and His word stands for fact. In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God created the Heavens and the earth. God has spoken and it is not for man to pry into the mysteries of God. Hebrews chapter 11 verse 3 reads. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." This 3rd. verse rules out all the scientific approach; and we have no patience with science when they try to tell us how old the world is.

Through Satan's cunning ways Eve was persuaded to take of the forbidden fruit, which brought about the first sinful act of the human race. How this evil influence or Satan came about I do not know. I do feel that God cannot be the author of sin, because God is Holy and cannot commit sin. We are here reminded of the 38th chapter of Job, where God spoke to him out of the whirlwind.

It says in the Bible that God created man. After man was created God placed him in the Garden of Eden. Thus God

has spoken, and we dare not question His word.

In Hassell's Church History page 50 we read, "It was the prerogative and pleasure of God to give law for government of all things created by Him, whether in relation to the motion of the planets or the creeping of an insect, and therefore man could not be exempt from that universal rule."

Adam, when placed in the garden, was given the task to dress and keep the garden. I do not feel this constitutes works because we are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2nd chapter verses 12 and 13.)

God gave Adam a law. Eve being in Adam at the time was made subject to the law also. Adam being the head of his wife and the whole human race, represented both her and them. Since Adam represented the whole human race, all fell and came under the law.

Satan has always been hostile to God and loses no time in leading weak fallen man on the downward path to destruction. God knew in the annals of eternity that this would take place. So God prepared a way of salvation for His elect people. This is foretold in the Old Testament by Isaac being brought to the altar for sacrifice, but a ram was caught by his horns in the thicket and was sacrificed in Isaac's stead.

In the first chapter of John we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In the 14th verse of this chapter it reads, "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." It is necessary to read the whole chapter because it all fits together. Therefore we see in this that God's word is power. He speaks and it is done.

God sent His Son, the second Adam, into the world as a sacrifice for the sins of His people to satisfy the law. Since God's people were chosen in Him

before the foundation of the world the law is made of none effect. (Ephesians 1: 4)

Eve being in Adam was made subject to the law. God's elect in Christ are made free by His death and resurrection.

Our Pastor Elder Amasa J. Slauson, of Kingston, New York, meets with us on fifth Sundays, Lord willing.

Done on behalf of The Middleburg Old School Baptist Church by Sister Beatrice E. Hocking, Clerk.

Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

The brethren and friends at the Lexington-Roxbury Association held at Halcottville, N. Y. September 13, 14, 1967, regret that Elder and Sister Ruston's health prevented them from attending this meeting. Elder Ruston was pastor of these churches in years gone by, having moved to Canada nearly forty years ago, but seldom failed to attend this association — being faithful to come among us at these meetings. We want them to know that they are greatly missed, and that they yet have our strong love and fellowship in our hearts, and our best wishes.

Sincerely done by order and behalf of the brethren and friends of this meeting.

Elder A. J. Slauson, Moderator
Deacon Woodrow Bellinger, Clerk

Glade Hill, Virginia

"And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water and the blood: and these three agree in one."

(1 John 5:8)

Dear Brethren:

"It is appointed unto men once to die . . ." and the death of God's saints is precious in his sight.

On behalf of all whose names were written in the Lamb's book of Life, the

Lord has placed three witnesses in the earth. Because of this mysterious fact, "the sleep of a laboring man is sweet." (Eccl. 5:12)

God holds the key of death, and when he turns the key we die. By turning that key, God thus wipes tears from all faces. Death for the righteous is an end of sin and sorrow. So, it is in this manner they come out of tribulations. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb," who were all their lives "born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward," because of Adam's fall — but now rest; and owning the riches that cannot be left behind, they do at death come "out of great tribulation." Hence, to die is gain. And there in the grave they do wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, who is the Way in which the "blessed" dead "in the Lord" are "therefore before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in His temple:" which is their bodies that shall sleep until grace shall triumph, and mortality shall put on immortality; and until "such an hour as ye think not." Then Jesus shall come to claim what is due him, which is: the joy that was set before him when he endured the cross, despising the shame.

May the Lord teach us more and more to number our days, and apply our hearts to wisdom — which is Jesus Christ. May we "abide in him, that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

On the day of Pentecost Peter said, "My flesh shall rest in hope." Few indeed know that hope is a Spirit and a Saviour.

Many claim they are going to run out of their bodies, and beat the church to heaven. The Devil's ancient lie: "Ye shall not surely die," is sweet indeed to the wicked. But faith replies, "I would not live alway." And again, "There let me be buried." and again, "Yea though

I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

God hath spoken, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Has He altered the thing that has gone out of his blessed lips? Ten thousand times, No! "Let God be true and every man a liar." David has not ascended into heaven, but is both dead and buried, according to the New Testament. No doubt Jesus will raise up David "at the last time."

These plain Bible truths are much neglected, while manufactured doctrines such as re-united souls and bodies, etc. have been preached until some think it is Bible truth. A few have been born again, and have the sentence of death in themselves, and they do not trust in themselves, but in God that raiseth the dead. Their conversation is in heaven: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. 3: 30, 21) Satan's lie, "Ye shall not surely die," will be preached by the multitudes, because: "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." They cannot know (or declare) that, "the day of death is better than the day of birth."

I truly wish that all who are Primitive Baptists were wise enough to know that we are all mortals and sinners, (inside and outside,) and must die. If we do not sleep we certainly will not "awake with his likeness . . ."

I have been careful to write only such things as scripture will support. It is a very great thing to have our eyes opened to know that we are sinners. It is good to believe the fact that we must die: this makes the resurrection desirable and our Lord precious; and the "hollow-log doctrine" a stench.

In bonds,
Julius Boccock

EXPERIENCE

I am going to try to write some of the good things I feel have been the dealings of the Lord with me. I hope I have been blessed with the love that God sheds abroad in our hearts at his appointed time; and He prepares our hearts to receive it.

I was much concerned about my mean and sinful ways around two years ago; and felt that I should change and do better, or I would be lost eternally. But I did not know what to do, I thought that if I would attend church all I could, that would be all right, so I went to church every time I could, having no desire to join any church at that time. I did not understand the doctrine for I had not been enlightened, as I hope I am now.

One day I was at work and it seemed a voice spoke to me, saying, You are under conviction for your sins, and it repeated again, again, and again, and I felt that I was one of the biggest sinners in the world, but I did not think much more about it until in June when I had a bad car wreck, and felt I could have gotten killed right then, and if I had died then there was no hope of eternal life for me. One morning about dawn, (I had slept but a very little that night) a voice spoke to me saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and repeated again, and I looked out the window and I saw the almighty hand reach out and a robe sleeve hanging from the hand. I could not get away from the thought that I was lost, and without the help of God I would be lost forever and ever. So in my weak way I tried to pray not knowing how or what to say, and I felt that my prayers did not reach Him. I felt I was all alone without a friend in the world, and even God had forsaken me. I could find no peace or rest anywhere, I would go places and do things to try and get it off my mind. I got to where I hardly had strength to lift my hand; yes, I believe it was God showing me how helpless I was. I could not get

away from the heavy burden that was in my heart. Yes He has all the power, and we will call upon him to have mercy on us when we realize the ruined state we are in. I continued praying every night for a while, and also through the day, and I began to feel that God was hearing my prayers, for these words would come to me, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." That was very comforting to me, and the sermons were also.

I had a vision or a dream on December 30th, I saw a crowd of people standing by the water, and out in this water I saw two people, one was a woman and the other was a man, and they were dressed in white, and the water was just as clear as crystal. I still continued to pray and I began to feel that my burden was lifted, and I received my hope of eternal life which is so very precious to me. It seemed like my whole being was filled with the Spirit, and I could not praise the Lord enough. I repeated these words over and over, Bless the Lord, O my soul praise His name. I was so happy that my Saviour sought me out when a stranger who went astray from the fold. I was astonished and amazed that such wonderful dreams or visions should come to me as unworthy as I felt to be. And then another night I had the very same dream, but this one right after I went to bed, and this time these words were spoke to me, "Take up thy cross and follow me." It was wonderful; and I got up Sunday morning and the morning was just beautiful. I went on to church, (Sandy Level, Elder Brammer, Pastor) and after hearing you preach such a wonderful sermon I couldn't stay away any longer. I offered to the church and they received me into fellowship with them. I was very happy although I felt too unworthy to belong with such good people.

Sunday when I started to the water, I felt so unworthy and not good enough to be baptized, and when I came up out of the water I was so happy; and I love my brothers and sisters. When I came

up out of the water I felt better both naturally and spiritually.

Written by a little sister in a precious hope.

Ruth Alice Dudley
Rt. 1, Box 382
Hardy, Va.

HAS MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR

Rt. 2,
Stuart, Va.

Dear Editors of the Good Paper:

I will try to tell you something of my travels, yet I know that the half cannot be told. I have tried for so long to tell what a wonderful Saviour we have; and that I have so much to be thankful for. I have lately been operated on for a tumor which I had for a long time. I knew I had it, but I had a feeble sister to care for, and I felt I could not leave her. I tried to pray that I might live to take care of her until she passed away; and He blessed me to do that.

I dreaded the operation, but the good Lord said that He would go with me all the way, and I did not dread it any more. I felt that He overshadowed the hospital; and I hope I praised him from a pure heart. I received many sweet get-well cards and letters and gifts, and many prayers. The doctors and nurses were so good to me: these things I shall not forget as long as I live.

I would like to tell of a dream I had before going to the hospital. Many knew Elder J. G. L. Hash, and I loved him like a father, and his memory will linger with me. I dreamed of being in his field just below where he was buried, and it was so steep, and I was so weak I wondered how he climbed up and down so much, as I know he did. And I saw the prettiest sheep I had ever seen, and he came so close to me that I felt of his

wool, which was as soft as feathers. I took hold of his wool, and he would pull me along, then wait until I got in a hard place; and he would always be there when I needed him. Something would say that is what led Brother Hash along; and I thought of how many times he had been to the hospital, and that sweet lamb led him.

What a wonderful Saviour we have! I hope I am in that number. If I feel like I do now, I won't dread dying, which I wanted to do when my loved ones have been taken from me; but I know that God knows all things, and I am left here for some purpose. I want to praise him for what he has done for unworthy me, for it is not for any good that I have done. I know I cannot do anything for myself or anyone else. How we fear sometimes, and then sometimes rejoice in Him, and fear is done away. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform."

I wish you dear editors could come to Charity Church; I do enjoy hearing you all preach. I enjoyed the February Signs so much as I had to stay at home a week or two, but am getting along fine now, and getting to the meetings again.

May God bless you to continue in your good work: it is such a blessing and comfort to us all.

Your unworthy sister,
Bodie Craddock

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EDITORIAL

“O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those with young. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.”

(Isaiah 40:9-12)

The things that are required for the conception, birth, growth, and welfare

of God’s children are given us by the Giver. (2 Peter 1:3) If there are those who preach anything else, let them be unto you accursed. (Gal. 1: 8, 9) Every good and perfect gift comes down to us by the Father (James 1:17), and if there is a gospel (which is not the gospel) being promulgated among God’s people today which has not been preached by the apostles and received by their hearers, then let them be avoided, rejected, rebuked, reduced to heathendom. (Rom. 16:17; Titus 1:13; 3:10; Matt. 18:17; 2 Thes. 3: 6)

Contrary to all divine rule, there is a strong tendency among the human race for wives to manage family affairs. This, together with all other departures from the law of nature, will end in sorrow. There has been numerous introductions in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ as to how the family affairs might be bettered by them. These have always carried away silly women and unstable members (2 Tim. 3: 6; 2 Pet. 3: 16), but there has always been a remnant that has been saved (timely), and it will always be this way. In the inner courts of the City of our God, the Husband, the King, the Law-giver, sits enthroned. He is the One that received his bride as a gift from his Father. This covenant is an everlasting one, conceived in the eternal mind of God, executed in giving and receiving. In the morning of creation God begin to show His bride what had been designed in eternity, giving her tokens and signs and tastes of what was to come. In the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. (Gal. 4: 4) His coming was to minister unto her; his dying was to redeem her; his life was to save her; his resurrection was to justify her; his appearing in glory was to intercede her. She has been eternally betrothed unto Jesus (Hos. 2: 16, 20), and she is now the bride of the Lord, the Saviour of sinners. If she has furnished her table; if she has supplied her name; if she has made the fine needlework of her robe, she is entitled to the running of the family, the kingdom of her husband. If not, He is now,

always has been, and always will be entitled to give all commandments to her, individually and collectively.

God will not leave himself without witnesses, that is, He will not if he is God. She, the bride of Jesus Christ, individually and collectively, are witnesses to his saving grace. They have a message to impart. It is not a message of what they have done, but it is a message of what Jesus has done for sinners. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain," and, "O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength." These are the commandments of the Saviour to the saved. They are reconciled unto him by his death, as that death is made manifest in them. (Rom. 5: 10; 2 Cor. 5: 18, 20; Psa. 110: 3) The commandments that he gives are not grievous (1 John 5: 3); rather they are compatible with being a new creature in Christ. (2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15)

I have serious doubts that a man, when called of God to bear witness, that he quits bearing witness. I do read that one tried to quit; that one said he couldn't go, and couldn't preach if he did go; that one tried to select the place that he would go; that one tried to get by with not knowing the one that called him; that one tried to go to one place, but the Spirit suffered him not to go; but God's people do not turn back. (Heb. 10: 39) Too, I have serious doubts about the religion of any man that will say that he loves sin as well as he ever did. His desire is to follow Jesus, and how glad he is when the Spirit calls him forth to go up to the higher ground (Psalm 122: 1): calls him from the weak and beggarly things of the earth to go up into the top of the mountains where the Lord's house is built. (Isa. 2:2) Here is the commandment that is needed to one like Jeremiah, to wit, "Thou shalt go to all that I send thee." When the commandment comes to get up into the high mountain he will get up and go. When the command is given to the church to raise her voice, to lift it up, to say to Jeremiah, "Whatsoever I com-

mand thee thou shalt speak," there will be a bringing forth of the glad tidings. Let it be remembered that Peter and James and John never would have gone up into the mountain had it not been for the Lord; that Jeremiah never would have preached (and continued preaching) had it not been for the Lord.

How precious it is when the blessed Saviour says, "Fear not." O how I need the soul cherishing presence of one that has overcome all of my opponents and opposition. It is the most wonderful tidings in all this vale of sorrow, "Be not afraid." These words come from the One that came down into the wilderness, rescued his bride from Satan and sin and herself, and brought her out leaning on his arm. His command to her is to lift up thy voice, be not afraid, tell what great things has been done for you. This is to be told unto the cities of Judah. Anywhere else? Isaiah did not say so, and I do not say so. What I do say, what I desire to say, is to say to Judah, "Behold your God." I am not afraid (at times) to speak on the housetop; sometimes I do not fear any consequences that may befall me. I desire to know him, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto his death, that I might present him as the only hope of poor sinners. I would say to the cities (churches) of Judah, "Behold your God." How is this to be? What does it entail? Ah, I would say, How gracious it is that the word was made flesh. When we see Jesus, we will see God; when we believe God, we will believe Jesus. The earth fails to produce anything worthy of comparison to the Word taking flesh; to His passing by the nature of angels and stooping to the taking of the nature of Abraham's seed. That is enough any time, anywhere, to say to believers, to the cities of Judah; that is indeed good tidings.

The gospel declared to Abraham before (Gal. 3: 8), and it testifies to us now, that the Lord will come with strong hand and that his arm shall rule for him. I do not subscribe to any eternal-children-theory, therefore I am not able to

say that his reward, which was with him, was his church and bride. I do not see the consistency in saying that he came after her and brought her with him. Let it be remembered that it was his reward that came with him. It does not say that he brought a reward for us, but his reward was with him. What is it that causes us to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ? It is the joy and the peace and the satisfaction that is in (not for) following Jesus. The meat of Jesus Christ is to do his Father's will. What is our meat? What is our desire? As sure as God is, our desire will be to follow the lusts of the flesh (first birth), or the things of God's Spirit. The things of his Spirit will be the things of Christ. His reward was with him. It was in doing the will of God. It was in coming to redeem them, in bringing them to know him, in association and fellowship with them. He had the reward with him and the work before him. What was his work? What is it now?

His work is to feed his flock like a shepherd. Not just any flock, but his flock; not like just any kind of shepherd, but like a good shepherd. (John 10: 11) He being the Shepherd, he having the food, it is his work to feed his flock. We sing,

"Soon will the toilsome strife be o'er,
Of sublunary care;
And life's dull vanities no more
This anxious breast ensnare,
Courage, my soul, on God rely,
Deliverance soon will come;
A thousand ways has Providence
To bring believers home.

"Ere first I drew this vital breath,
From nature's prison free,
Crosses in number, measure, weight,
Were written, Lord, for me;
But thou, my shepherd, friend and guide
Hast led me kindly on —
Taught me to rest my fainting head
On Christ, the corner stone."

And we will find in our experience him teaching and feeding his flock in various ways. It may be by the testimonies of the heavens (Psa. 19: 1, 4); it may be in the wilderness and the solitary place (Deut. 32; Psa. 107); it may be by the

sending of ministers (John 21), but however and whenever they are fed, it is the work of the shepherd that does the feeding. His work is to gather the lambs in his arm. I have not had any experience with lambs but I have been sent to gather calves. Sometimes I gathered at them, but their agility enabled them to escape. Jesus, our Saviour did not gather at them, but he gathered the lambs in his arm. His work is to carry them (the lambs) in his bosom. Now the uppermost question in my mind is this: Does he need my help to carry them? If so, then when I fail through age or neglect or limitation, the sheep are not carried, the lambs are not gathered. That is what I call hardshell doctrine; and it, with all other doctrine in kind, I do not subscribe to it. The doctrine of God our Saviour may be, and no doubt it is hard to the natural mind of men, including, God's children, but it is not hard for God to do his will (Gen. 18: 14; Jer. 32: 17), and when God is in power (manifestly) his people are willing for his will to be done. (Psalm 110: 3)

When great things are promised me, I desire the fleece to be wet and the ground dry; if the promise is of great importance, if the outcome holds my destiny and welfare in it, I will desire the ground to be wet and the fleece dry. (Judges 6: 37, 40) In our natural lives, it gives us a pleasant feeling when men back up their promises by a list of things already performed. How assuring it is to have all of these precious promises delivered and received to us and by us. (2 Pet. 1: 3, 4) And how comforting it is to have the Promiser listing some of the things that He has accomplished. In our nature we will ask, What do you have to draw with? (John 4: 11) When his power is made manifest in giving unto us, we will hasten into the city (church) and request others to come and see (John 4: 29); when his promise is verified in our life, we will say, "My Lord and my God" (John 20: 28); and today when the Lord is preached as the shepherd that feeds his flock, that gathers the lambs, that carries them in his bosom, that gently leads those that

are with young, we are shown by the Holy Ghost (John 14: 26; 16: 13, 14) that God will do all of that, and we are given a list of his accomplishments. Let us remember that it is Christ Jesus the Lord of whom we speak. It is Him that does all of the wonderful things that the shepherd does. He has a wonderful record of accomplishments.

Would it be worth anything to a poor struggling sinner to know that God had measured the waters of the five oceans? Is it the hand of God the Father that has measured the water? Does He deal in geography lessons to his children? Does God teach oceanography to his children? This I doubt. If this is true, what percentage of them would know the least thing about such matters? To me, I am writing to the spiritually taught of God; to those that have been born of the Spirit of God. The hand that has measured the waters in the hollow of it, is none other than the hand of Christ. He has measured the waters, and they are bitter and they are overwhelming, and they would drown the little ones that belong to the Shepherd if he had not measured them; if he had not become acquainted with all of the flood of afflictions that would forever separate us from him. There is not a flood that awaits us (and many do) but that he has already gone through it. It is the waters (not water) that he has measured. He has measured them all of all his children. Not one flooding wave but that he has endured it in bearing our sorrows and in carrying our griefs. If it is to be without a home he has measured that bitter water; if it is to feel forsaken by brethren and God, he has measured that in the most intense suffering; if it is in being persecuted for righteousness sake, he has measured that with all of its sorrow. The Bible abundantly teaches us that our troubles are spoken of as waters. Let us rejoice that Jesus Christ has measured them.

Would it be comforting to a poor sinner that was suffering the pangs of hell, to know that God had meted out the heavenly bodies and the universe with

a wave of his hand? All God-fearing characters know that God has, indeed, measured the unlimited (to us) space around and beyond us; but I seriously question the Bible as being a book of science or other branches of learning that can be grasped and retained by the faculties of the mind; that if, and when, it speaks of such things it has a spiritual meaning instead of a natural, even though there has been much said about spiritualizing the scriptures. I will quit doing that when the faculties of the natural mind understand and know the things of the spirit.

It is true that there are a number of heavens mentioned in the Bible, and that each one of them means **heaven**. There is a law or legal heaven, and there isn't any body as contented and happy as he or she that thinks their destiny is in their hands. There is a heaven that I would not associate with law or grace; that has to do only with the stores and beauties of the earth. There is a heaven which the Bible speaks of as being the space or region beyond us and above us. All of these heavens are meted out by the measurement of God's span. The dictionary tells us that a span is a wave of the hand of the builder. He has a measurement for the occasion — if an emergency comes up he has more than one measurement, or more than one span; that he can lay out different measurements as the need arises — and that the need arises because of his limited foresight. This Shepherd, this Builder, this Measurer, this Architect, has **the** measurement. He has measured or meted out heaven with **the** (not a) span. He has raised his hand in the face of all enemies and said, Thus far shalt thou come. How could we have a heaven **if hell had not been halted this side of it?** Had hell not been halted at the "thus far" boundary line, heaven could not have been meted with **the** span. My poor heart is made to rejoice as I write; just to look in upon the sacred scenes that come fleeting across my line of vision as I view my times of heaven as being measured to me. I cannot span the

law; I can not span the space; I can not span (mete, measure) my blessings (heavenly places) while I am traveling through this life. My heart and soul and mind is enraptured as I sit in astonishment and look back over the pathway that I have come. My God has supplied my need. Heaven has been meted out to me according to the measurement that is in Christ. The measurement (span) was in his hand as the wise masterbuilder of His church. This flock, this church, this bride of Christ has had all of her heavenly places and enjoyments meted out to her. If she does not receive them, the Shepherd is not any better at measuring than is the carpenter that builds the house.

It is not my intention to dispute God as knowing and comprehending every atom of dust of this earth, this terrestrial globe. But I am not making that application here. It is a comforting thought (it would be torment any other way) that the bodies (yes, dust bodies) of God's children shall be brought from the graves — if it is not comforting, it follows that we are not comforted in the angelic message that he shall save his people. But I want **something** here. I believe in time salvation as much as any man that ever lived — I need salvation **now**. If I am one for whom Christ died, I believe that the time will come in my life when I can say, By the grace of God I am what I am; and I do not expect, and I do not believe that any man, regardless of his laboring, will ever be able to change that assertion.

God's people have at the present time, at this the time of need, a high priest that can be touched by the feeling of our infirmities. O Lord, how I need that! How I daily need the assurance that I have a Friend, an Intercessor, that has come to know all of my infirmities! He came to know them by **feeling**, by experience. His being acquainted with all of our ways (Psa. 139: 3) came about in a concrete manner. It was much more than visionary and imaginary. Thus, from all eternity, He comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure. That was

in his body, wherein the cost of salvation, the feeling of it, the acquaintance with his people in every particular, was brought about, and all of it according to his foreknowledge of man.

This is God at work in this weighing and balancing of the mountains and hills. He weighed them before they were problems to his people. He balanced our hills, as he did our clouds (Job 36: 4), before they became tasks that we could not perform or troubles that we could not solve. There has never been anything in the lives of God's people that it has not already been weighed in eternity and experienced by Jesus in his life. If any word of prophecy concerning Jesus had failed, it certainly would have shown a short weight by the One that weighed it. We will never fail. Our failing to fail is not to be reckoned as being in us, but in Him that won the victory and bestowed it upon us. We can not fail, because the Head did not fail. If the devil had done the weighing of the hills and mountains; if the sinners that he came to save had done the weighing, or, if they had been left to chance about how and when and where they were met, then we would have failed.

We will have our mountains, we will meet up with many hills that our crippled feet will not be able to climb; we will have experiences that we think are unbearable, but they have all been weighed. For patience he gives us afflictions, for the destruction of fleshly ambitions he gives us the furnace, for sorrows and anxieties he gives us grace.

Our Shepherd is able to feed his flock, to gather and to carry them, to lead them to the mountains and to home, because "HE HATH MEASURED THE WATERS IN THE HOLLOW OF HIS HAND, AND METED OUT HEAVEN WITH THE SPAN, AND COMPREHENDED THE DUST OF THE EARTH IN A MEASURE, AND WEIGHED THE MOUNTAINS IN SCALES, AND THE HILLS IN A BALANCE."

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE MYSTERY OF PARABLES

"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come."

— *Luke xix, 12, 13*

I have not felt to be wise enough to call myself skilled in the mysteries of God, but this subject is on my mind, and I shall only aim to try in my weakness to give a train of thought in my mind that seems to see some harmony in these parables. First, in order to come at once to the point, I will say, if I have any understanding about this parable and its meaning, it is that this nobleman was God, and the ten servants were the Jews when he had got them settled in Canaan.

And now for the proof. The fourteenth verse reads: "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to rule over us." But this nobleman had said to those he had given the ten pounds, "Occupy till I come." They were to occupy Jerusalem and keep the ordinances until he came, and when he returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called. The first came and said, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds;" the second had gained five pounds, the third had gained nothing, and felt that the lord was an austere man, taking up that which he had not strowed. The result was they took from him what he had and gave it to him that had. This last clause agrees with what Christ said to the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," and also it agrees with that Scripture which saith,

"He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." This also agrees with Christ's interpretation of the parable in the next chapter (Luke xx.) where he said, "A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time. [This long time is from Moses until Christ.] And at the season, he sent a servant to the husbandmen [the servant was a prophet, such as Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel] that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant [prophet]: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty." And again he sent the third servant, or prophet, and he fared as the others. Last of all he said, "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him, when they see him." The son was Christ, and they killed him. Christ himself in this parable, or figure, says, And what shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He answered it by saying, "He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others." The vineyard was the first covenant, or the church under the first covenant; the kingdom the nobleman went to receive seems to be the kingdom of Jesus Christ, or the new covenant. As I said before, the pounds the nobleman left with his ten servants were the first covenant; the servants, the Jews (the citizens) hated him. These were the Jews, and the nobleman said of them, Bring hither those enemies and slay them before me. This was done by the Roman army, for in this nineteenth chapter of Luke, as Jesus came riding into Jerusalem, when he beheld the city he "wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a

trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

It has seemed plain to me in reading these parables that most of them were spoken of and against the Jews. The trusting them with God's goods, the pounds, the talents, the vineyard, I have felt for a long time had reference to putting the first covenant and its ordinances in their hands to use, or occupy, until he should come, and the time for him to come and reckon with all these servants was when he came in the flesh. I would understand that he spoke these parables because they were nigh unto Jerusalem, and because they thought the kingdom of heaven should immediately appear. I am aware that I am treading upon controverted ground in handling these parables, but I feel inclined to not contend against any one who may see them differently, for what have we that we have not received? and if we have received it why should we act as though we had not? I feel certain that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

These parables have long been a stumblingblock to me, but they are figures, and we should always while meditating upon them keep before us what Jesus was teaching and whom he was speaking those parables against. The Jews would become angry at them, because they perceived he had spoken them against the Jews. Many have lost the figure Christ was showing, by running after what the ten pounds meant, and the five pounds, and the one who had gained nothing. First, whenever anything is taken from one and given to another in these parables, it has seemed plain to me to mean taken from the people of the first covenant and given to the people of the second covenant. This I feel is a safe basis to start from, and when we keep the figure right before us we need not run off to know

what the different pounds mean, or what the different talents mean, or what the vineyard means, or the husbandmen, or the servants. We know that the Lord made a covenant with the Jews, and that he took it away from them and gave it to others, and, as Christ said, he will miserably destroy these wicked husbandmen and burn up their city. The Jews themselves understood these parables were spoken against them, and owned it, and why not we own the same in Matthew xxiv., where Christ is so clearly making known the destruction of Jerusalem with its awful consequences, and warning his disciples to flee to the mountains and escape the wrath of God upon the Jews? He starts out in the next chapter in continuance of the same subject, and says, “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins.” I have understood the ten virgins to mean no more and no less than the ten servants he gave his ten pounds unto, also I understand it to mean the same as the parable of the talents, also in this twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. The foolish virgins are no more than the slothful servant who had laid his master's pound up in a napkin, or the unprofitable servant who had hid his talent; the five foolish virgins, the slothful servant, the unprofitable servant, all mean one and the same thing, I think. The foolish virgins had only the lamp of Moses, and it went out when the true Light came. I think if we would always keep the figures or parables before us, and not run off after what some word in the parables means, we would get better understanding of these things.

All these things spoken of in these figures were given to the Jews, and they made a complete failure in keeping them. They had two thousand years trial, and always failed, so these things were taken from them and given unto another people bringing forth the fruits thereof; it was impossible to get grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, for the Father seeketh such to worship him

in spirit and in truth, for God is a Spirit. It has ever been true that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them. The parable of the wedding supper has seemed to me to fit along with the other parables. The one who had not the wedding garment on was cast into outer darkness, where the unprofitable servant was who had only one talent, and so were the foolish virgins. I have felt the one without the wedding garment, the slothful servant, the unprofitable servant and the five foolish virgins all have reference to the unbelieving Jews; the servant who had gained the ten pounds, or the five talents, and the five wise virgins and those who had the wedding garment on I feel all mean one and the selfsame thing; but spoken in the different figures they refer to the people of God, the believers in Jesus Christ, as all these parables were spoken when Christ was here, and spoken against his enemies and in behalf of his believers.

Some have thought these parables set forth different things; that the parable of the vineyard in Luke xx. was of different meaning than the one in Luke xix., of which our text speaks, but a close observation I believe will show they are only different figures, alluding to one and the same thing in the main. It is true we get some lessons out of one that do not appear so plain in another, but to me, in the main, I see the same thing. One brother sees it best through the parable of our text, another sees it best through the parable of the vineyard, another sees it best through the parable of the talents, and so on. There seems to be something in one parable that is plainer to one brother than another, so I would not wish to force my views upon any one who differs with me, neither would I contend with any brother as to the true meaning of any of these parables.

(Written by Elder Newton Peters and published in the Signs September 15, 1909)

“IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?”

Jeremiah viii, 22

From infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord's people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God's people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry, and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, “For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.” And then he demands, “Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?” Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal property for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which human science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the

Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for comfort and deliverance from afflictions, and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: "Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, "Lord, save, or I perish." There certainly is no balm short of the Saviour's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1855)

OBITUARIES

MAJOR THOMAS SMITH

Major Thomas Smith was born May 6, 1882, in Rockingham County, N. C. He passed from this life February 2, 1967, at the age of 84. He was the son of the late Coleman G. and Rebecca Shreve Smith. Surviving are his wife, the former Nettie Nixon, of Greensboro; a son, Thomas D. Smith, Maitland, Fla.; a daughter, Mrs. Linwood Eure, Summerville, S. C.; one brother, John R. Smith, Reidsville; and five grandchildren.

Brother Smith joined the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1953, and was a devoted member, serving as Treasurer and Clerk efficiently for several years. Our dear brother loved his church and brethren very much, and though he was only in the church militant for a few years, his devotion to the cause was for many years.

He was a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law. He served as Clerk of the City of Reidsville for five years before he was elected to the Superior Court of Rockingham County, where he served for twenty years. In the passing of our dear brother, his family, church and community have suffered a great loss; but we believe our loss is his eternal gain, as we believe he has gone home to be forever with his Lord.

Funeral services were conducted from the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church by Elder W. C. King.

D. V. S.

BROTHER A. W. LEWIS

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, write in regards to our dear brother Albert W. Lewis.

Brother Albert was born March 15, 1898, and departed this life July 5, 1965. He spent his last days in failing health, but he bore his afflictions so humbly and patiently, always praising his God. He united with Lower Town Creek Church in June, 1950, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Smith.

Brother Lewis leaves to mourn his death, his wife, Sister Nannie Lee Lewis, which we are very thankful to still have with us. Also three children, Lower Town Creek Church, and a host of friends. Brother Lewis was greatly concerned of his Soul and Salvation, also concerned of those on beds of afflictions, the poor and needy, the fatherless, and the the widows.

We read in the writings of James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Brother Lewis was a Deacon at Lower Town Creek from the second Sunday in February, 1954 until his death, always concerned of the welfare of the members and the care for the church and grounds.

He was laid to rest in the Greenwood Cemetery to await the coming of the King of Kings. We miss Brother Lewis very much.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on our church records, a copy be sent to the family and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

SISTER PEARL PROCTOR

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, write a few lines in regards to our dear Sister Pearl Proctor.

Sister Proctor was born on July 28, 1888, in Edgemcombe County and departed this life on August 24, 1965. She was the wife of Dock Proctor, and to this union were born five children.

Sister Proctor's last years of stay were with her son and daughter-in-law. She was confined to the home in her last days, but was blessed to have devoted loved ones to care for her. She united with Lower Town Creek Church, September, 1932, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Smith.

Sister Pearl leaves to mourn her death, one son, two daughters, one brother, two sisters, a host of grandchildren, and friends. If words could describe Sister Pearl, we would say, "Soft spoken, kind, humble and ever looking to her Maker who is the author and finisher of her faith."

Her remains were laid to rest in the Proctor Cemetery. We miss Sister Pearl, but feel that she has an eternal gain.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the family, and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, write a few lines in regards to our dear Sister Effie Edwards.

Sister Edwards was born on July 7, 1887, and departed this life on April 22, 1965. She was the wife of C. W. Edwards, and to this union were born six children.

Sister Edwards' last years of stay were with one of her sons and daughter-in-law. Although confined to her bed in her last days, she was blessed to have devoted hands to care for her.

Sister Edwards united with Lower Town Creek Church in July, 1954, and was baptized by Elder C. L. Coker. She leaves to mourn her death, her children, grandchildren, Lower Town Creek Church, and friends. She was admired by all who knew her for her meekness. We read in Psalm 37:11, "But, the meek shall inherit the earth."

Her remains were laid to rest in the Pine-tops Cemetery.

We miss this loved one, but our loss is her eternal gain.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on our church record, a copy be given the family, and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

IDA DELANO BARTLETT

Ida Delano Bartlett was born on February 1, 1893, and departed this life on May 22, 1967. We bow in humble submission to the will of God, believing that she had spent her appointed time here, and it pleased the Lord to take her from the trials of this life.

She was the daughter of the late Forest and Etta Silsby Delano. Sister Bartlett was married on June 19, 1912 to Sanford S. Bartlett and to this union were born twelve children, nine surviving; five daughters and four sons. There are also surviving a brother Howard Delano, nineteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Sister Bartlett was baptized in the year of 1947 by Elder John D. Wood, her membership being with the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church, and she remained a faithful member until death, always attending the meetings. The writer visited in her home many times and always found her solid in her belief that salvation came not by her own works, for she well knew that her own works were all vanity, but by the grace and mercy of her eternal God. She enjoyed very much entertaining in her home and many times the meetings were held there.

Funeral services were held in the meeting house of the Bunker Baptist Church, Jefferson, Maine, by the writer on May 26, 1967, where she attended in her younger life; and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery. May it please the Lord to reconcile all who knew and loved her so dearly, to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MRS. ELIZABETH LEWIS HARDY

Sister Elizabeth L. Hardy, truly a Mother in Israel, was called home June 10, 1967. She was ill one month, spending the last two weeks of her life in Liberty House Nursing Home in Lynchburg, Va.

She was born at Ringgold, Va., Pittsylvania County, August 11, 1866, being 100 years and 10 months old. She was the daughter of Benjamin H. and Mary Ingram Lewis, and the widow of Chesley W. Hardy, who preceded her in death 1901. Two of their 4 children survive: Sister Maude Doss and Sister Mary Doss, who so tenderly cared for their mother. She made her home with Sister Maude. There were 15 grandchildren, 35 great grandchildren and 6 great great grandchildren, a number of nieces and nephews.

We desire to praise God for the orderly walk and lovely character of our dear sister. We miss her presence at church, which she loved so much, and filled her seat as long as she was able, being present a few times since

her 100th birthday. Though we miss her, we could not wish her back. We heard her say many times, "I want to go on. I have been here long enough, but can't die till my time comes."

We feel to say she was one of God's humble saints, and was loved by the brethren, sisters and friends. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 6, 1909. Her funeral was held at Springfield Church in Gretna, Va. in the presence of a large congregation, with many beautiful floral offerings. Services were conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and burial in Gretna Cemetery.

We extend our sympathy to her family.

By one who loved her,
Annie Tosh

NETTIE FARNSWORTH CROZIER

Upon request of the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church, it is with a sad heart even now that I attempt to write a few words in memory of our dear sister, Nettie Farnsworth Crozier. She was very faithful to her church in many ways, and was always there when services were held, unless sickness kept her home. She is missed so very much, but we are made to feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Sister Crozier entered this life July 17, 1898, and was called home October 11, 1966; thus making her stay here sixty-eight years. She was received by experience into the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church May 24, 1949, and was baptized by Elder R. B. Denson.

She is survived by her husband, two daughters, three sons, and six grandchildren. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. N. Bunn, in Lynchburg, Virginia; and her body was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers in Fair Hill Memorial Park, to await the resurrection morning.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy be placed on the church records.

Done by order of conference June 4, 1967.

Elder C. N. Bunn, Moderator
Sisters

Nannie Varnier
Lillie Weider
Azellie Lee
Committee

JAMES LESTER BUTCHER

It pleased our Lord to call from this life Brother J. L. Butcher on November 3, 1966. He was born December 10, 1889, thus making his stay on earth seventy-six years.

Brother Butcher was received by experience in the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church in 1920. He acted as Clerk pro tem. in 1920, and was ordained deacon in 1921. This office he filled until the time of his death. Brother Butcher lived in Danville, Va., but was faithful to his church as long as his health permitted. In July 1921, he was chosen a trustee, and was also Treasurer for several years.

He is survived by his wife, Mabel Parcell Butcher; one daughter, two grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. Also a brother and five sisters.

The funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home by Elder Raymond Payne, and he was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park; there to await resurrection morning, when the chosen of God shall see Him and sing praise unto his name forever.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission unto our God, who worketh the counsel of his own will. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy be placed on the church records.

Done by order of church in conference June 4, 1967.

Elder C. N. Bunn, Moderator
Sisters
Nannie Varnier
Lillie Weider
Azellie Lee
Committee

MARY ELEANOR WILSON

The Durham Primitive Baptist Church, Durham, N. C., records the passing of Mary Eleanor Wilson at the age of ninety-seven years. She was the widow of Patrick H. Wilson, who died in 1922.

Surviving are two daughters: Mrs. Esther Whitefield, of Durham, and Eula W. Midgette, of Morrisville, N. C.; two sons, Jasper C. Wilson and Hubert L. Wilson, of Durham; also nineteen grandchildren and more than fifty great grandchildren.

Sister Wilson was a member of the Durham Church for seventy years, and I have never known a more loyal member to her church. In her declining years, even when she could not walk, she would attend the services in a rolling chair; and in many ways manifested her faith by her works.

In her passing, we believe she died in the triumph of faith which God gave her many, many years ago.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor at the Hall-Wynne Funeral Home. Written by her pastor.

D. V. Spangler

CHANLEY NEWTON PARCELL

Chanley Newton Parcell was born October 7, 1886, and died December 31, 1966. Surviving are his wife, Odelle Wright Parcell, Rocky Mount, Va.; a daughter, Mrs. John C. Fannish, Scottsville, Va.; a son, C. Noell Parcell, Rocky Mount; a sister, Mrs. T. J. Dudley, Santa Pass, Texas; a brother, W. H. Parcell, Rocky Mount; and eight grandchildren.

He united with Chestnut Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Va., and was baptized the second Sunday in October, 1957. He was a kind and gentle husband, a good father and grandfather. His home was a place of welcome to all those that loved the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He loved his church and brethren, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace.

Funeral service was held at Annington and Bussey Chapel, Rocky Mount, by his pastor, Elder Cecil E. Turner, and his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery; there to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour.

We feel that our loss is his eternal gain, and when he awakes in His likeness, he shall be satisfied. May our God reconcile us all to his holy and sovereign will.

Written by his wife.

Odelle W. Parcell

ELDER LLOYD SEARS

Elder Lloyd Sears was born September 24, 1899, and departed this life January 24, 1967, at the age of 67 years; being the son of the late French and Elizabeth Sears. He was married to Ada Tanner, who survives. To this union were born four sons: Darriel, who lost his life in an automobile wreck several years ago; Alpha, Kent, Ohio; Roscoe, Akron; and Earnie, Monroe Falls, Ohio; four daughters: Mrs. Dessie Tanner, Nebo, W. Va.; Mrs. Evelyn Santy, Mrs. Glendoria Primo, and Mrs. Larene Keene, of Akron; two sisters: Mrs. Doanie McCumbers, Hallburg, W. Va., and Mrs. Flonie Murphy, Chloe, W. Va.; two brothers: Thurman, Nebo, W. Va., and Virgil, Akron, Ohio. Also 28 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Elder Lloyd joined the West Fork Primitive Baptist Church in 1938, and was later ordained to the ministry of the gospel, and later chosen assistant pastor. He continued in this capacity until stricken with hardened arteries, which he bore patiently for more than two years.

He was a staunch believer and defender of the doctrine of predestination of all things, and a sincere lover of the church. During illness he continually mentioned his hope of getting well and going to the church. His family and doctors did everything they knew to comfort him.

The writer by request conducted his funeral at Clay, W. Va., assisted by Elder J. C. Hammond. He was laid to rest in the Sears family cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the return of Jesus, and be claimed as one of that holy family of an eternal God.

Elder Gilbert Sears, Sr.

MRS. KATE COTTRELL

With sadness in my heart I wish to write my mother's obituary, Mrs. Kate Cottrell. Her life meant so much to me, and still does. She was born March 10, 1876, at Alma, Arkansas, and died June 10, 1967, making her stay on earth more than ninety-one years. She was the daughter of Isaac and Nancy Jane Pound.

She was united in marriage to David Crockett Cottrell February 20, 1898, who died in January, 1941. To this union six boys and five girls were born. There are ten living. We miss our mother, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Survivors are: William L., of Downey, Calif.; George M. and Clay, of Dyer, Arkansas; Earl, of Monterey, Calif., and John K. Cottrell, of Lawndale, Calif.; Mrs. Nancy Pennington, of Los Angeles; Mrs. Dalene Bolton, Ludlow, Vermont; Mrs. Ruby Norwood, El Monte, Calif.; Mrs. Nona Blevins and Miss Verna Cottrell, of Dyer, Arkansas; also seventeen grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church during early youth. We hope to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who called her from our midst to await the resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise and come forth from their graves, and behold His face in righteousness. A faithful one has passed into the great beyond. She was firm in the faith and doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Her funeral was conducted June 13, 1967, at Dyer Baptist Church. Her body was laid to rest in the family Pound Cemetery beneath a beautiful array of flowers, to await the coming of her Saviour. Mother loved the following hymn: "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound! that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost but now am found; was blind, but now I see." etc.

Written by a daughter who loved her.

Miss Verna Cottrell

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C.

The church is located about two miles east of Stand Hope, N. C., on Highway 97. All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 135

DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1967

NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/67
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE ARM OF THE LORD
(S. of S. 8:6; Isa. 59:16)

I once more, in a pleasant dream,
Did the dear Saviour see;
Adorably, I laid hold on his arm,
As he journeyed by me.
He caused lights to go on and off
In the far northern sky,
An instance of his mighty power,
As he was drawing nigh.

I said that he could do those things
"Because (that) he is God;"
Many miracles were done by him,
Who alone the winepress trod.
The Lord causes the light to shine
In the hearts of the elect,
Whose names are written in heaven,
Whose steps he doth direct.

Now the Lord's arm is his power,
By which they are upheld;
"His arm brought salvation to him,"
While on the earth he dwelled.
According to the word of God,
The Lord his arm made bare;
His holy arm's revealed to them,
Who're his peculiar care.

The Bible says he's the wisdom
And the power of God;
He has power to save his bride
By shedding his own blood.
The efficacious blood of Christ
Canceled her debt of sin,
And his fulfilling of the law
Brought a righteousness in.

Kept by the arm of God's power,
She can't at last be lost,
Saved from everlasting torment,
At such tremendous cost.

"Set me as a seal upon thine arm,"
Is her sincere desire,
While sojourning in this time world,
And the end draweth nigher.

It seems fitting to add a verse
Of a beautiful hymn
That pertains to a happy home —
The new Jerusalem:
"Reach down, reach down thine arm
of grace
And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And sabbaths never end."

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, N. C.

NOT MEMBERS, BUT BELIEVERS

Rt. 1
Tinsman, Ark. 71767

Dear Editors:

I notice my subscription has expired, so am sending \$5.00 for two years' renewal. Wife and I neither one are members of any church, but if we know ourselves, our belief is the Primitive Baptist advocated by the *Signs*. We get more out of reading the *Signs* than we can tell you.

Our hope is that the able editors will be blessed to continue to set forth salvation by grace, as in the past. We desire the prayers of all God's elect.

I want to mention that we attended the South Arkansas Association near Bearden, Arkansas, and heard four of the most wonderful sermons by Elder John Lee Smith, Elder Ballard, Elder E. J. Lambert and Elder Loyd Wall. We hope we are thankful for such ministers.

Ray Watson

SERMON AT
THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION
1967

It has been my privilege to attend and to speak in this association forty-six years. A lot of changes take place in forty-six years. I am glad of the privilege to stand before you this morning; and I desire an interest in your prayers.

I am going to do something unusual, but I am not doing it to appear odd or spectacular, but I am doing it because it has been upon my mind. Sometime during this meeting I was reading the Articles of Faith of the Pigg River Association; and I noticed that this is the 142nd annual session of this body. My mind fell upon a paragraph in these Articles of Faith, and if God would bless me, I would like to speak to you concerning it. The paragraph is number 5.

I realize very well that we cannot substitute articles of faith for the Word of God. Our articles of faith have been more or less an exposition of what we believe touching certain principles of doctrine which we have not been ashamed of. The first ones were drawn up over three hundred years ago. Today we might not understand some expressions of the old English writers, but in substance the same doctrine we are preaching today was embodied: election, predestination, the new birth, effectual calling, and preservation of the people of God unto eternal glory.

I have admired our brother who spoke just before me. (Elder W. B. Barnes — Ed.) I have admired him for two reasons: for his stability and for his humility. One is worth very little in the church of God without the other. His preaching has been clear and plain. The gospel of Christ, the truth of God, is like clear water: you can see a long ways through it. Some times what is called deep preaching is just muddy water, because you cannot see very far into it; and it could be very shallow.

The 5th paragraph reads:

“The regeneration, sanctification, justification and salvation are by virtue of birth, life, death, resurrection and med-

iation of Jesus Christ, and in no other way; and that all these graces of the Spirit are referable to the Church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.”

The first thing mentioned by our forefathers is **Regeneration**. Jesus taught while he was here, that except man be born again he could not see or enter the Kingdom of God. Regeneration is more or less what we call a new birth. Jesus taught Nicodemus that, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so in every one that is born of the Spirit.” There is no exception to this rule. Our Saviour also taught that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. He clearly says that a man must be born again. No substitute has ever been found by men for the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing people to the knowledge of the truth, or the imparting of eternal life: and none ever will be found. Anybody is foolish to believe, (who professes to believe the Bible,) that a person can have eternal life, and then lose it. Religion is something that if you seek it, you can't find it; if you find it, you can't lose it; if you lose it, it is evidence you never had it.

Regeneration comes to men and women by the work of the Holy Spirit that Jesus sent after he left the world, who should take the things of Jesus and show them to his people, guiding them in the way of all truth. All the excitement of men, all loud preaching and praying — “Hell fire and damnation preaching”, has never regenerated a man. That work is the work of the Holy Spirit, and, if I know anything about it, has the same power that Jesus had. I know that men are preaching over the land that the Spirit is wooing and beseeching sinners, trying to get them to accept the Lord. If this could be true, then the sinner is stronger than the Holy Spirit. That theory would put the Devil on one side of a man, and the Spirit on the other, both trying to

take him in the opposite direction. This would leave the man with more power than either one, wouldn't it? I read in the Psalms, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Every day is the day of God's power; but there is a day that the Holy Spirit overwhelms a person, and he is brought into subjection to the will of Almighty God. I like the way the Psalmist put it, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

Wherever the Spirit of God has wrought his work in bringing a person into the knowledge of the glorious truth of God, it is like being brought from darkness to light, or from night to day: as in a new world, he is brought to see and to understand something of the power and virtue of Jesus Christ. In my years of endeavoring to speak to God's dear people, I've never asked God more than just to give me an enlarged view of my blessed Saviour — I want to see a little more of him; and especially I want to feel his presence when I shall come to cross that river that men call death.

The Regeneration then is because of the electing love of God. It reaches those who are called vessels of mercy — chosen in Jesus Christ before the world began. "Given grace," Paul says, "in Christ Jesus before the world began." They are saved according to the eternal purpose of a sovereign God. So, where there is regeneration, there is evidence of the electing love of God. It is the revealing in the hearts of men and women that Jesus Christ is the way of life and salvation. Once you know this blessed truth, every other doctrine will become as dung to you.

Sanctification. Every one of these glorious principles work like the link in a chain — one can be no weaker than another. We may have a chain that would support a ton, but one weak link would make it of no strength. There are no weak links in God Almighty's work in bringing men and women to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Sanctification: the word means to set apart for a specific use; to be made holy. Sanctification is associated

with the word regeneration. The people of God, according to the Apostle Jude, were sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus. He means their life from all eternity has been in Jesus Christ. Paul used the expression, "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." And, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Just as certain as there was a sanctification, or setting apart, or being chosen in Jesus Christ before the world, the principle of that sanctification will be brought into the life of the individual.

The Scripture says that both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one. Meaning that God Almighty has determined this matter unalterably. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified," meaning that Jesus and his people are all of one — for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Why? because they are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh: they have verily been a part of him from all eternity — before he took a body of flesh and came into the world.

"Sanctified and preserved." Anything that is preserved cannot be lost. Their lives were preserved. Whose lives? the elect of God; the chosen people of God. Preserved in Jesus Christ, and called accordingly. Sanctification is received, and that which is in the child of grace is as pure as heaven itself. I like to think, my hearers, there is a work that brings you and me close enough to God, that our Saviour was not ashamed to call us his brethren. I like to think that some day, when this world is over, there will be a people in heaven that God will not be ashamed of. This is the only way there can be a people in heaven that God will not be ashamed of: He himself must prepare them for heaven. God accepts only his own work, whether it be in prayer, or in praise. Whether it be prayer or praise, he prepares what He accepts.

Justification. There must be a way which God has provided to justify his

people. No sinner has ever been justified by the works of the law. The apostle said that if there had been a law given which could have given life, righteousness would be by the law. But by the works of the law no flesh can be justified. If we offend in one point of God's law, we are guilty of the whole. But the Lord's people must be justified. There are two branches of this justification that I want to talk a little about. The word justify means to free from condemnation. We are justified by the blood of Christ; and that alone. We are freed from hell and condemnation by the blood of Christ from all things which we could not be by the law of Moses. Thank God he has a way of applying that justification to the hearts of sinners. I can't believe that God would have something for you, and not have a way of giving it to you. Can you? No, because the apostle says that we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed. God has a way of bringing his promise definitely to all the seed of Christ; and that way is called, "by grace through faith." It is of faith; that it might be by grace.

I would rather preach these things to you, than to tell you about a lot of frames and feelings; to tell you of the glorious doctrine of God: to tell you of a doctrine that will stand when the world is on fire; to tell you of a doctrine that honors and glorifies the God of heaven. Paul said that we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus, sake.

Now the other branch of justification. Paul said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." That is, when justification, which was brought about by the shedding of the blood of Christ, is applied to a sinner's heart. "Justified by faith." No other justification can do a sinner any good. We have peace with God — not a half-peace. No! but peace. Jesus said before he left the world, "My peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the

world giveth."

In justification by faith, people receive something. What do they receive? They receive the atonement of Christ. And by receiving the atonement of Christ, they joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, "by whom we have now received the atonement."

And Salvation. We call it all salvation; and it is all by virtue of the **Birth** of Christ. What! was the birth of Christ involved in this? Yes, it was. Why is the birth of Christ involved in all these glorious things I have talked to you about this morning, Because when Jesus came into the world, he must come under the law where you and I were bound; and be bound by that law too, to deliver us from its curse. His birth must be by conception of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. (This truth men are trying to overthrow: if they could overthrow this one principle of the virgin birth of Christ, they would overthrow them all.) The virgin birth of Christ, — whereas the eternal Son of God was with his Father from all eternity. But I cannot dwell upon this at this time.

In the fulness of time God sent forth his Son. He was his son before he sent him; and he was his Son when he came — made of a woman, made under the law. For what reason? to redeem his people who had fallen under the righteous law of God. To redeem them from what? from all iniquity, from all vain conversation — and that eternally. By virtue of the birth he must take in union with himself our flesh and blood. He was made like unto his brethren, with the exception of sin. As the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.

Yes, the birth has as important part in this glorious doctrine as any other part. Verily God, and verily man! As he came into the world he was the Son of God and the Son of Man. And in this glorious work there is a **Mediation**. Paul said there is one mediator between God and man. We hear priests telling that they are mediators between God and

man; but What a lie! They tell you that the virgin Mary is a mediator between God and man, when Jesus himself did not recognize his mother above any other woman. Someone came to him and said that his mother desired to speak to him. But he answered and said, "Who is my mother? . . . Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

But there is a mediation of Jesus Christ. He was bound in a covenant of grace to save his people from before the world, so that he must come on our behalf in his mediation. And he is the only one between God and man.

By virtue of the Life. The life of Christ is embodied. What kind of a life? It is a life whereby while he lived here in the world, he must honor the law — not for himself, but for you and me. He must make it an honorable law in fulfilling it to a jot and a tittle. Not only literally before men, but he could say, "I delight to do thy will, O God. I am glad he said that, aren't you? I am glad that everything the Saviour has ever performed for us, he delighted to do it. And I believe that his greatest delight will be when his people shall some day be gathered home. And I tell you, my friends, everyone for whom he shed his blood, will be there. If they were not there, it wouldn't be heaven for Jesus himself. The prophet Isaiah said, "He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

Life. The poet says, "He lived in my room, and he died in my stead." Have you ever felt that in your soul? Has it been brought to you by a living faith? Someway have you felt that you could just reach out and take hold of these blessed promises, and say they are suited to a poor sinner like me.

By virtue of his Death. Yes, death. What did Paul say about the death of Christ? "He that spared not his own Son." I can't believe that God who would not spare the dying of the only innocent person that ever lived: would not spare him the agonies of Hell itself, and all

the consequences of a broken law, would fail in any sense to save his people. "Spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. 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."

Resurrection. We do not find in the Bible about the Lord coming to raise the people from the dead; but we find that he talked about; raising the dead. The resurrection of the dead is what he talked about; and in that resurrection Christ was the first fruits of them that slept. There is established in the 15th chapter of Corinthians, that the very body of Christ that was buried and laid in the grave, arose as they had put it in the grave. It saw no corruption. God would not leave his soul in hell. He came out; and was seen of the apostles, and of about five hundred at one time; and last of all was seen of me, said Paul, as one born out of due time — who am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But he said, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Is that in your soul this morning? Do you know it? Not like I look at you, but know it inside, that what you are, or ever expect to be, is solely by the sovereign rich and reigning grace of God.

Christ arose and conquered death. He delivered us; and in that deliverance took the penalty of the law — he must receive all the penalty of a violated law, and satisfy its every demand. He went into heaven, and God crowned him with glory. The greatest crown one has ever worn was the crown of glory of our Saviour. "Crowned with honor and glory." Would he have had any honor, if he had gone to the Father, and said, "I have done all I can to save the people, but some of them I died for might be lost." If such were so, what glory would Christ have in heaven? He was crowned with honor and glory, and is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high.

There he is today, my hearers; and he appears in the presence of God. He is not an intangible spirit in heaven. The one whose hands were nailed to the cross; the one whose side was torn, is in heaven. His very appearance there is all the mediation a sinner needs, because Jesus said to his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

(The above was a sermon by Elder Spangler at the Pigg River Association in August, 1967, taken from a tape. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING — 1967

(Written by C. Walter Norman)

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session at the Mount Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, Wednesday and Thursday, October, 11th and 12th, 1967, to the Churches composing the same, and to the Associations with which we correspond, sends Christian Greetings.

Dear Brethren:

We desire to thank the Lord of all grace that it is our privilege to once more meet in associated capacity and hear the goodness and mercy of God's Grace; and it is our custom to write something in the way of a Circular Letter. I find that my mind is a blank, at this time, on Spiritual matters, and I know not where to begin.

In Hebrews, 13th chapter, 1st verse, we find: "Let brotherly love continue"; and in Romans, 12th chapter, 9th verse: "Let love be without dissimulation, abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." The meaning of the word LET is to permit, to allow, to suffer, to give leave or power by a positive act; not to hinder, etc. God, in the creation of the world, used, for the first time in creation, the word LET. He said, "Let there be light; and there was light," showing, by this, that His word is Power, for He speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. Hence, then, the word LET is more a

command than a permit. In natural creation, God commanded light to come forth out of darkness; also, in spiritual creation, He did the same. Paul, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, said, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In the first creation: "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light and there was light." (Genesis 1st chapter, verses two and three.)

Dear brethren, we were all darkness and had no light until God commanded the Light to shine into the dark recesses of our hearts, and gave us the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ; who is our All in All. For this cause, "Let brotherly love continue."

In the 133 Psalm, David says, "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Unity is oneness; two in one, Christ and his bride (the Church) made one; I in you and you in me; Christ in you, the hope of Glory. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." We believe in the Vital Unity of Christ and the Church. May we, therefore, endeavor to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us not get too highminded, and become puffed up with worldly pride, and feel to exalt self like the Pharisees did of old, for our Saviour has said: "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and, he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted." (Matthew 23rd chapter, 12th verse.)

May peace, love, and fellowship abound in our hearts; and we pray that we may be kept by the Almighty Power of God, through Faith, unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Our Saviour hath said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is our Fa-

ther glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." (John 15th chapter, 7 to 9th verses)

Now brethren, we conclude by giving all praise to the King, eternal, immortal, invisible; the only wise God, to whom be Honor and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CHURCH LETTER TO ASSOCIATION

In the name of her Lord Jesus Christ, the Salisbury Church greets her sister churches of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session at the church house in Salisbury, Maryland, on Wednesday and Thursday, October 18 and 19, 1967:

Beloved Brethren:

It is joyous to meet once more with you, our visitors and our ministering brethren, to hear the gospel proclaimed and to speak among ourselves the unsearchable riches of Christ. May His Spirit pervade the atmosphere of this meeting, to the end that we be drawn closer to Him and thereby to one another.

The mind of the writer was captivated recently by a part of the third verse of Hebrews One, which states: "When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," The subject is, of course, the Man, Christ Jesus, who had gone to Calvary's cross, bearing in His own holy body every sin of every object of God's sovereign electing grace through all the ages of time. By His perfect obedience, He had paid the penalty for our disobedience; He had died, the just for the unjust; He had arisen, triumphant over death and the power of hell; He had gone back to heaven, there to take His seat at the Father's right hand. And He sat down! Not because He was discouraged by fruitless effort; not because He was wearied by the mighty works He had performed or exhausted by the terrible agony He had endured. but be-

cause He had finished the work He had covenanted with His Father to do. Moreover, He sat down because He was completely and forever satisfied with the results of His great work and agony. Though we might give our very bodies to be burned for the cause of Christ, we could never be satisfied with what we had done. But this Man was satisfied — He was satisfied with the bride whom He had redeemed. Solomon, speaking for the elect of all ages, said, "I am black, but comely." As we look within ourselves, we see only the blackness of sin, but our Blessed Redeemer, beholding us cleansed in His own blood and clothed in His own righteousness, tells us tenderly "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." And she is satisfied with Him! Drawn to Him by His great love for her, their desire is mutual, and although she inhabits a strange land and dwells among a strange people, her eyes are fixed upon Zion, expectantly and longingly awaiting the return of Him on whose vesture and on whose thigh a name is written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This Beloved is that Blessed Hope which we not yet see, but wait for. It is our only hope, as all around us we see the crumbling walls of a rapidly dying dispensation, yet without surprise or alarm, for the promise is sure that "He tarry." Surely, surely, the answering who shall come, will come and not prayer of every world-weary, footsore pilgrim must be, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Let us comfort one another with the assurance of this Blessed Hope until He comes.

Our meetings on the first and fifth Sundays each month are reasonably well attended. We feel greatly blest to have our beloved pastor and his assistant, Elders D. V. Spangler and Elder W. D. Griffin, respectively, who, faithful and true to their calling, walk softly before their God and humbly before their brethren, preaching boldly but with godly fear, Jesus Christ, crucified, buried, arisen, ascended and seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

We of Salisbury are few in number,

but hope we are living together in harmony and in fellowship and love with you, our dear Sister Churches.

Submitted in love and fellowship.
 Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor
 Elder W. D. Griffin, Assistant Pastor
 Maude T. Laws, Clerk
 Written by Sister Mildred Dykes

THE FATALIST POINT OF VIEW

We believe and rejoice in the doctrine of the Predestination of all things. Yet, our mind has been led to mention an error that Satan has brought into the minds of a few; and may we be given to take heed to ourselves.

"The Fatalist Point of View": Satan uses truth in bringing forth this error. Predestination is advocated in such a way that the growing idea is that man is justified in hiding his wickedness or blaming his sins on the sovereignty of God.

The "Fatalist Point of View" is an error of *Satan* to lull the Children of God to sleep. It is to dull or harden the conscience, and to charge God with our sins. The scheme is to give excuses as these: "I couldn't help it. I had to do this because God purposed it." These thoughts derive from Satan, and the motive is to justify one for his wrongdoings, instead of grieving and repenting over them.

The effects of this is to lull the church to sleep, and thereby causing a coldness, indifference, etc. This is to discourage prayers and supplications, and soul exercises. It is to discourage the yearnings for a closer walk with God, the longing for His presence, and for His sweet visitations. This error is to discourage the reading of the scriptures, and seeking the Lord in prayer. It is to discourage ones to come into the Church. The error is to lull them to sleep (meaning the ones who have a work of Grace in their hearts) and make them satisfied with being on the outside, and not desire a home with the Brethren. In other words, it is to dis-

courage them in: "Go home to your friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done for you."

This error is to encourage the — "being at ease in Zion." Here is the prevailing attitude: "If God meant for me to do this or that, then I'll do it." This is the same principle as a farmer sitting down and saying: "If God meant for me to have a good crop, then I'll have it. Therefore I am not going to work it."

We quote from Philpot: "Now Satan can make use of truth in the Church of God to induce his own errors, and often makes use of one truth to subvert another truth. Satan is a cunning artificier; he uses no rotten levers when he wants to overthrow a building, but he will select the strongest and largest and most powerful he can possibly wield. And I have been astonished sometimes, to see how Satan, that crafty magician, that wonderful mechanic, can make use of one lever of one truth to overthrow another truth, how he can *bring forward doctrine to upset experience*, how he can *bring forward doctrine to upset practice*, and how he can employ one part of God's word to upset another part of God's word." (*Selected Sermons*, by J. C. Philpot, pg. 99)

Satan uses truth. The truth is that God has purposed all things, and that God has predestinated all things that come to pass. Let us assume that one is overtaken in a fault, or one has committed a grievous sin.

Suppose Satan creeps in and drops thoughts like this in his mind: "What is the use of you grieving? It had to happen anyway. Doesn't the scripture say, '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.' (Rom. 8:28) You had to do this because God has purposed it. Now, if God had not purposed it, then you would not have done it. Now, if God had purpose it, and you had not done it, then the decree, predestination, and counsel of God would be upset. Therefore, it had to happen

and it couldn't be any other way."

Dear one, do you not see in the thoughts mentioned above that Satan uses truth to inject error? What do thoughts as this tend to do? They tend to dull and harden the conscience, and cause one to use predestination as a cloak for his sins.

Let us examine Peter's case in his denial of Jesus. An important lesson is taught in the scriptures concerning this situation. Peter had to be taught that he was not his own keeper, and that he could not stand and fight the battle on his own strength. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; *my God, my strength*, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for *they were too strong for me.*" (Psalm 18:2, 17)

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples." (Matt. 26:33-35) Peter meant well, but he was quite boastful, especially in this expression: "*yet will I never be offended.*" He did not say, the Lord being my strength, I will not deny thee. He had to be brought down and humbly say as David: "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from *whence cometh my help.*" (Psalms 121:1) ". . . wilt not thou *deliver my feet from falling*, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" (Psalm 56:13) Therefore, Peter had to be shown that unless we are kept by the power of God, we will all fall by the wayside.

After the third denial of Jesus, the cock crew, and the Lord looked upon Peter, and Peter wept bitterly. (see Luke 22:61-62) He did the very thing which he said he wouldn't do, and this grieved him at his heart.

Let us assume that Satan had dropped thoughts like this in Peter's mind: "What is the use of grieving? You did exactly what Jesus told you that you would do. If you had not denied Jesus, then you would make him a liar. You could not help from denying Jesus, because God had purposed it." Maybe Peter was tempted with thoughts as this. If so, then God delivered him from them, because he wept bitterly and repented. "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:32)

If Peter had not repented, and was overcome by Satan's temptation, he probably would have excused his denial of Jesus by justifying himself, and charging his sin to the predestination of God. But, this was not the case.

If one is guilty of absenting himself from the meetings, and not taking heed to this exhortation: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching," (Hebrews 10:25) he may excuse himself by saying such as this: "God predestinated me to miss the meetings, because I wasn't there. If God had purposed me to be at the meeting, then I would have been there." Dear friends, do you not see that such expressions as this are dishonor to this Holy God? It is erroneous to attempt to hide one's sins behind the predestination of God. God is an allwise, holy God, He does not force one to sin. (Read James 1:13-15 and 1 Cor. 14:33)

Suppose a farmer plants his seed, does not work the crop, sits down and says this: "There is not any use of me getting out the weeds, grass, etc., because if God meant for me to have a good crop, then I will have it." Now, what do you call this? Is this fatalism?

Let us consider this expression: "Peter could have kept from denying Christ." An expression as this leaves the thought that Peter had the ability and strength to travel on his own, and

that he could keep himself if he so desired to. This does not coincide with Paul's experience: ". . . for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." (Romans 7:18) In another place we read, "Who are kept by the power of God . . ." (1 Peter 1:5)

But, we must be careful of our answer. In fact, we hear this expression: "If it be true that Peter could have kept from denying Christ, this would make Christ a liar." We must admit there is truth in this remark, but look where it leads us. It leads us to the doctrine of charging our sins to God. We also hear this: "Peter had to deny Christ. He couldn't help it, and God decreed that he would deny Christ and it couldn't be any other way." There is truth in all expressions, but they all give the idea that Peter had every reason to charge his denial of Jesus to the predestination of God.

We hear expressions as these: "Man cannot control his thoughts; therefore he cannot help what he is thinking about." This scripture is quoted in reference to such says: "Thou understandest my thought afar off. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." (Psalm 139:2, 4) That is true, but look at the trap Satan is setting. Satan quotes this: "The thoughts of foolishness is sin." (Prov. 24:9) One's alibi is (through the influence of Satan): "I do not feel bad about having this foolish thought. I could not help it. In fact, God put it in my mind. If God so desired, he could have kept that thought from entering into my mind."

My friends, do you see how Satan brings forth truth to slip in his errors? It is man that sins, and who is man to attempt to charge his sins to the decree of God? "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (1 Cor. 14:33) "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted,

when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." (James 1:13-14)

Remember, predestination is not caustive. One Elder made this beautiful picture: "The blueprint does not build the house, neither does predestination save a soul."

We hear expressions as this: "Adam sinned because he had to. He sinned because he could not help it. Man sins because God purposed it, and it cannot be any other way. If man could keep from sinning, this would make the decree of God null and void." As we mentioned before, Satan uses truth to inject his errors. The truth is that God has purposed all things, and decreed all things before the foundation of the world, and all things must come to pass as God has purposed it, and they cannot fail to come to pass. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9)

The expressions mentioned above are all true, and no logical argument can be given except: Satan uses these truths to induce the error of hiding one's sins behind the predestination of God, and thereby hardened one's conscience. In fact, the thought is that one is just in blaming his shortcomings to the decree of God. Such expressions as these leave the sentiment that Adam had every reason to blame his fall to the foreknowledge of God. In short, the motive of Satan is to bring forth doctrine in a careless way in order to upset practice.

As the Lord blesses us, let us consider David's prayer in the 51st chapter of Psalms: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is over before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou

speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." (Psalm 51:1-4) Notice that David acknowledged he had sinned. He was under conviction, and he was grieving over his sins. He could not have prayed a prayer as this if he was trying to blame his grievous sin to the counsel of God.

He uses the expression: "my sin is ever before me." It is "I" that have sinned. He acknowledges that God is just, and that he is unjust.

Consider your own experience, dear friends. Have you been brought to the place to realize that you have sinned and come short of the glory of God? You know that it is your sins which have grieved you, and that you do not dare to attempt to hide your sins behind the predestination of God, because you know that God is just and holy and good.

If you have the fear of God, then you hate the sins that cause you to mourn. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride and arrogancy, and the froward mouth, do I hate." Proverbs 8:13)

God is a just and holy God, and who is man to charge God with injustice? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" (Rom. 9:20)

God has a purpose in all things, and it behooves us to consider the revealed will of God, and not attempt to probe into the secret things of God. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deut. 29:29) "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, *intruding into those things which he hath not seen*, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." (Colossians 2:18) It is one of Satan's means to tempt the Servant of God to speculate upon things which have not been revealed unto him.

Oh! may we be given to pray as David: "Lord make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what

it is; *that I may know how frail I am.*" (Psalm 39:4)

May we be given to cry as Solomon did: "Draw me, we will run after thee." And, as Ephraim: ". . . turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God." (Jer. 31:18)

May we be given to yearn for a closer walk with God. "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:1-2) "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm 42:1-2)

Oh! may we pray that the Lord will bring us with prayers and supplications. (see Jer. 31:9) May we be given to seek those things which are above, and to follow this exhortation: ". . . 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; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

May the Lord enable us to advocate the truth in the spirit of love, and keep us from falling into the error of seeking to please man. We realize that when the truth is proclaimed in its purity, opposition will arise.

May the Lord enable us to be careful in handling predestination. "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." (Ecclesiastes 12:10)

We trust that God has directed our thoughts, and that He will bless what is written for the edification of the readers.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

EXPERIENCE

2059-A Oak Ridge Dr.,
Charleston, W. Va. 25311

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I feel to know you well, though have not met you in the flesh. My brother, B. K. Smith, has expressed his much love for you in my presence many times. I am often made to consider the love that flows from breast to breast. What a mystery! a wonderful mystery that only our God is able to bring about. Bud and family are in California now with our family. Our parents, brother and two sisters are there. He is very near and dear to my heart, I hope in spirit as well as flesh.

I have often had much desire to write some of my experience to the Signs, yet am unworthy of anyone's time and thoughts, and have many doubts and fears. But, you know, when one tastes a little grace they want to shout to the world, and their doubts and fears are set aside for a little while. We often complain, but God knows best for each of us, and has everything fixed and prepared from the beginning.

Others have often expressed my feelings much better than I could; but the desire to write has been with me about three years and more. Sometime in 1952 I dreamed the world was coming to an end, and everything was on fire. I was frightened, but looked and behold a narrow path was opened up for me — a way to escape the flames. This is as clear to me now as it was at the time I dreamed it. I believe that all my life I have had a fear of God ever with me. When I was in the 7th grade, the girls in class with me and I would take our Testaments to school, and during lunch time would go to the hill to hold church. We would try to sing and pray, and one would try to preach; which I never could. I was scared, for I felt it was a mockery, and God was watching us.

In 1963 I was carrying my fourth child not yet born, and I thought I was going to die. It was so strong on me that I thought it would be in childbirth.

When the baby was born, I thought, not yet but it is yet to come. I would see myself to be the worst of all mankind. I tried to get better, for I felt no good to anyone. The more I tried the worse condition I found myself to be in. This all stayed with me and I was most miserable. One of my sons got sick with a kidney infection, and I prayed God to make him well and cure his condition, and I would go to church. That seemed to come as an order, and I answered, "I will." I was struck dumb, for I hadn't even thought of church — I never wanted to be associated with any religion. I had been to a lot of Old Baptist meetings with Mom and Dad when I was a child, and always felt that the Old Baptists were God's people; but not me, Oh, not me: no one is vile and unworthy as I.

To go on, I had a picture on the wall entitled, The Lords Last Supper, supposed to be a painting of Jesus and his disciples. I had had the picture for several years, and it had never bothered me one way or another. Now I could not bear to look at it, for when I did, my thoughts would be, That's not Jesus, that is a painted image: ears that hear not, eyes that see not, and a mouth that cannot speak. I was fearful for having it in my house, and told my husband that it had to go; and go it did.

I sat up all hours of the night reading my Bible, and could hardly lay it down. When I did, everytime I walked by, it seemed to say, Come and read. My eyes would draw to it, and I tried to keep from picking it up; but that didn't work.

The doctor said my son had a remarkable recovery. He said it was wonderful that we had kept him quiet long enough, and the medication had been just right. All I could think of was, "Thank God," for I believe his hand was in the matter. Then I got scared, I had to go to church somewhere: and I knew I had to go,

even if just once. Where will I go? O Lord, if it is only the desire of the flesh, I can go anywhere and be satisfied. O where shall I go? For several nights I had a vision: a group of people singing. I didn't see their faces, but still I knew them; and I wanted to sing with them.

O, I was so alone! I felt as a worm of the dust, but wanted to be with those people. I prayed God to have mercy on this vile sinner. It hit me like a blow, and I couldn't be satisfied just anywhere. But where, I did not know. I was covered with a veil: I felt it on me and could not get out: and I was smothering. Then a presence came into the room, like a spirit; and I knew it was the Lord. The veil was lifted from me, and I saw this people again; but this time there was one face, which I recognized as our dear departed Elder Lane.

I knew from that moment where I had to go. My whole being was rejoicing, and I sang songs I never knew before. I wanted to tell the world, and shout with rejoicing. I saw myself before these people bowed down and ashamed to lift my head, but telling them how I felt and knowing I was unworthy to be with them; and praying God for mercy. During the February meeting I had told Mom how I felt, and where I had to go. On Saturday evening mother called, but I said, No Mom, I don't think I will go. At 3 AM Sunday morning, I was up getting ready to go to church, as I thought. I tried to call Dad from that time until late in the morning — when I would reach for the phone, my hand wouldn't pick it up. I went on this way until March 8th, when they took me in the Church, and I was baptized April 12, 1964. Sweet, sweet peace was with me for awhile.

God has called our pastor from our midst, as many know. I loved him greatly in the bonds of Christian love, and feel he was a called servant of God, and filled his place among the inhabitants of the earth. I feel that the love and grace of God is all we need. The Apostle Paul was told, "My grace is sufficient for thee." My desire is to meet with the brethren, for the Lord said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." What more could we ask for? What more do we need? He knows our very thoughts and needs. I hope I love all that God has given me to love, for charity is the greatest of the three: Faith, Hope and Charity.

In bonds of love,
Nancy Clay

Danville, Virginia December, 1967

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EDITORIAL

ZECHARIAH 4:11-14

"The two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

The prophet Zechariah is usually called one of the minor prophets, as though his testimony is of less importance than some others, but that is not so. In this chapter we see a prince, Zerubbabel, a type of Jesus Christ who was also a Prince of the House of David, one who laid the foundation of the temple, and also brought forth "the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Zechariah 4:7. The prophet, when wakened out of his sleep, saw a candlestick all of gold and seven lamps thereon, and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side and the other on the left side. The angel that talked with the prophet asked him if he understood what these things were, and he answered, "No, my Lord." Verse eleven begins with the prophet asking, "What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?" He also asked, "What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?" Again the angel questions him, saying, "Knowest thou not what these be?" and he said, "No, my Lord."

Turning to the New Testament, we find in Mark 9, "After six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. — And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus." How did these three disciples know Moses and Elias but by revelation? John the Baptist, the last of the prophets, said, "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." John 1:33. We believe that by the same Holy Spirit those three Apostles saw Moses and Elias, THE TWO WITNESSES, standing by the Lord of the whole earth. Our view thereof is that the first is Moses, who personifies the Law, of whom Paul in Hebrews tells "was faithful in all his house as a servant for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." Everything he did was according to the pattern that he saw in the mount. Moses died before Israel entered into the land of Canaan. The Lord buried him, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. When he died, his eyes were not dim, nor his natural force abated, which suggests to us that the Law, no matter how old it is, is still as strong as when it was first given by the hand of Moses.

Elias is the Greek for Elijah, and we are told that Elijah did not die but was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Elijah personifies the prophets, who all spake of Jesus, his sufferings and the glory that should follow, and who, like Daniel, were to stand in their lot to the end of their days. The golden candlestick was the light of the old dispensation, and standing on the right and on the left were the Law and the Prophets. They had their place in a worldly sanctuary, which was a shadow of a better and more enduring substance.

The olive tree was an evergreen tree

to which the people of the Eastern lands looked for its fruit, which, when ripe, was used to produce the olive oil which was so needful for them in their every day life; and when the olive failed, it was a calamity, as suggested in Habakkuk 3:17. Gold, in the Old Testament, was used to set forth the Godhead. The ark, with its mercy-seat, the table of shewbread and the golden altar, were made of wood, a type of the manhood of Jesus, and were overlaid with gold, a type of the Godhead. The golden pipes therefore carry the thought that it was a God-ordained way that their testimony should come, the oil a type of the Holy Ghost, the pipes setting forth a perfect channel, that not a drop could be wasted, i.e. not a word of their testimony could fall to the ground. How wonderfully their testimony came to pass: Isaiah, speaking of the perfection of those golden pipes, said, "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." These two witnesses, as ministering spirits, testified in types and shadows to the fathers. Some were given to feel and know the preciousness of that oil, for our Lord told the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." The Son of God and the Holy Ghost were the only two GOLDEN channels through which the oil of joy for mourning could then, as now, be known and left in their souls.

These two witnesses stood by our Lord, who is the Lord of the whole earth, as we have said. We see this in the Mount of Transfiguration, where stood Moses and Elias as witnesses, yet the glory of Jesus our Lord eclipsed their glory, and the three disciples, when they came to themselves, saw none but Jesus. In the account given in

Luke 9:28-36, we are told that Moses and Elias appeared in glory and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Peter was for building three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. "While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

From his advent into the world to his death of Calvary's cross, those two witnesses stood by, proving that their testimony was true, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which was the golden oil that proceeded from them and moved them to testify of Jesus, his sufferings and the glory that should follow. From the time that Israel became a nation, these two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth, and when Jesus came, they had foretold that a virgin should conceive and bear a Son, and that he would be a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel.

During the three and a half years of his ministry, in which he showed by his wonderful miracles that he was the one of whom these two witnesses had testified, yet so debased were the Priests and the Levites, that they would have none of his counsel and despised his reproof. Moses and the prophets were read, sacrifices were made, but their worship was a dead formalism. They replaced Moses with the traditions of the elders. Jesus said unto them, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." He then shows how full the prophet Isaiah stood by him. "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias proph-

esy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:3-9.

It is the mind of the writer of this article that these two witnesses are those spoken of in the eleventh chapter of Revelation. In the parable of the talents, Matthew 25:15, Judas was given the talent of carrying the bag, but he buried it in the earth, he was a thief. His talent was given to Paul, who faithfully carried what the brethren could give, up to the afflicted brethren in Jerusalem. 1 Corinthians 16:2-3. The Jewish nation buried their talent in the earth, they saw nothing more than a ritual that was pleasing to the eye. It can be said that their talent was given to John, who saw, when in the Spirit on the Lord's day, "seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man." Thus in what the Jews buried in the earth, John, in the Spirit, saw the perfect number of the churches which are the ground and pillar of the truth.

In Revelation 10:8-11, John received from the angel a little book. The angel told him, "Take it and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." John must come into the fellowship of those two witnesses as they also came through great tribulation. Ezekiel was given a roll of a book to eat, and there was written therein lamentations and mourning and woe. "So I opened my mouth and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it: and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness." Ezekiel 3:2-3. The witnesses certainly prophesied in sackcloth amongst a wicked and rebellious Israel. John describes the witnesses and what they could do, and gives the same honour and placing as the angel did in the

vision of Zechariah, which is the subject of this article, for we believe that they are the same two witnesses. Read of Moses in Numbers 16:28-35, and see what happened to Korah, Dathan and Abiram and their followers. Did not Moses in Egypt turn water into blood and smite the earth with plagues? Read of Elijah the Tishbite, who appeared before King Ahab, a wicked king, and said, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." 1 Kings 17:1. Did not Elijah, in 2 Kings 1:9-10, command fire to come down from heaven and consume those sent by the king to arrest him?

"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." Revelation 11:4-6. These two witnesses stood firm in their testimony, as Daniel did, who was told by the angel, "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Daniel 12:13.

The wickedness of Israel increased, and when our Lord appeared, Satan had so blinded their minds that the wonderful testimony of both these witnesses was ignored. During the three and a half years of our Lord's public ministry, he, being the substance, the types and shadows ceased, and the two witnesses lay dead in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Revelation 11:8. The people saw their bodies, which, to our mind, means that they, in their love of tradition, read their words but believed them not, as now the Bible is in every pulpit, but who believes what it says?

After three and a half years our Lord

was crucified, and on the first day of the week he appeared to the two brethren on their Emmaus journey, chiding them for their unbelief, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at MOSES and all the PROPHETS, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:25-27. Thus these two witnesses were caught up into the gospel heaven. Our Lord put life and meaning into their testimony so that from then on they were as lights from afar to the Church of the living God. When they ascended from under the Law to the Gospel Heaven they ascended in a cloud, a cloud of witnesses. Paul, in Hebrews 11, tells who were in that cloud, and in chapter 12 he begins, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us (the sin of unbelief) and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Our Lord, as our High Priest, is in the Holy place of Heaven itself, and the Gentiles are given the outer court. To the Jew, Moses and the Prophets are still prophesying in sackcloth. The outer court John was not to measure with his reed for it is given to the Gentiles for a set time. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Romans 11:25. To this day they read Moses and the prophets but see not that they testified of Jesus the Son of David. The judgments that Moses pronounced upon their disobedience have been meted out to the full, the mercies that are promised them in Ezekiel from chapter 37 are yet to come.

So completely to John the Apostle was the sight of Jerusalem above given, that in Revelation 12 he describes her

as clothed with the sun, and the twelve apostles as stars in her crown and the moon (the Law) under her feet. She was ready to bring forth a man child (Jesus) who should rule the nations with a rod of iron. The dragon (Herod) stood ready to slay the man child as soon as it was born. Matthew 2:16. The child was caught up to God and to his throne. The Church, spoken of as the woman, fled into the wilderness, that is, among the Gentiles, "Where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Revelation 12:6. Our Lord's ministry was three and a half years or forty-two months, a limited time, which is also set forth by the twelve hundred and forty days. How soon the church will cease among the Gentiles is in the hands of the Lord.

G. R.

(Having a request for someone to write concerning the two witnesses mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, we republish the above editorial by Elder Ruston. We feel that all of our readers will be much interested in the subject. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ORDER

"Let all things be done decently and in order." — 1 Cor. 14:40

In the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, the law of Christ amply provides for everything requisite to the maintenance of that perfect harmony which drew from the psalmist the admiring expression, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" When this law is observed, and the spirit of it prevails among the saints, there can be no schism in the body. No carnality can find a place, no jealousy can work its insidious way, nor can wrath or bitterness engender strifes and divisions among brethren when this law is recognized as the rule of

supreme authority among the saints; nor will it be felt by them as a galling yoke of bondage, but rather as it rules in them its sweet power is felt as the perfect law of liberty. Led by it, they experience unspeakable peace causing them to exclaim in spirit, "O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

The joy of those whose conduct and conversation are ordered in conformity to this divine commandment, is such as can never be experienced by any who are not led by the spirit of God to deny every selfish emotion, and walk in newness of life. No other rule or principle can yield such comfort and rest as is found by the saints who take the yoke of Jesus; in keeping his statutes their heart is rejoiced, and they receive the great reward of which David sings in the nineteenth Psalm. Every saint desires this joyful rest, and feels the want of it as a grievous burden, causing that groaning spoken of by Paul, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."— (2 Cor. 5:4)

In the inspired record is given the perfect law which bears the seal of our loving Lord, by which the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto good works. Here is every needful instruction for every case which can ever arise. When anything is apparently needed which is not herein given, the defect is not in the rule, but in our darkened understanding; and even for this condition it is directed, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) Hence it is evident that the direction in regard to the order to be observed in the church is to be understood in the light of revelation, and not as finite reason might interpret it.

Pre-eminent in importance, as well as in the divinely ordained order of the organized church of our Lord Jesus, is his royal authority as our Judge, our

Lawgiver, and our King, who alone will save us. No law is to be received from any authority but his; no other judgment binds us; to no other power do we owe allegiance. Whenever this is forgotten, there is a departure from that decent order which he has enjoined. Nor is his contempt of his authority atoned for when we substitute "a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels;" that is, when we render a ready obedience to the teaching or practices of esteemed ministers or fathers. This is additional departure from the order established by the law of our King, when such teachings or practices are without the divine authority. With that authority, they demand obedience by all our allegiance to our Lord, and it is to him that such obedience is rendered. It is enjoined upon all the saints to hear him in all things, and to render reverent and implicit obedience to him in all things. (Luke 9:35; Acts 3:22) Observance of this rule will insure that all things be done decently and in order.

The order of the typical dispensation, as given by Moses, consisted in the faithful compliance of the natural Israelites with external forms and ceremonies required of them by that law which God gave to them. The Israelite who obeyed in the letter all those requirements was justified by that law, though he might be ignorant of the typical significance of the rites performed, as was Saul of Tarsus. But in the gospel church the saints are justified freely by grace from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. (Romans 3:24; Acts 8:39) By the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus the subjects of the grace of God are made free from the law of sin and death; yet they are not without law to God, but under law to Christ. This law in their heart produces that love for holiness and hatred to sin, which causes them to long for deliverance from the bondage of sin, and conformity to the righteousness of God as revealed in their great Redeemer. Under the guidance of this principle they can deny self, and honest-

ly pray that the will of God be done in all things. Now their desire is to know their duty, and they feel that it would indeed be their highest privilege to obey every command of their precious Savior. His word is addressed to such as are in this state, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." His example is full of heavenly beauty to them, and they desire to follow in the ordinance of baptism. The beauty of the Lord, as manifested in his house, enraptures them, and their one desire is ever to dwell in the enjoyment of the delights of the sanctuary. This desire can be gratified only in the observance of the order which the Lord has established. In obedience to his law rest is found which can be found in no other way. The tempter and carnal reason may suggest some other way as preferable to the order of the narrow way which he has marked out; but all such departures from his authorized order will invariably end in the ways of death to all comfort and peace. Strict obedience is the order of the kingdom of Jesus, and therein alone is safety.

In the visible organization of the church the law of perfect order is established by the divine rule, and in conformity to it alone can the beauty of the Lord be manifested. When human inventions and the traditions of men are allowed to usurp the place of the order which our King has given, the consequence will always be found in strife, jealousies, variance, and perhaps even enmity among those who should love one another with a pure heart fervently. These hateful developments never can result from the peaceful order of the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. When such things exist it is safe to conclude that the rebuke is applicable as recorded by inspiration. (James 4) Severe as is the language of the apostle in this rebuke, let it not be forgotten that it is written alone "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad," whom the apostle addresses as his brethren, having the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet by their violation of the order enjoined in the house of the

Lord they brought upon themselves this just rebuke. How important, therefore, that we heed the admonition, and examine ourselves. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1) Surely, when a church professing to hold the simplicity of the doctrine of salvation by grace, is divided and torn by dissension among its own members, there is some carnal and selfish cause which produces the discord. Then well may we pray with David, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults; keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins." (Psa. 14: 12, 13)

The order of the church consists not in any mere external forms or ceremonial rites, but in the spirit of love to the Lord and to one another. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Then the order of this spiritual house must consist in something more than a mere formal observance of duties which may be laid down in rules written on paper. The law of Christ must be in the heart, and the spirit of Christ must direct every act of obedience in those who follow him in the order he has appointed. So Paul exhorts the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, to "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure." Nothing is to be done in this work but what the word of the Lord enjoins. Anything else would fail to declare his praise, and could not therefore be his works, since it is written, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." (Psalm 145:10) The love of God in the hearts of his children will be manifested in causing them to love one another with a pure heart fervently; and therein God is glorified, because that love is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 8:10) "Love is of God." (John 4:7) This is the spirit in which every action must

be performed to be in the order which the Lord has commanded. In this spirit every action is in order; without love, all is out of order. Even though the letter of the law of Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, may have been followed in every particular in a case, instead of being in order, it is at best but mockery, if the motive for action was anything but that love which seeks only the glory of God and the good of the saints. How inexpressibly beautiful do the courts of Zion appear when the saints walk in this heavenly order, and have the same care one for another! Then indeed it is manifest that we are members one of another. "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now (in this perfect order) ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (I Cor. 12: 26, 27)

For the practical development of this perfect order which the Lord has ordained in his church, it is the duty and privilege of all who are led by the spirit of God to embrace every opportunity for assembling themselves to commune together in spirit, to speak, teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs; and whatsoever they do, all should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. For this purpose, as many as are so located as to render it practicable should be united in churches, as is in the pattern given in the apostolic age. Each of these churches should meet as often as practicable for social worship in prayer and singing to the praise of their Lord, as the example is given in the New Testament; and in such meetings such public gifts as the Lord has bestowed should be brought into service for the mutual benefit of the whole body of the church.

The order of this service is prescribed by the inspired rule, as recorded in this chapter, I Cor. 14. But as these gifts are not all for preaching, though of the same Spirit, each should be used in its own place and order. Gifts for the ministry, as well as all other gifts, are

for the benefit of the church, and should ever be subject to the judgment and disposal of the church as directed by the spirit of Christ. But the responsibility of this judgment rests upon the church; and it is incumbent on her to judge righteously in this important matter, by the direction of the Holy Ghost, without reference to any carnal feelings or prejudice. Nor should any mistaken tenderness of natural sympathy bias their judgment to decide in any case against the light given them by the indwelling witness of the spirit of Christ. Disregard for the honesty in this particular has involved some churches in much perplexity; and in some cases other churches have suffered from the unfaithfulness of such as have acted hastily or from a wrong spirit. Such action certainly was not in order, nor did it evince a decent reverence for the solemn responsibility involved. Neither was it just to those brethren with whom the church acted thus unfaithfully.

So also is the reception of members into the fellowship of the church, order requires perfect honesty. This is due not less to the candidate applying for the judgment of the church, than to the peace and prosperity of the church; and any departure from the order of the law of Christ will result in confusion and trouble. In walking together as professed followers of Jesus, the order of conformity to his example excludes selfishness and carnality, and enjoins that the members should have the same care one for another. When this is the case the spirit of love appears, and the Lord is glorified in the body and spirit of such as walk according to the rule of the King of saints. This is the order of his kingdom. Contentions, wars and fightings among the saints are all in violation of this order; and James has told us that these come of our lusts, which war in our members. All these must be put off as belonging to the old man. "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your

mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. (Col. 3: 8 10) "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16) Nothing which is prompted by carnal selfishness is consistent with gospel order.

In the practical development of this order in the walk of the associated saints in the church, some system is required in the transaction of such business as is incident to their organization. While no special formality is enjoined in this particular, convenience and a decent regard for accuracy require that the actions of the church should be recorded for future reference. Of course such records should be correct and authentic, and in order to secure this authenticity it has been customary, when practicable, to have a clerk to record the acts of the church; and to assure that accuracy which is desirable, as well as to relieve the clerk of liability to mistakes or omissions, it is a prudent course to submit the record to the approval of the church at each meeting, when those present will be competent to judge and correct the record of their own actions. A little attention to this system in their business proceedings would save much annoying uncertainty in subsequent actions of the church. Cases have occurred wherein the memory of those who were present when the church acted in some matter has become confused, and brethren have differed as to particulars. Then an authentic record would settle the difference to the satisfaction of all concerned, and perhaps thereby much trouble might be avoided, and the minds of all be relieved of what would otherwise have excited mutual recriminations, heart-burnings and distrust. Thus even in these, which might be considered matters of minor importance in the church, it is profitable to observe the apostolic injunction to "Let all things be done decently and in order."

This law of perfect order applies to the individual conduct of every subject of our King. In the inspired rule the order of every state and circumstance which ever can arise is given, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. However it may have the appearance of good works or be approved by natural reason nothing can be profitable for the man of God which is not in order according to the test of this rule. Many things in the world may seem by the rule of carnal reason to be desirable, and to promise profit and happiness; but all aside from that which is here written will prove but vain and delusive. As pilgrims and strangers here, the saints are directed, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affections on things above not on things on the earth." (Col. 3:12)

In neglecting to follow this order many dear children of God have experienced bitter disappointment and deep sorrow; for it is the established order of the Lord in dealing with his children, that "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 4:8) "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8: 13) This order can apply to none but those who are led by the spirit of God. No others can through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, or sow to the Spirit, since none can know the things of God but by the revelation of the Spirit. This revelation teaches us that the world with all its alluring vanities, and all that pertains to its fashion or order, is to perish with the using, and passeth away. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Peter 3: 14) "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and

built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." (Col. 2: 6, 7)

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe November 1, 1881.)

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death, our brother, Willie Coleman Holley, June 1, 1967, in Memorial Hospital, Danville, Va.

Brother Holley was the son of the late John and Virginia (Jennie) Holley, born Nov. 6, 1889. He was united in marriage to Miss Les- sie Rigney, Dec. 26, 1916, who survives with the following children: Mrs. Elizabeth H. Pat- terson, Mrs. Ruth H. Parrish, H. C., and Harry W. Holley, all of Danville, Va., Herbert K. Holley, Chatham, Va., Rt. 6. One son, Ju- lian S. Holley, was killed in service February 29, 1944. Also surviving are 7 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren, three sisters and two brothers.

Brother Holley joined Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church Sept. 2, 1956, and was bap- tized by the late Elder W. R. Dodd, whom he loved dearly. He was a firm believer in salva- tion by grace, and had a sweet hope that Christ had redeemed him from all sin. The writer well remembers the times he visited Elder Dodd and they would converse on Di- vine Things. He was faithful to his profes- sion and the church's welfare as long as he lived, coming to church often times when he was not physically able. After he lost his eye- sight his daughter Elizabeth would bring him to church. He had a smile and kind word for everyone. His honesty and neighborly traits were among his many virtues.

His funeral was conducted by Elders R. S. Payne and H. W. Wray, at Wrenn-Yeatts Fun- eral Chapel, June 3, 1967, with interment in Highland Burial Park, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of his precious Saviour.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of God who doeth all things well. We, the church at Strawberry, greatly feel our loss, which is his eternal gain. We extend our love and sym- pathy to the family and may God's grace be upon all that mourn his departure. And again

BE IT RESOLVED, That this resolution be recorded in our Church Record, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publica- tion, of which a copy is to be sent to each member of the family.

Done by the order of Strawberry Church in conference Saturday, July 1, 1967.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk

J. FRANK HUDSON

It pleased the Lord to take from our midst on July 7, 1967, our good friend J. Frank Hudson at the age of 66 years, and we would desire to say with one of old, "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away, Blessed be the name of the Lord."

He was born on April 28, 1901, and was raised by his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Henry Hudson. On Dec. 22, 1934, he was married to Myrtle Holloway who survives. He is also survived by one son and three grandchildren by a former marriage.

Frank, a very dear friend of all who knew him, was not a member of the visible church but seemed to enjoy going to the meetings very much; and the writer remembers well the day before he passed away, a few of us were gathered together in a home, and he seemed to enjoy it as much as anyone else. The writer would desire to say that church records have never revealed the number of God's chosen people; and we would also desire that the Lord would be pleased to recon- cile all who knew and loved our departed friend, to feel that he had spent his appoint- ed time here, and to leave these mortal shores was his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Holloway Funeral Home, Salis- bury, Md., on July 10, 1967, and his body was laid to rest in the Forest Grove Cemetery near Parsonsburg, Md.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

MRS. MARTHA TINDELL GRIFFIN

Mrs. Martha Tindell Griffin died at her home in Dothan, Alabama, August 22, 1967 at the age of seventy-eight. She was the widow of Brother Griffin, and the following are sur- vivors: one daughter, Katrina G. Hinson; five brothers, two sisters and seven grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at the Ward-Wilson Funeral Home, with interment in Goodwater Cemetery, with Elder J. J. Collins, officiating.

and

J. L. HOOVER

J. Lem Hoover died at his home in Cypress, Florida, after a short illness on September 17, 1967. He is survived by three daughters in South Florida, and many other relatives.

Funeral arrangements were in charge of Marianna Funeral Home, with interment in Goodwater Cemetery, with Elder J. J. Collins, officiating.

Elder J. J. Collins

MRS. MAUDE YEATTS PICKERAL

Sister Maude Yeatts Pickeral, widow of the late John Thomas Pickeral, was called to her heavenly home August 17, 1967. Sister Pickeral, formerly of Gretna, had lived in Richmond, Va. several years, where she died. Born in Pittsylvania County May 10, 1890, she was the daughter of the late James and Lou Dodd Yeatts. She joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church October 8, 1938.

She leaves two daughters, Mrs. Virginia Berger and Miss Agnes Reid Pickeral, both of Richmond; and two sisters, Mrs. L. H. Motley of Richmond, and Mrs. F. L. Oakes of Clifton Forge, Va.

She was a faithful member of her church, which she attended as long as she was able, before she was stricken with a stroke a year ago. She was very humble and patient during her illness. Her two daughters so devoted to their mother, did tenderly and faithfully do all they could for her. Sister Pickeral will be greatly missed in the church, and by relatives and friends.

Funeral services were conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va., by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench; and her body was laid to rest in Gretna Burial Park, to await the glorious resurrection. May the Lord comfort her loved ones and all who mourn her passing.

Annie Tosh

ETHEL BULLOCK GOSS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom, love and mercy to remove from our midst our dear sister, Ethel Bullock Goss on July 29, 1967. She was born August 25, 1887, the daughter of T. Gideon Bullock and Eliza Stem Bullock. On December 21, 1910, she was married to L. Otha Goss. She leaves to mourn her passing her husband, who was so faithful to her; and a host of brethren and friends.

She united with Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church August 8, 1937, and proved a faithful member always filling her seat, as long as she was able. She was confined to her home for several years, but was patient in her afflictions and enjoyed so much the ministers and brethren visiting in her home, talking of

the goodness and mercy of our God. She was a great inspiration to the writer.

Her funeral was conducted Sunday afternoon, July 30, 1967, at Gooch Memorial Church by Elder Donald Smith, Elder Wallis Smith and Elder Curry King. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of the Lord.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we express our loss in her passing, and that we pray our Heavenly Father, who only can know our loss, to reconcile us to his Holy will; and be it further Resolved, That we extend our love and sympathy to Brother Goss; and Resolved thirdly, that a copy of this Obituary be spread on our church records, a copy to Brother Goss and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Church in Conference, August 12, 1967.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Brother O. Y. Clayton, Church Clerk
Written by Annie C. Gregory,
Assistant Clerk

SISTER NOMA A. PRESCOTT RHUE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from us our dear sister in Christ, Noma Prescott Rhue, the daughter of Josiah and Mary Prescott. This sister was born March 7, 1878. She was called to her eternal home August 19, 1967, making her stay on earth eighty-nine years and five months.

In the year 1897 she was married to Thomas D. Rhue, who preceded her in death August 9, 1955. They spent their entire married lives at Stella, North Carolina. Soon after her marriage she was received into the fellowship of Hadnot Primitive Baptist Church where her husband, mother and father were members. She was baptized by the late Elder E. C. Smith, having received a lively hope in Christ at an early age. She was blessed to remain a faithful member for seventy years.

The Church has lost a faithful and loving member, the children a precious and devoted mother, her neighbors a very kind friend. Her brethren were always extended a warm welcome when visiting in her home. It seemed that it was her whole life and joy to be associated with old Baptists. She dearly loved to sing the songs of Zion and hear the glorious gospel preached.

We cannot wish her back into this world to suffer, nor can we question the will of God. We read in Job 14:1, 2; "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and con-

tinueth not." We think of Sister Rhue as a beautiful flower which He planted in His Church, His mortal vineyard here. When each flower reaches maturity and blossoms forth in its beauty, adorned by His spirit that shines forth in His love, then at His appointed time, He plucks it from the garden, it is cut down, and withers away. It fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. The blessed thought is, that He transplants each one that He died for to that eternal city of love and peace, never more to know the troubles and sorrows that His people know and endure in this life, but will be with Him and forever be satisfied. May the Church, her dear children and her many friends be reconciled to the Lord's will, and each one be upheld by the same power that sustained her to the end.

Sister Rhue was given strength and patience to endure her many afflictions without complaining or murmuring. She always had a smile when greeting her friends. Nothing did her more good than when her brethren would gather around her bedside and sing, pray, and preach for her. Even when her physical condition had weakened to the point that she lost interest in all material things, she asked for and tried to help sing the old hymns she loved so dearly. Just a day or so before she departed this life, she asked for, and in a whisper helped sing: "The day is past and gone," etc.

When the end came, it was as falling asleep. She passed so gently and easily from this world of troubles and sorrows, we believe, to her eternal home of rest and peace, to await the second coming of her Lord and Master, to be called from the sleeping dust, to that city whose builder and maker is God, to ever be with Jesus.

In the midst of her brethren, a host of relatives and many dear friends, her funeral was conducted at Hadnot Creek Church by the Elders D. B. Stokes, J. T. Prescott and M. L. Simmons. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery with a large display of beautiful flowers.

She leaves to mourn her passing the following children: Jesse R. Rhue, Fayetteville, N. C.; Elder Zennie L. Rhue, Winston-Salem; Mrs. C. C. Norris, Newport, N. C.; Elder Jabez J. Rhue, Swansboro, N. C.; Mrs. John A. Weeks, Swansboro; Walter Redford Rhue, Fort Lawn, S. C.; Roy T. Rhue, Winston-Salem; and Mrs. W. P. Vinson, Swansboro. (One son, Joseph R. Rhue, died in August, 1946.) Also 22 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild. And one sister Mrs. Lena B. Key, Swansboro, N. C.

By order of the church a copy of this notice is to be entered on the church record, a copy sent to the children, to *The Signs of the Times*,

The Old Faith Contender and *Zions Landmark* for publication.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Moderator
 Vilma G. Rhue, Church Clerk

MARY ALICE KERLEY

Mary Alice Kerley, the daughter of Walter and Ellen Mizell, was born near Simpson, Illinois, on July 18, 1908, and departed this life on August 3, 1967, at the age of 59 years.

She joined the Simpson Baptist Church at an early age, and remained a faithful member throughout her life.

She was united in holy matrimony to Paul Kerley on August 4, 1929. They were happy during their life in their home in the Flatwoods community.

Her father preceded her in death, but she leaves to mourn her passing her devoted husband and beloved mother. Also surviving are seven brothers: Orlan of East Alton, Ill.; Orval and Wayne of Simpson; Clyde of Cedarville, Ill.; Herschel of Lexington, Ky.; Robert of Springfield, Ill.; and Rillis of Joliet. Two sisters also survive: Mrs. Lora Sickling of Dongola, Ill., and Mrs. Monterey Lierley of Fall City, Wash. Several nieces and nephews as well as many relatives and friends also sadly mourn the passing of their aunt and friend.

Alice was a true and faithful companion. She was devoted to her home and its duties. Her Creator endowed her with a special talent for artistic designs and the beauty of color. She used this talent to beautify not only her home, but the homes of many of her relatives and friends with countless pieces of needlework and construction. These words written by her husband are truly expressive of her life and work: "A precious one from me is gone, A vacant place is made, Her name shall forever be on the wall, And in my heart linger on."

The following lines by a poet whose name is unknown are also expressive of the life and philosophy of this departed one.

"Afraid to die? Ah, No! Not she,
 Who calmly faced this life's adversity,
 And who through life, as the setting sun,
 Could lift her eyes and say,
 'Thy will be done.'

For her death held no terrors, had no fears;
 Abiding faith sustained her through the years,

And when at last she came to cross the bar,
 Then faith in God was her guiding star."

Funeral service were conducted by Elder John H. Simpson.