

THE LONE PILGRIM

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THE LONE PILGRIM

"And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."—Heb. 11:13.

In some peculiar way, and for some reason and purpose the word "pilgrim" has been fastened on my mind, for what reason I do not know, but there is a purpose in everything under the sun, also a time and a season for all things. If this is the time and season for me to respond to the inclination of my mind then perhaps it may bear fruit, but if I am trying to hasten the season, then the frost will more than likely kill my premature attempt. The Lord knoweth, to whom be praise forever. Amen.

The above quotation is only a part of the thirteenth verse of the eleventh chapter of Paul's writings to the Hebrews, while it is true that he, a Jew, was made an apostle to the Gentiles, yet he never forgot his own people in the flesh, for he, also ourselves know that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and notwithstanding the fact that the Jews as a nation had been cut off from their own olive tree because of unbelief, which in turn causes unfruitfulness, yet there were a few that remained faithful, or in the faith, to them Paul wrote by way of exhortation and encouragement, reminding them of those holy men of old who remained true and faithful even so full of faith as to die in the faith fully believing that the God who had promised was true in all things and able to perform all his promises, even though afar off, nevertheless embraced them as true, and in so doing they became a part of a strange race of people, counted by others as queer and peculiar, and have ever been a laughing stock, an object of scorn and contempt.

In the early morn of time, Abel, by faith offered unto God the first of his

flock, a portrayal of that perfect sacrifice that was to come, which was accounted more excellent than the offering of Cain which was of the ground, the fruit of the labor of his hands, and thereby incurring Cain's displeasure, and in his jealous wrath Cain slew Abel.

This figure has run all through time and the followers of Cain and Abel still grace the stage of action. Then on down through time we have record of different ones that possessed these peculiarities that separated them from they of their own household. By faith Noah prepared an ark and this faith made him so different from other people that he was the only one that built an ark. If we may be permitted to draw on our imagination a few moments, what must the people round about him have thought of this strange work so completely different from others alone in his ideas and thoughts, he nor any other has ever had the sanction and support of the masses. Not even the majority but ever in the minority, and conspicuously so, this faith separated him from all others and made him a stranger.

God called Abraham, and it is written that "he went out not knowing whither he went," by faith he traveled on day after day, year after year, a wanderer, a stranger, a pilgrim having no fixed place of abode, while others built and possessed cities and strongholds, Abraham wandered about with his mind and desire fixed to follow the leading of God. What a peculiar man he must have seemed to other men, and Terah, his father, must have thought him a strange and ungrateful son to set out from a well provided home and many friends and become a wanderer in answer to some strange communication from an unseen being. Terah's gods were visible, tangible, and he could see what and to whom he bowed and prayed, but Abraham's God being invisible he must walk by faith, without the

which it is impossible to please God, therefore Terah could not understand Abraham, and I dare say, Abraham himself could not understand it nor give a reasonable reason for his actions, but a force, an irresistible, compelling force led him on and on, not knowing where he went, but he trusted in God, and embraced the promise believing God able and willing to perform all things promised, so much so that he staggered not at the command of God to take Isaac, his son, the one he loved most, unto a mount that would be shown him and offer him as a burnt sacrifice, believing that God was able to raise him up from the dead and fulfill his promise in him, but he was a strange man and a lone pilgrim. And Moses was another strange man, declining to be recognized as a prince in Egypt, then the richest country in the world, but chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt and forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king. He saw the promise afar off—Christ—and embraced it, but what a crazy man to throw down wealth, position and honor for something he could not see some promise to be fulfilled in the future and coming from the unseen. Yes, a strange man, and this faith, implicit faith in God makes people appear strange in the eye of the world. Then if they are strange they are strangers, and if strangers then they are pilgrims, because if they remained in one place they would become acquainted with those about them, imbibe their customs and manners and cease to be strangers, but they remain strangers, the very Son of God confessed himself such when he said, "The birds of the air have nests, the foxes have holes but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." So then I shall speak plainly and say, if you are a

Christian or a follower of Christ you are without the where to lay your head, and on the other hand, if this is your condition then you are Christ's follower, and are a stranger, a pilgrim, a lonely wanderer, sometimes by a pleasant way, a shady road with flowers here and there, and you meditate on sacred things, and find it sweet and pleasant, and forget that you are a lone pilgrim, but presently the shadow of a storm crosses your path, the sun is hidden and the tempest bursts relentlessly on your defenceless head, you are tossed about, your feet in the mire of unbelief, and doubt seizes you. Miserable then is your lot, you have no place to lay your head, no resting place, for affliction sorely tries you, but Moses, another pilgrim in this strange road, chose rather to suffer these things with the people of God—no others suffer such things—than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. At most, the pleasures of sin can only be short, but the eternal weight of joy that is ours in Christ Jesus our Lord is enduring, therefore with and by the same faith with which he endured all things for us, we press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in him through good weather and bad, esteeming the sufferings of this present time, which is not to be compared to the joy that shall be revealed in us. Greater riches than the treasures of this world, often lonely, often in doubt, often discouraged, but God has fixed our choice, and we press on ever foot sore and weary.

Now, so surely as there are such a people, just so surely is there a reason for it, and they are not the demented set of fools they are branded by the world, but are as wise as serpents, as harmless as doves, and are fellow citizens with the saints and the household of faith, followers of Christ, inheritors together with him of the kingdom of heaven.

I do not know of anything more desired by a lonely traveller than to find a companion, and it is written that God setteth the solitary, or the lonely ones, in families, and this is done, for it is God's work and He does His work Himself. You nor I can not accomplish this, we can only accomplish that which He gives us to do, which He also prepares us to do, for He prepares and fits each one

for the task designed for him, but He sets them in families, often this is done through the medium of the pen, or in some other way, it is ever in a way least expected by us. I may be ten thousand miles from home but that does not hinder me from being a member of my father's family, but it does keep me from the enjoyment of the companionship of my family, the relationship holds good and though a lonely wanderer, a stranger, and a pilgrim, there is an attachment that binds and holds us together, and though we often find ourself like unto an island at sea surrounded by a restless, relentless ocean whose angry waves continually beat about us, but did it never occur to you that even though the island may be a thousand miles at sea, clear out of sight and alone on the boundless deep yet in a hidden and unseen way it is still connected to the main land. Then we, as islands, with the turmoil of unrest all about us yet we are bound to Christ and each other through the hidden tie that binds. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love." So we travel on in this new and unseen way, like Abraham of old, by faith, because God hath chosen us to this end, that the benefit be ours and the glory be His. Preferring this rough road to the pleasure of sin for a season, you say, I am not separated from sin, I sin every hour, yea I do every minute, but do you enjoy it, do you love it, is it not a continual grief to you that you do sin? Then while it is true that you do sin, but you do not enjoy it, so you do not enjoy the pleasures of sin for it is no pleasure to you.

The natural mind—all the wisdom of the world has never grasped the smallest fragment of the truth—has absolutely no knowledge at all of the religion of Jesus Christ, of the faith of God's people. Study, research, striving, digging up the graves of ancient kings does not give man the slightest particle of knowledge concerning the hidden treasures of God's house. One of these treasures, though unseen, is most freely bestowed on certain ones whom God has before ordained should be the recipients thereof, faith, the gift of God, is not thrown out promiscuously to be gathered up by any and every one at will. All men have not

faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Well, what are you going to do about it? If you have faith you will and do please God, but they who do not have it are absolutely certain not to please him, but do you think for one moment that one who does not have faith in God, really cares whether he pleases God or not. Why should he care? Are we mindful of those in whom we have no faith? Then why should those who are void of faith strive to please a God who is not all powerful, who begs man to be saved and is disappointed when he refuses salvation. As certain as one believes that God is that sort of being just that certain he has not the faith of the Son of God—the faith of Abraham and those holy men of old—the faith of the elect of God. Is a woman, careful and attentive, trying every way to please a man in whom she has no faith nor for whom she has no love? I trow not. And if God's people did not believe in and have faith in God as being infinite, far above all principalities and powers, the Imperial Monarch, upholding all things by the word of His power, they would not be at all particular about pleasing Him neither through love nor yet through fear of punishment, absolutely no. If God has made a people that is able to reject the salvation He offers and begs them to accept, they certainly should be able to refuse to accept the damnation prepared for the wicked. If God is a being that can not save a man independent of that man, pray tell me how He can damn that man unless he wishes to be damned.

But you want to please God and you do please him because of this faith in Him—that is what faith is—it is faith in God, of His power, ability, love and mercy, etc., which He has given you for some purpose, rest assured of the fact He had a purpose in this gift of faith to you and it is not bestowed in vain, it shall be called into use and put to the test. But think not strange of the fiery trial that is to try you as though some strange thing had happened to you, and just so sure as He has granted you this faith, just so sure does it separate you from the world, makes you different, sets you apart from your friends and earthly companions. I know a man that has a wonderfully good wife

that thinks all the world of him, but she thinks without a doubt, he is one of the strangest, queerest mortals that ever lived, since he has gotten those strange and unreasonable ideas in his head. That the man is peculiar I have no doubt, but I believe he does the best he can, the fact that he can not explain nor make her understand does not help the situation any, and he has to go along alone, no one to say a word to, often times wade around in blackness that can be felt, that is oppressive, that bears down and crushes, but he can not talk a word of it to his own bosom companion, the closest earthly tie, that is what it does for people, it divides a house, it separates husband and wife—I do not mean literally—children and parents—causes one to go out and become a stranger and a pilgrim, while others in their ignorance are resting in the work of their own hands and enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season. It is only for a short time, this life at the longest is of short duration, but there are those who are wandering about with no abiding place, no work or merit to call their own, simply leaning on the staff of faith, of whom the world is not worthy, being led day by day by that irresistible power that fastens on men, women and children and will not let them go. The fact that one does remain faithful is not by reason of any merit in him, and no credit is due the creature, but all is due the Creator and preserver of our being. To all appearances the wandering pilgrim has no object in view, no place—but not so. We are not floating aimlessly about, neither is the mote in the sunbeam, but both alike are following a prescribed, predetermined channel, without the slightest variance to the right or left, up nor down, each one equally helpless, but are guided, led, compelled, drawn, filling the measure of his days according to dictated plan of God. Our finite minds can not grasp the infinite wisdom of God but that makes Him less the Supreme Sovereign that He is, and we have faith in Him, knowing he is God, and besides Him there is no other, the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Those characters of old believed the promise by reason of faith in God that the Saviour of sinners should be born

even though they often may have become weary with watching, few lived to see this verified in the flesh, and it was just as much by faith that these few recognized Jesus as the Son of God, that did see the man Christ Jesus, just as much the work of faith to believe it as it was for those who did not live to see the promise verified literally. The multitude saw and heard him but did not believe him, and to those who did believe him it became their lot to become pilgrims. Faith in God has the same effect on people in every age, clime and nation. It separated and divided in days gone by, it does the same today, it will ever do the same.

To the faithful it becomes a substance, a thing on which to hold, to lean, to depend, and were it not for faith we had sunk ago, it is the substance Paul says of things hoped for, then by faith man has hope or hopes for the reality. We most surely desire the real and by reason of this substance, faith, we expect to come at last in the full realization of our expectations. So we see that hope is composed of two principles, desire and belief. We may desire with our whole power and strength to possess a certain thing and yet have no hope of it, for we do not expect it or believe we shall receive it. Can we not recall a time when we desired above all things to find peace with God, and rest for our souls, but had no hope of it, believing the opposite of our most ardent desires, that it was not for us? On the other hand one may believe they shall receive a thing and have no desire for it. We believed once that eternal banishment from God was our lot and portion, but we certainly did not desire it, therefore we did not hope for it, but according to His will concerning us a time came when coupled with our desire for righteousness and holiness, belief came that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned our sins, since then we have hope, which is brought about by faith which to us is a substance on which we build, and do rest in this implicit faith in God that He is Sovereign, all powerful and as merciful as He is powerful, that none can turn Him nor stay His hand, having all power over all beings and things, Satan and hell included. What a wonderful Being to bestow so wondrous a

gift on mortal man. Faith, not only the substance of things hoped for but also the evidence of things not seen and is the only evidence we have, for take our faith away from us what evidence have we of anything, what assurance have we? Destroy our faith in God and to us you have destroyed God. The faith that we have is evidence that God is. I speak in reverence and Godly fear from the depth of my heart and by experience, for Satan once made me believe there was no God and tortured my soul in hell for two hours yet it seemed an eternity when God restored my faith and like unto Jonah, from the belly of hell I cried unto God who immediately heard and delivered, therefore when the evidence is gone all is gone. Our courts would be useless without evidence and would cease to function. Faith is our evidence, sufficient, but the natural mind has the wrong conception of faith as it also has of all things else pertaining to God, His work and His people, because it would seem that one possessed with faith would be a popular person among men but not so, but the opposite effect is produced by the cause and he becomes a lonely wanderer, a pilgrim, and declares, not necessarily by word of mouth but by act and deed, that he seeks a city. If there is any one on earth who do really desire and seek a permanent place of rest it is those who walk by faith. Their desire is to reach that city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. Having no desire to return to our former place and ways but "desire a better country that is a heavenly city wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city." Most surely He has prepared for them a place of rest which none may dare describe for there are no words to describe it. Paul was caught up into the third heaven and saw things unlawful to utter. Why? Because the law of language forbade its description. Have you ever been able to put into words an adequate description of some of the blessed moments that have been yours? Nor can you put into words some of the anguish of soul endured. But faith has held you thus far and will not let you go, for I am persuaded that where God begins a good work he will perform it unto the end, he

will not cease to be born and not bring forth.

"There is a path that no fowl knoweth, the vulture's eye hath not seen it, the lion's whelp hath not trodden it neither hath the fierce lion passed by it,"—the path trod by faith and alone—but see how safe, how protected and shielded from all harm, not even the keen eyed vulture has even so much as seen the path, neither hath the lion or whelp found it; no unclean bird nor beast of prey can find or touch the lone pilgrim as he treads this lonely way.

The servant of Abraham said, "And I being in the way the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren," therefore in faith and assurance we feel that we being in the way the Lord will safely lead us to the house of our Master's brethren, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and unto Him who hath done so much for us and will do infinitely more than we can ask or even think, be all praise now and when we come into that city that hath foundations which God hath prepared for us, where we shall be fully clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and go out no more but rest forever in the embrace of our dear Elder Brother who trod the wine press of God's wrath alone, the Lone Pilgrim that wandered through earth, death and hell for you and for me.

From a lone pilgrim to the lone pilgrims scattered through out the land, may peace, not as the world gives, be yours, and grace sufficient for your needs, it shall be supplied.

Unworthily yours,

F. SELBY FISHER,

Salisbury, Maryland.

DEATH—RESURRECTION

Dear Brother Wyatt:

It has been in my mind for some time to write an article for your valuable periodical, *THE LONE PILGRIM*. Of course, I cannot tell why I am thus exercised, however, I am solemnly impressed with the great subject of death and the resurrection. Although I am aware of the difficulties that are interwoven with, and cluster around this complex subject, therefore, it is with fear and trembling that

I attempt to launch out upon the great deep. While I write, I implore the special blessing of the Holy Spirit to dictate words and guide my pen. For a foundation I will invite the attention of all who may read this scribble to Job 14:14, especially the first clause, viz.: "If a man die, shall he live again?" We will first notice the little word "if" at the beginning of this passage, this little word, as I understand it, in its common acceptance introduces a conditional sentence. Sometimes we use such words as admit, allow, grant, and suppose, as synonyms in place of the word "if," and we use them interchangeably. As, for an example we might with propriety read the clause under consideration in this manner, admitting, or taking for granted that a man dies, shall he live again? The question is not, shall a man die, but shall he live again? The solemn inquiry of the patriarch was in reference to living again, not in this life, or in the flesh, but beyond the grave, in the resurrection life. The correct rendering of the text would put it in this form, as I understand it, to wit: After a man dies, shall he live again? or, shall he live again after death? This rendering would be in a positive form, while the reading of the text is in a doubtful form, and conveys the idea of a condition, and a doubt as well. Hence the question of living again is predicated upon the uncertainty of a man's dying. We must admit that such an idea is erroneous, and is, therefore, an error of the translators. There is one more instance I want to notice before I leave this line of thought, and that is the statement of the leper to the dear Saviour, which is an humble and grave confession that gushed forth from the deep recesses of his troubled heart. He worshipped Him saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole."—Matt. 8:2. Now that poor leper had a doubt in his mind, not of the power of Jesus to make him whole, but he doubted His willingness, from a deep felt sense of his unworthiness, and uncleanness. Now I have referred to this instance to show that the word "if" invariably signifies a doubt, and a condition as well. But Job did not entertain a particle of a doubt of the fact that it is the inevitable lot of all men to die, and this is apparent from

the following language from the mouth of the plaintive patriarch, to wit: "But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost and where is he? (verse 10). So man lieth down, and riseth not till the Heavens be no more. They shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep" (verse 12, ch. 14). Hence, it is apparent that the author of our text was an established believer in the resurrection and knew, of course, that all men are doomed to die, and are dying as the consequence of the violated law of God. Death is the penalty fixed by Him, "the living know that they shall die, etc. (Eccles. 9:4), and as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment."—Heb. 9:27; Gen. 2:17; 1st Cor. 15:22.

We could multiply proof texts, but it is unnecessary for it is a conceded and well known fact, that all men die and are dying, which none would dare to deny. Now since this phase of our subject is nondebtable, I will omit any further argument, and proceed to notice some of the solemn consequences of the grim monster Death, that relentless foe, the merciless tyrant, the king of terrors, and terror to kings, has from the beginning of time, the distant past to the present, been steady in its march; roaming in every country, in the great seas, in the islands of the seas, in every nook and corner of the earth, and in every dispensation; claiming as his victims monarchs and peasants, the rich and the beggar, saints and sinners, all races and all classes of men alike. It is no respecter of persons; all have died and are dying, with the exception of two, to wit: Enoch and Elijah.

All, all is gloom, murky darkness, and frightfulness; an unexplored chasm, a void space, deep and broad. When this monster stalks into our family circles or homes, and claims for its victims our friends and loved ones, and we see them locked up in the gloomy vaults of death and we with bleeding hearts and our eyes a fountain of tears, we look upon their distorted and ghastly form for the last time as they are descending into their dismal resting place (the tomb), and the scenery of the graveyard is all solitude and loneliness, no thought, no contemplation, no subject or theme can so effectually

ally dispel the gloom, drive away the melancholy and brighten up the scenery as the warrant of a triumphant and glorious resurrection life infinitely beyond the power of death into the full blaze of heavenly bliss. The solace afforded by this theme is immensely heightened by the guarantee that in that blessed resurrection life there will be no possibility of a relapse into mortality, sickness, sorrow, pain nor death.

As to the blessedness of this heavenly state we know that it is inconceivable; "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered in to the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1st Cor. 2:9.) It is with pleasing anticipation that we adopt the eloquent confession comprehended in the following stanza: "We know not, O we know not what joys await us there; what radiance of glory; what bliss beyond compare."

It was this blessed resurrection life with which the venerable patriarch (Job) was so solemnly impressed and constrained him to anxiously ask, "Shall a man live again, after death?" O, yes, poor "bruised reed" (afflicted child of God), you shall live again, in perfect felicity. Why? because a great cloud of witnesses has left on record unqualified testimony that "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." And that is the warrant that you shall "live also."

The doctrine of the resurrection is one of the basic principles of the gospel of our salvation, its importance is second to none in the entire Christian system of revealed truth. With it the whole architecture stands or falls. God in all His attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, etc., and in His decrees, and purpose in sending His beloved son into the world to suffer and die on the cross for the redemption of His chosen people is all a failure. "Our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins." The whole chain of Paul's reasoning in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Cor. is in bold defense of the resurrection of God's elect children exclusively, however, the resurrection of the unjust is clearly taught in various places of the scriptures. But there were some in the church at Corinth who positively denied the resur-

rection of the body; and it is against this negative position that Paul takes his stand, and advances an argument in the affirmative that cannot be confuted nor overthrown. He enters his solemn protest by the rejoicing which the Corinthian brethren had in Christ Jesus, the Lord. Then he proceeds to enumerate witnesses to prove that Christ actually arose from the dead; even the identical body which was crucified on the cross; and he affirms to the brethren, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures, and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time," etc., the greater part of this great array of witnesses were living at that time as Paul testifies, and therefore could have been examined, and cross examined, in reference to the proposition, but we have no evidence of such a procedure. On the other hand, if in any particular, the apostle had perjured himself, or made a false statement in the case, doubtless those witnesses would have come forth and confuted his argument or testimony. Therefore the all important fact that our Lord arose from the dead is incontestably settled, however, lest the objection make further aggression upon this precious doctrine. It would not be amiss perhaps, to call up some of the witnesses that Paul conferred with and re-examine them, together with a few others whom he did not mention, viz.: When those pious women, "It was Mary, Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James, and other women that were with them, and told these things unto the apostles."—Luke 24:10.

"They came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, and they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus," and why? Because this was the third day of his invisible state, death and hell could

no longer hold Him captive, therefore He arose, shook himself from the dust, came to the door of the sepulchre, burst it open, laid hold on Death, who stood as sentinel next to the door of the tomb, trampled him under His feet, and by main force wrenched from him his poisonous sting, that sad repository of all his strength, and as those women were perplexed there about, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. They said unto them, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

After they had returned from the sepulchre, they told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest, etc, "to whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days."—Acts 1:3. Thus He walked and talked with them, ate and drank with them, and on one occasion, during an interview with them, they supposed that they had seen a spirit, therefore were troubled, and He shewed them His hands and feet, "Handle me," He said, "and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, "Have ye here any meat? and they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb, and he took it, and did eat before them."—Luke 24.

We all know that a spirit does not eat material food, such as fish and honeycomb. Now we have the assurance that the blessed doctrine of the resurrection is established beyond all danger of a successful contradiction, for that reason, and in the same manner, is the resurrection of all the dead in Christ guaranteed for ever more.

But, to admit this negative opinion to be a fact, then as Paul concludes, "Our preaching is vain, our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins, we are found false witnesses of God, they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished, and we who are living are of all men most miserable." Why? Because, after a life time spent in misery, persecution, tribulation, crushings and bruising by the cruel hands of this wild gain saying world, together with our enemies within that perplex and harass us continually. Our expectation shall perish at the terminatio

of this life, and cannot hope for any rest from our labors and afflictions beyond the grave; let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die like the beast, and there is no more of us.

Baptism is an unmeaning ordinance to us that are baptized for the dead, or (as being dead). But just listen to Paul again, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." We also hear a voice from yonder throne of God in accents sweet and melodious "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."

"But some man will say, how are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" The apostle denominates that man as a fool who would be so skeptical as to ask such an unintelligible question, however, he proceeds to answer his question by introducing a real thing, or phenomena in nature, with which all rational, intelligent beings are familiar, and uses it as a figure to shadow forth the how and manner of the resurrection of the body. It is clear enough, that in order to a quickening or being made alive, that the seed must first fall into the ground and die, else it abideth alone (John 12:24), and the process is mysteriously effected through the agency of the enlivening and energizing rays of the sun, rain, moisture, and air, with all of its constituent elements, as oxygen, nitrogen, and other gases, all of which are necessary to the germination, and subsequent development of a seed sown in the earth, and the whole process while passing through this change is noiseless, secret and gradual; after this order, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."—Mark 4:28.

God gives to every seed his own body as it has pleased Him (1st Cor. 15:38), that is, if a man sows wheat he also reaps wheat, and so of any other grain; and that which we reap is a new crop entirely, a new body, "for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," etc. This corruptible natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Mortality, corruption, flesh and blood shall be purged out, and left in the grave, but it shall be the self-same body which is buried in the tomb.

conscientiously believe that on that august and glorious morn when our Lord

Jesus Christ shall descend from Heaven with a shout and with the voice of the Archangel, that my sleeping dust, even myself, shall hear that animating, tomb rending shout, and shall come out of the gloomy cells of the grave in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye; then, O, then my first glad thought will be echoed in the triumphal shout, "O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?" It shall be the same poor worm of the dust that is now scribbling these words, even T. R. Sawyer, not some other man, nor an aerial visionary body; O no! it is no wonder then, that we poor crawling worms are transported with holy delight in our contemplations of that perfect resurrection life, and our future happiness, which will consist in the enlargement of all our faculties, and in our entire exemption from all sin and sorrow, in our intercourse and fellowship with the high intelligence of heaven; with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs and all the redeemed. O, the blessed thought that our Lord Jesus "shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21), "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" (1st John 3:2). It's no wonder that the glad acclaim bubbled up, and out of the innermost shrine of Paul's heart; "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ."

It was in consideration of this blessed theme, that the aged patriarch, while under the charming spell of ecstatic vision gave utterance to the following soul stirring language, viz.: "And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." Or as the margin reads:

"After I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:26-27). I believe this is the correct translation of the preceding scripture language. But the skeptic asks with a sneer, how can the body of man be raised after he has been dead thousands of years and mouldered into dust and

scattered to the four winds, or perhaps it may have been destroyed by wild beasts, or eaten by the cannibal; and that sailor who perished far out at sea and whose body became the prey of the mighty monsters of the deep?

Our simple reply is, God is almighty, of infinite sufficiency. He is omniscient, of universal knowledge, all seeing, and of universal perception. "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering" (Job 26:6; Prov. 15:11). The best interpretation that we can give of those two words "hell" and "destruction" is, as I understand it, comprehended in a sentence something like this: "Death" and hell are (before the Lord), the separate state of departed spirits, and "destruction" (the place of torment), are both of them, although solemnly mysterious to us, visible enough to God.

"Hell," then, we might as well render death, or the state of departed spirits and do no violence to that sentence, nor, the scriptures in general relative to this subject. Now death, with all its solemn consequences is visible before the Lord. Between us and the hereafter of the dead, a great black cloud is hanging. Though now and then we are graciously permitted to look through some little rift in that cloud by the eye of faith and get a glimpse darkly of the solemn realities of our future state; for He hath revealed unto us by His "spirit," the things which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard," and which the human intellect cannot grasp; yet what we know is very little. When men die, they pass beyond the sphere of our knowledge, both in body and in spirit, but God comprehends all the secrets of death. He knows the burial places of all His people, no body of man, however it may have been buried or unburied, has passed beyond range of God's knowledge. Blessed be His holy and reverend name; it does not matter when, how, nor where I die, nor yet my resting place, I shall be known as well, and rise as well recognized by my glorious Heavenly Father, as if I had been buried in a majestic cemetery where myriads of granite and marble pillars and monuments proudly stand erect. I shall be known as well as if I had been buried there in solemn grandure, and had been buried with music, and with a

mournful funeral sermon, and with pompous parade and a lavishing display of wealth, for the holy Lord God knows no such thing as forgetfulness of the burial places nor the sleeping dust of His afflicted, poor and despised people, having this assurance then, the glad refrain wells up in our little souls, and we mingle our feeble voices with David, even the sweet singer in Israel, viz.: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psalm 17:15.

But, just listen! We hear a voice from the mouth of yonder infidel saying, "It is incredible that God should raise the dead" (Acts 26:8), after the body has long, long ago moldered into dust. O no, it isn't. Why? Because omniscience has every atom of it full in His view, and omnipotence has it within the might of His power, although it has passed through the most complicated machinery of nature, and become entangled in its passage with plants and beasts, yes, and with the bodies of other men. And yet our blessed Heavenly Father in His almightiness shall quicken and call every particle of it from its various wanderings and restore it to its proper sphere, and build the body anew or rebuild it and fit it to enjoy infinitely all the dazzling glories of Heaven, and adapt it as well to its beatific environments, and to its innumerable company of angels, constituted of men, women and children, who were saved by the precious blood of Jesus, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, our new spiritual bodies will also be acclimated to the pure, unsullied atmosphere of the heavenly Canaan, where all but love and inconceivable bliss is abolished forever more. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name" for such an invaluable hope.

DE. T. R. SAWYER,
loved on somville, N. C.
wonderfully

Elder J. W. Wyatt,
Dear Brother:

It has been in my mind to write a few lines to you for *The Lone Pilgrim*, but you know how things will some times get in the way and cause us to put off doing that which seems our duty until

we find ourselves in so much darkness we cannot tell which way to go or what is best to do. Yes, the dear people of God get in darkness so often, and it is in these places that they are made to cease from man, made to trust in the Lord and lean upon Him as a sure guide and where they learn to have no confidence in the flesh. In this connection we think of the Good Samaritan. "For a certain man journeying from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Luke 10:30.

So we see our Lord as a Guide, for He finds His people in a waste, howling wilderness and a desert land, leads them about and instructs them. Yea, our Lord as a Saviour finds His people, as it were, in a horrible pit and a miry clay. He delivers them, establishes their goings, and puts a new song in their mouth, even praise unto our God. He finds them in the highways and hedges, sick, faint and ready to die, puts them on His own beast and brings them to the inn, and He finds them as sheep lost in the wilderness, puts them on His own shoulder and carries them, not back to the ninety and nine, but home. Our Lord is also like a shepherd, as such He watches and delivers His sheep from the paw of the bear and the paw of the lion. He maketh them to lie down in green pastures and leadeth them beside the still waters. He restoreth their soul; and leadeth them in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake, and I do not know anything these sheep ever

did to cause the Shepherd to do so much for them.

Now if we find grace in His sight, it is favor altogether undeserved. While in the flesh we shall often find ourselves in the dark which is a trouble to us for the time being but not without its benefits to the sheep.

When we can realize the presence of the Lord then darkness is turned into light, for the light and the darkness are both alike to our God.

Finally brethren farewell, and if I never meet you all in this world, which I know I never shall, I have a little hope of meeting you where parting will be known no more.

Your brother in hope,
TILLMAN SAWYER,
Grimesland, N. C.

TIDINGS FROM VIRGINIA

Sunday, June 17, 1923.

Elder J. W. Wyatt,
My dear Brother:

It has been some time since I received your letter asking me to write an article for your paper "*The Lone Pilgrim*." I am encouraged to try to write since you have confidence enough in me to risk my writings in your paper.

I feel I am a stranger personally to most all of your readers, therefore I'm trusting that my writing if properly seasoned, may make room for me in the hearts of those taught of the Lord. Not of my ability can this be, but by the indescribable work of our Eternal God and Father manifested by the moving of these bodies of ours in performing the work required at our hands, which is governed by the spiritual mind dwelling in our bodies, which is the mind of Christ—who forms in us the hope of glory—in this way we are made willing to present our bodies a living sacrifice before God, to do His bidding, and to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem to declare unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that she hath received at the Lord's hands, double for all her sins, could more comforting words be spoken to a child of God? Let us say as did one of old, "Great and marvelous are Thy works Lord God Almighty, just

Continued on Page Eight

THE LONE PILGRIM

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Beulah, near Micro, N. C. Preaching
every third Sunday and Saturday before.
Elder J. T. Coyler, Pastor.

Bethany, at Pine Level, N. C. Preach-
ing every 4th Sunday and Saturday be-
fore. Elder J. T. Coyler, Pastor.

Little Vine, six miles northwest of
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J. W. Wyatt, Pastor.

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Jones, Pastor. Elder Jesse Barnes, As-
sistant Pastor.

Old Harnett, in Sampson County, N. C.
Preaching every first Sunday and Satur-
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Old Salem Church. Northeast of
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Pastor. Elder Jesse Barnes, Assistant
Pastor.

Four Oaks, N. C., 1st Sunday and
Saturday before. Elder D. A. Johnson,
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Mingo, near Dunn, N. C., 2d Sunday
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Sandy Grove, below Washington, N. C.
Meetings 3d Sunday and Saturday before.
Elder J. W. Wyatt, Pastor.

Hunting Quarters, 2d Sunday and
Saturday before in each month. L. H.
Hardy, Pastor, Atlantic, N. C. John D.
Smith, Clerk, Atlantic, N. C.

Kinston, 3d Sunday and at night in
each month. L. H. Hardy, Pastor. Dr.
R. H. Temple, Clerk, Kinston, N. C.

Brethren, sisters and friends, when
visiting in the towns or neighborhoods
are invited to come and be with us. You
may get more comfort out of it than
you will loafing on the streets, around
the hotels and boarding houses.

L. H. HARDY, Pastor.

ASSOCIATION DIRECTORY FOR 1923

Kehukee—Eld. B. S. Cowan, Clerk,
Williamston, N. C., at Smithwicks Creek,
Martin County, October 6, 7, 8.

Fisher's River—Eld. F. P. Stone,
Clerk, Francisco, N. C., at Deep Creek,
Yadkin County, August 10, 11, 12.
Nearest station, Siloam.

Bear Creek—J. W. Jones, Clerk,
Peachland, N. C., Spring Session at Wat-
son Falls, Union County, May 5, 6, 7.
Fall Session Pleasant Hill, Iredell
County, October 6, 7, 8.

Lower Country Line—J. H. Gooch,
Clerk, Stem, N. C., at Surl, Person
County, August 4, 5, 6. Nearest station,
Stem.

Upper Country Line—Eld. J. W.
Gilliam, Clerk, Altamahaw, N. C., at
Big Meadow, Alamance County, August
15, 16, 17. Nearest station, Burlington.

Salem—W. L. Teague, Clerk, Winston-
Salem, N. C., at Abbotts Creek, David-
son County, October 13, 14, 15. Nearest
station, High Point.

Staunton River—R. L. Dodson, Clerk,
Danville, Va., at Danville, Va., August
11, 12, 13. Nearest station, Danville.

Abbotts Creek—A. L. Owens, Clerk,
Salisbury, N. C., at Lamm's Grove, Moore
County, August 25, 26, 27. Nearest
station, Carthage.

Black Creek—Eld. E. L. Cobb, Clerk,
Wilson, N. C., at Sandy Grove, Nash
County, October 26, 27, 28. Nearest sta-
tion, Bailey or Spring Hope.

Smith's River—Eld. J. D. Cockram,
Clerk, Floyd, Va., at Dan River, Friday
before the 1st Sunday in September.

Mayo—At Pleasantville Church, Rock-
ingham County, October 20, 21, 22.

TIDINGS FROM VIRGINIA

Continued from page seven.

and true art Thou, oh King of Saints!"

The work of grace in the hearts of
God's believing children is so marvelously
wrought, that no one can tell another in
a way that he may understand except he
has been taught in the same school and
by the same teacher. It must be spirit-
ually told and it must be spiritually
understood. Therefore spirit to spirit
hence the spiritual relationship and ^{us}
of the children of God. And beca^{die}
this we are enabled to commune with
those who are many, many miles from us,
and whose faces we shall never behold in
this world, but many times have I read
the writings of those dear ones, and re-
joiced in spirit while tears of joy ran
down my cheeks, and in my heart I was
saying, "Thank God for such wonderful

gifts." Oh! the height of this wonderful work no one can tell neither can we descend into its depths, but with the ability that God is pleased to give us, and with such things as He is pleased to add unto us, we will gladly give to others that His name may be praised among the children of men.

We were all born into this earthly habitation as the offspring of Adam, we must have our reign in mortality which begins from our natural birth and will end with our corporal death, and what is held between the two designated points is known by us as it comes to pass, but known unto God were all things ere it pleased Him to speak this earth into existence as His footstool.

With me this reign seems as a book opened and its leaves turned by an unseen Power, and on each page are recorded the transpiring events, peculiar to this reign in mortal life which must be. This book was opened for me on Jan. 3d, 1877. Many leaves have been turned, as I am now in my 46th year, and many sacred memories are indelibly marked, some with sadness, sorrow, grief and distress, others with joy, pleasure, and gladness, but the most sacred memory occurred in the year 1895 when it pleased God to remember me in mercy and to forgive my many sins which had for so long hung over me with crushing weight, sinking me, as it seemed, inch by inch into eternal woe. I believe this memory is marked by shouting and praise to God, yet not a sound was uttered vocally, my life since then seems to be a "mixture of joy and sorrow." I believe I know what it is to be tried in the "fiery furnace." I know what it is to suffer bodily afflictions, we have lost all by fire twice since we started out to housekeeping, and our first born was only spared to us the short period of two and one-half years, yet my loved ones in Christ, the Lord has been wonderfully good to us. I have fully realized that all things are in His hands and not mine, and all that we call our own is only loaned us for the time being, it may be taken tonight, tomorrow or it may all be spared to us, and we taken. We plan ahead, it may be, it may not be, we must use the best judgment we have in trying to provide an honest living, and that night.

try to do the very best we can with the mind we have to guide us, as this is our duty as natural men and women, yet with this we know not what a day may bring forth, but be of good cheer, the Lord will provide, forget not the Fountain Head. Pride is wielding a broad cycle among the inhabitants of the earth, Oh! 'tis astonishing to see the hold it is gaining on *old Baptists*. I want the good Lord to keep me free from its clutches, I love pride in a neat, modest and friendly way, humble pride that has no big *I's* and little *u's*, pride that loves the old, old hymns and old, old tunes, and I would to God we could now meet and enjoy our liberty of meeting and the blessing of having the opportunity afforded us, with as much reality manifested as was, when I was a child and went with my father and mother to the places of worship—in my mind there is a picture of them now, humble, gentle, meek, kind and loving, their faces aglow with spiritual love for each other. Oh! that I could feel as they then looked to me, but that was in their day, and now comes to pass what is in our day, the wheel of time is revolving and God's purposes are ripening fulfilling His deep designs. He foreknew all things and all things come to pass according to His foreknowledge, hence all things must have their destination as foreknown by Him according as He hath declared the end thereof. All things are in His hands and under His wise control, having the bounds set. Then be still children, and know that He is God.

Farewell,

ANNIE FULCHER.

Elders Hutchens and Wyatt,
Dear Brethren:

For some reason, I cannot tell why, I have a mind to try to write a short sketch for your paper, I do not think I am a writer, but had a mind to write to your paper when I first heard of it, and while at the Mayo Association Brother Hutchens asked me to write some for the paper.

While I try to write I hope the Lord may guide my mind to the end that I may write as would please Him, and as would be endorsed by good, sound Baptists. A few thoughts on John 5:40, "And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have

life." The question that most concerns us is: Who it is making this assertion and to whom is it addressed? I do not see any comfort in it unless we can assign it to its proper place, therefore getting to the real substance of the matter, in the first place we remember some years back the world preached, and do yet, that this scripture was addressed to the dead sinner, and they preached to him to get life and come unto the Lord. In these days we have new ideas on this text; namely: that the above scripture is addressed to the child of God, but he is in disobedience, and the God of all power and full of mercy wants him to obey (so His language would hold good where He has said "I (Jesus) am come that they might have life," etc.) Therefore leaving the matter of the poor fellow's salvation depending on his obeying when there is no soundness in him only as the Lord gives it to him and causes him to come to Him, "no man can come to Me except My father which is in heaven draw him," then we are given to believe that if we love Him it is the effects and outcome of His first loving us. If we come to Him it is the effectual drawing of His mighty power, if we pray it is from a state of poverty in spirit, therefore we can but call on Him who is rich, if we have a good thought it came from the Lord, from whom all blessings both natural and spiritual must come. Then we want to ascribe all honor and praise to our God, who has delivered, and who doth deliver, and in whom we trust. He will yet deliver, and not leave us to our free will to come unto Him or not come. It is as true today as it ever was, that the fleshly nature of all mankind is enmity against God's way and His laws, and is it not true that the child of God has that resisting nature about him like Jonah had, and has God told us of any better way that He would overcome it than He did Jonah? And as He did Peter, when He knew the very intents of his heart and knew just what he would do and told him so, and since those days we do not find where Jonah or Peter ever preached anything but salvation by grace. Now as to the text referred to I believe it was Jesus talking to and of the carnal mind of mankind

which has always chose darkness rather than light, and takes bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter, and will not come unto Jesus because that mind of the flesh has always said we will not have this man to rule over us. Now in conclusion I wish to say I want to tell you of our High Priest who is independent of all powers and reveals Himself to whom He will and it is done with power and when He begins a work it is a perfect work, and He carries it on through the Christian's life to the praise of His glory, and will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ. May the God of all mercy be with you all, I am, I hope, your brother,

W. R. DODD.

Elder J. W. Wyatt,
Dear Brother and Pastor:

I will try if the Lord will, to write something of the reason of the hope I have in the Lord. At about the age of fourteen years, it came to me that I was the meanest one in my father's home, which was seven in number. From that time on I have felt that all my brothers and sisters were better than I, well this stayed with me and has caused me often to wonder what it could mean. At the age of sixteen I was walking along the road with two of my sisters and as we were going down a hill, all at once I had a curious feeling come over me, and I thought I was sinking down to death, when I heard a voice speak from above my head very plainly, and said stoop down and pick you up three rocks, that your father and mother would remember you. I had been feeling very good all day until then.

So after this I felt cast down and worse than nothing, right here I thought of the Lord Jesus Christ in a different way from what I ever had before, and was much concerned about my condition, and I felt very lonely. So I went on in this condition and put the rocks in my pocket and kept them there for one whole year, but would not let any one see them, for I thought if I lost them I surely would die. So I finally got to thinking this was all foolishness, and threw them away, so then it appeared to me that I was lost, and where is your hopes, have you got any, then I looked for them and found

that I had no hope, and without a Saviour, and was therefore lost, right here if I ever had a change of heart it took place, for I was turned completely around and saw my lost and ruined condition, so then I knew there was a Saviour, but not for me. So I went on in this condition for about four years, when one night I dreamed that the world was coming to an end, and I thought that I was very much troubled because I was a sinner and had no hope of being saved. After waiting it seemed to me about a day, I saw fire as I thought in my dream coming down from above and the sun was darkened and the moon turned to blood, and I was very much troubled, and by this time I could begin to feel the heat from the fire, and there appeared before me many people, some of whom I knew were dead, and many I knew were living, and they were screaming and lamenting. About this time there was a girl that I knew very well ran by me, I had stood still until then, then I broke and ran, what appeared to be about a stone's throw, and fell on my face and prayed, saying, "Oh, Lord, let this cup pass if you will, not my will but thine be done." I repeated this three times, and a man took hold of my right hand and stood me over where I could see several men and women that I knew, and knew also that they were Baptists, I knew also that some of them had been dead for several years, and they were just as quiet and looked so very lovely. And I thought I loved them dearly, more so than any people that I ever had seen.

I thought that the man that stood me by them was Christ. At this juncture I awoke, and never slept any more that night, and when morning came it seemed that everything was prasing the Lord. This was in the month of June.

I thought I would never see any more trouble, but on the third morning from this I got up mad, and of all the bad days, this was the worst. It would take a time to tell what happened to me that day. So I will leave that off. But will say that I have felt to be a sinner ever since, and if I am saved at all it must be by the grace of God. After this I was in a great deal of trouble, for I had two minds, one right to the reverse of the

other, I felt like I wanted to join the church but was afraid I was mistaken in the whole matter, and was too mean to offer the church. So I went on in this condition promising the Lord I would do better, and it seemed that I got worse. But when I was twenty-one years old I heard the first sermon that ever really reached my case. This was when I was all alone in the field plowing. After this I knew that the old Baptist was right, whether I was or not. So on Saturday before the third Sunday in June, 1897, I went before the church at old Contentnea in Wilson County, N. C., and was received and baptized on Sunday following by the late Elder William Woodard.

Here I wish to say that I have never regreted the day I was baptized. But I sure do feel my great unworthiness and feel to be the least in my Father's house, if indeed I am one at all. Here I will close, asking all the dear people of God to remember me when at a throne of grace.

D. M. MORRIS.

Route No. 3, Mount Airy, N. C.
Elder J. W. Wyatt, Selma, N. C.:

Having been requested by my children and several of the brethren, I will now try to write a brief sketch of my experience, and if you wish to, you may publish same in THE LONE PILGRIM. I was born in Carroll County, Va., July 14th, 1845, and October 1861 I enlisted in the army. I remained in the service until peace was made, then when discharged, returned home to sare for my widowed mother and sister. On October 1, 1869 I was married to Miss Nairy Surratt. I will make this as short as possible, leaving off the beginning of my troubles. In February, 1884, I had been trying to lay down all trouble and study and accumulate the goods of this world and take my pleasure. So one night I dreamed I was standing out in my yard and was wondering what was going to happen to me and I looked up and the sky was clear and I saw in the air a beautiful man on a white horse beautifully dressed in uniform. He had on an exceedingly high hat with stars as bright as the sun on it. I thought he was the most beautiful man I ever saw,

he was going southward and kept looking straight at me. I thought he meant to kill me. When he got nearly out of sight he turned about half around and began shooting at me with a bow and arrow. The arrows came faster than a man could count, but they did not hurt me. I knew he would kill me but I decided to fight until he killed me and so I did, but he killed the love of sin. I went into the house to mould some bullets to fight and right there I awoke. Now if the Lord would guide me I will try to tell something about my trouble. I began to meditate. My trouble came; it seemed more than I could bear. I tried to keep this a secret from everybody, so for some years I went on in this way and would some nights read scriptures all night and find no relief. My case seemed to be a sealed one. I would try to pray, but got no relief. So life became not worth living—I would say to my self, If I could only exchange chances with a beast—ah; it would have been good if I had not been born. So I went on in this condition for some time. Sometimes my wife would say, what is the matter? I would say, nothing much, but I told her at last that I was going to die or go crazy one, and if I went crazy to have me sent off, for I did not want to hurt any one. So one day I thought that was the last day I had to live; I took my axe in the evening and told my wife I would go and get some pine. I went to a pine log far away from the road where I thought I would try once more to pray, then it seemed that if I tried there the just God would destroy me. The sun was about two hours high and I feared to look at it, so I left that place and went a little farther, but feared to try there. So I went on to another place and all I could think of was, Lord have mercy. I started to go home and said to myself I will never try to pray again, but instantly I was repeating the words, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner," and there I tried to pray and I believe I did pray. It seemed that I could go back home then. When I got there they asked, where is your pine? I said that I did not bring any. That night I laid down as I thought,

for my last nap, to rise no more; for I thought that I would die before morning. I was lying looking at the fire dying down and I thought by the time it got dark I would be dead, and no sooner dead than damned. At once I seemed to be at an old house, I looked some distance from that place southward and saw two men coming, riding. One was dressed in blue and riding a white horse, the other was dressed in black riding a bay horse. The road was straight, not a crook nor a bump in it, they came to the opposite side of the house and spoke, I said, come in, you shall not be hurt. They came in and I knew the man who rode the bay horse; he was drowned about one year before and used a big oath just as he plunged into the water, and I had thought that he and I were both lost but this beautiful man, this lovely man picked him up and laid him on a bed and said to me, take care of him; as much as to say, I am able to save him. I said, he will be taken care of, I will go with you. He said, stay here with him and in no wise cast him out. I said, do let me go with you. He took me by the hand, kissed me and said, when I come again you shall go with me. He left a smell in my nostrils and taste in my mouth that far exceeds all perfumes; I was then willing to stay. He then returned in the same direction he came. I was then praising the Lord with all my might. My wife had hold of me and wanted to know what was the matter. To quiet her I told her I guessed it was a dream. I went out and looked about and everything looked different and was praising God. I thought I should never see any more trouble, but it was not long until doubts began to rise, and I was trying to hide all this but there was a small, soft whisper in my heart saying, I will follow Jesus where he goes. I said He has spared me and I will go to the church the next opportunity, but failed and that got me in trouble again. I would think that they could not find fellowship for me. All this gave me more trouble. I went to preaching and thought I would stop at the door and when they got through preaching I would leave for

home and may be it would not give me so much trouble, but it seemed that I was fast to my seat until an opportunity was offered for the reception of members. The next I knew I was about half way to the stand and every one looking at me. I don't know whether I was talking or not, I thought I would go out of the house but the people were crowded so behind me I could not. As soon as they were dismissed I got away without saying anything to any body, and after I got home, I said to my wife, I had come near doing something that I expect I ought not to do. She asked what; I told her I caught myself going to the church; she said don't until I can go. So I said no more until she offered to the church, then I went and we were both received on the first Sunday in September, and was baptized the first Sunday in October, 1895, by our beloved Pastor, Elder J. M. Wyatt into the fellowship of Flowery Gap Church, where my membership is until yet.

So I have written a part of what I have taken for the reason of my hope but the half has not been told. I haven't language to express this just as it has been to me, and felt too unworthy to undertake such a task, but if not deceived, this is part of what has caused me to love Jesus and his people, The Primitive Baptists. Some time it is almost out of sight then it is enough. If I were called to die, Brother Wyatt, during all these years I have had many troubles, sore afflictions and many gloomy days but amid all of this I have enjoyed the sweet presence of the Lord, and have been made to trust him and to rejoice in my little hope. So I must come to a close, pray for me and mine.

Written by request to all who may and can receive such an experience of grace, I am, your brother in hope of eternal life.

H. M. SPENCER,

Route No. 3, Mount Airy, N. C.
Elder J. W. Wyatt, Selma, N. C.:

Very Dear Brother: As I have been requested by my children to have my experience published I have decided to send you a copy of it for THE LONE

PILGRIM and if not asking too much of you I will be glad if you publish it for their benefit. From my youth up, I would at times feel and realize that I was a sinner, and would have serious thoughts as to what would become of me until the year 1894, when I hope the light of the grace of God shone round about me and showed me that I was a condemned sinner in the sight of a just God. At this time I was at old Flower Gap Church at a communion meeting and foot washing. I thought they were the prettiest people I ever saw, they looked so good and humble and I felt so sinful, it appeared to me that I must die. Ah, how miserable I was, I felt that I would never see those good people again and that was not the worst of it, I felt that I was without God and without hope in the world. I would try to beg the Lord to have mercy on me but it seemed that my prayers would not reach above my head. I continued to feel this way for some time and wondered over my condition as I was not sick and yet it seemed to me that I had to die and be forever banished from the presence of the Lord. One day while sitting at my dinner table it seemed to me that something called me to go to some secret place to try to pray, which I thought I would do, so I went to the woods to try to pray. I looked around and didn't see any one or anything to be afraid of, but I could not utter a word; I was afraid to try to pray; language fails me to describe my feelings at this as well as many other times. I felt that hell was my doom and that my condemnation was just and I was afraid to take the name of the Lord in my sinful lips. So night came on and I feeling that I never would see the sun, laid down on my bed begging the Lord to have mercy on my poor soul, and while thus engaged I fell asleep and it appeared to me in a dream that I was in the darkest place I ever saw and that I was sinking in a mire. I don't know how I got out of this awful place but the first thing I knew I was on top of a hill and it was the prettiest place I ever saw; the most beautiful light shining around and it also seemed that the sun was shining,

and a little child came and took me by the hand and led me to a large beautiful tree and under this tree was a beautiful spring out of which he dipped and gave me to drink and showed me this beautiful tree whose branches were all dripping with clear and beautiful water. He said this is the tree of life. At this time I awoke, my burden of sin and guilt was gone and I was praising God from the depths of my heart. Yes then I could view Jesus as my Saviour which I could never do before. Everything looked good and lovely and seemed to be praising God. I then loved everybody, it was peace on earth and good will to men. I wanted to join the church and be baptized, but I soon began to be doubtful and thought may be it was an imagination and that I had caught the shadow and missed the substance. My impressions grew stronger to join the church and be baptized but I would put it off from time to time, I thought surely those good people could not receive me with such a little to tell, but would feel condemned for not going. I went on in this way for something over a year, at which time I went to meeting at Flower Gap on Saturday but did not offer myself that day and while returning home, that day I began to suffer for my disobedience. I did not feel that I would live to get home, and told my husband that if I knew they were not all gone home I would go back and offer myself, but did not. Soon the day following I went and told a part of what I have requested by my children to have my written and greatly to my joy was received without a question being asked. My husband, H. M. C. Spencer, came forward and was received and baptized the first Sunday in October, 1895, by Elder J. W. Wyatt, and have lived with the old Primitive Baptist Church in the peace since. But oh! the trials and troubles and tribulations that I have passed through no tongue can tell or pen describe. But sometimes I feel that I can say with the old poet the Lord has promised good to me, etc.

I have written at least a part of what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me, a poor sinner, saved by grace

if saved at all. I humbly ask all of the Lord's people under whose observation this may come to pray for me that I may adorn the profession that I have made, and that I may ever be found faithful in the discharge of my duty.

Your sister in Hope,

NANCY A. SPENCER.

SIN AND GOD'S DECREES

Upon this subject much has been said. Sometimes the greatest kindness has been used and sometimes a fleshly spirit enters into the subject and nothing good is accomplished thereby. And it is our desire pass is either by His agency or permission; and though He permits sin to be, He is not therefore the author of it." Elder Hassell says, "But I am assured, both from scripture and observation and experience, that men are voluntary, and are therefore accountable, in the commission of sin, and that they receive no to say something by way of quotations from godly men and writers upon this subject. We desire to do this in the fear of God and pray our Father that nothing may be said to trouble Zion.

The London Confession says, "The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in His word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may from the certainty of their effectual vocation be assured of their eternal election." Also, "Some men and angels are predestinated or foreordained to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, to the praise of His glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of His glorious justice." And the Philadelphia Association in 1761 said, "God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. Whatsoever comes to internal compulsion from a holy God necessitating them to commit sin." He further adds, "Augustine maintained that grace is nothing else than predestination realized, that salvation is the work of God, in accordance with His eternal will and purpose; that His decree is the efficient cause of all good in the elect, while the cause of sin in the reprobate is the

evil will of man *permitted* to operate voluntarily and independently of divine grace, and thus justly left by God to go on to perdition. Surely, then, it were the most dreadful blasphemy to believe that God is the author of sin or source of wickedness and no Baptist, no Christian, no Bible *predestinarian* does or can believe it." John Gill wrote: "Though God may be said, in some senses (for instance, to bring about a great good, or to punish other sin), to will sin, yet he wills it in a different way than He wills that which is good; He does not will to do it Himself, nor to do it by others; but *permits* it to be done; and which is not a bare permission, but a voluntary permission; and is expressed by God's giving up men to their own heart's lust, and by suffering them to walk in their own sinful ways; He wills it not by His effective will, but by His permissive will, and therefore cannot be chargeable with being the author of sin." Eld. J. R. Respass wrote: "No Primitive Baptist believes that God works sin in man; it never has, in any age, been believed by the church, that God in His word forbade a thing, and that God in His spirit prompted disobedience to His word. That would destroy His unity." Eld. John Rowe says, "God's decrees are not the causes of men's sins any more than the sun is the cause of darkness."

I have copied the quotations above to show that while the various writers used different words to express themselves, yet they are in harmony in this: Man is the cause of his own destruction, by him sin came into the world, and God is the author of our being and of our salvation from sin. When I was a boy seventeen years old I wept because of my sins and felt that I was justly punished for them. I still weep over my sins but have hope that they have been atoned for and because of Christ's obedience and blood I expect some time to see Heaven and immortal glory. And I feel that much of the difference between some of our Baptist people has not been so much about the doctrine itself but about words used to convey their meaning and the interpretation put on those words by others than the authors. The expression, "Absolute predestination of all things" is man-made. It is not

found in the Bible and I do not know of any Baptist Church using the expression in their articles of faith here in the United States. I heard a judge once say that it was always fair to a witness to let him say what he meant by what he said. So it is hardly fair to charge consequences of a doctrine held by others—at least until we know just what is meant by the writer. In talking to one man who claimed to believe and love the doctrine of Bible predestination he replied to me he believed that God made men sin. I told him we were too far apart to talk and that I wanted to go to bed at once. Being in bed alone meditating upon the goodness and mercy of God is far better than spending time talking about a thing so unprofitable. A strong predestinarian once said to me that all the doctrine of God our Saviour was taught in our experience. To this I readily assented, and still say it is the truth. The man who can preach predestination and Christian experience and exhortation and make them harmonize and at the same time feed the lambs and sheep is a good and strong minister of Jesus Christ. But if he preaches predestination in such a way as to frighten the dear children of God he is dishonoring the doctrine of grace and will never build up the precious cause. When preachers quarrel and the dear little children are weeping over their war you may know that God is not honored. If we had grace enough about us to be kind in our honest differences it would perhaps be better. Sometimes in our zeal to appear sound we act in such a way as to make good people think us deficient in both soundness and sense. Let us remember we are only here for a few short years and that we are only little children in the school of Christ. Let us use plain and kind words when we speak in Jesus' name. We cannot accomplish much for good when we brand our dear brethren as unsound just because they may kindly differ. If we find our dear kind brethren misunderstanding us we had better throw away some expressions and use words whereby the tender little ones can understand us. Nothing can result to the glory of God when we resort to clubbing and misrepresenting our brethren. If we would talk in kindness

to those we would win we might hope for good and wholesome results. Let us labor to make ourselves understood in all we say and do. If we will speak in love we will find responsive hearts of love, but if we speak in caustic words we will provoke quarrels among us which can only lead to our own destruction. Let each preacher ask himself if he is building up or tearing down. Does your preaching cement or divide God's children? Are you speaking the truth in love or in a fleshly, boastful spirit? Is it your motive to tickle the flesh or stir up the pure hearts of God's children? Which side are you on? If you cannot answer ask the precious, little, loving children of God. They are the wise men Paul speaks about and they know a good deal more about preachers than you may at times think. They gather to hear you preach the gospel. If you preach anything else God will not hold you guiltless but will punish you for your sin.

My preaching brethren, let me beg of you to preach nothing but the gospel when you enter into the pulpit. That gospel will find, and feed, and comfort, and confirm the dear little ones that gather around us looking for a home, and it will have the same results with those who are traveling through the land of sighing and death to the land unseen. Preach Jesus always and that will keep you busy until death.

G. A. B.

OBITUARY

The subject of this notice is Belinda Perry, who was born Nov. 28, 1844, and died May 13, 1923, making her stay on earth 78 years 5 months and 23 days. Her older brother, B. D. Tillett, preceded her to the grave on last Aug. 14, 1922, after making his stay on earth 82 years 3 months and 16 days. She was the daughter of Samuel Tillett and Sallie Beacham, his wife. At about the age of 22 she was married to Dempsey Perry and unto this union were born 10 children, 6 boys and 4 girls, all of which together with her husband survive, except one son who died at the age of 13. She leaves 45 living grandchildren and 7 living great grandchildren, together with a host of friends and neighbors to mourn their loss,

yet we all feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

She professed a hope in Christ and on the 4th Sunday in July, 1869, she, together with her husband, was baptized into the fellowship of the church at Kitty Hawk, N. C., by Elder John D. Wicker. She has since had the pleasure of seeing several of her children profess a hope in the Lord Jesus and given a desire to follow their Lord and Master in the liquid grave, to live in the loving fellowship of the church of her espousal. She enjoyed the confidence and esteem of all who knew her and her children are today living monuments of a kind hand and parental training so that they love the truth, have good credit and are honorable among men.

She was taken with the "flu" and owing to her advanced age could not finally recover but continued to grow weaker and weaker until on May 13 she gently passed away and her spirit returned to God who gave it. The remains were taken to the Austin cemetery and the last resting place well-marked, there to await the resurrection morn when this vile and mortal body shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus.

May we all bow in humble submission to the will of Him do doth all things well.

Yours in hope,

J. P. TINGLE.

JULIA J. SCOTT

At the request of my wife and others, I will try to here give a sketch of our beloved sister, Aunt Julia J. Scott, one of the younger sisters of my wife's mother. She was born June 5, 1852, and died June 6, 1923, making her time in this world 71 years and one day. She was the daughter of C. S. Dixon, Sr., and Julia Paul, his wife, and twin to her sister, Elvery Jane. There were three children older and three younger than the twins.

On May 28, 1874, she was married to Henderson Scott and unto this union there were born two girls, viz.: Fannie and Lottie. Lottie died at about 8 years of age.

She leaves her husband, one daughter

and four grandchildren, two brothers and one sister, as well as many neighbors and friends to mourn their loss, yet we cannot weep like we weep for those who have no hope. Aunt Julia received a hope long before she offered to the church. On Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1884, she offered to the church at Bethel, Pamlico County, N. C., and on next day at Goose Creek bridge was baptized by Elder John R. Rowe.

She loved the cause and had it at heart, for no one was more faithful to live up to her profession, always filling her seat when not providentially hindered, even when she knew that the preacher was sick or away so that he could not be present; she would at such times go to the place of meeting, with no other view than to see those that would meet, for as she would some times say, "I want to see the others just as bad as I want to see the preacher."

Some few years ago she had an attack of appendicitis which left her feeble, when later she began having some heart trouble until about two weeks before her death, she was taken with what was called high blood pressure which increased until the end came, when she gently fell asleep and on the next day her body was taken to Bethel Church yard and there laid to rest.

A few remarks, reading and prayer were offered at the grave by the writer in the presence of a large congregation of people.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. P. TINGLE.

Selma, N. C.

UNION MEETING

The next Black Creek Union Meeting will be held with the Church at Sappona meeting house in Nash County, N. C., Saturday and 5th Sunday in July, 1923. Those coming by rail will be met at Spring Hope and at Baileys, on Friday in the afternoon. All lovers of truth are invited to attend.

ELDER E. L. COBB,

Union Clerk.

STUART'S CREEK

Stuart's Creek, one mile west of Mount Airy, N. C., preaching every third Sunday and Saturday before.

Elder G. O. KEY, Pastor.

Continued From Last Issue

arm is an evidence that it is whole. The immediate commands of the Lord are spirit and life, and from the same source comes the power and will to obey. The natural will, however anxious it may be, cannot produce faith, hope, love or a blessing. These are fruits of the Spirit, and flow out spontaneously, constraining us to love and serve him from whom we have received all things that pertain to life and godliness. "From me is thy fruit found," saith the Lord.

Your brother, I hope

M. L. GILBERT.

ELDER J. W. WYATT

Appointments

Durham, Wednesday night, July 18th.
Camp Creek, July 19th.
Tar River, July 20th.
Surles, July 21st.
Flat River, July 22nd.
Roxboro, July 23rd.
Wheeler's, July 24th.
Prospect Hill, July 25th.
Mebane, July 26th, at night.
Burlington, July 27th, and on to the Union at
Gilliams, the 28th and 29th,

J. W. WYATT.

Elder J. W. Wyatt,

Dear Brother: Please say in THE LONE PILGRIM next issue that the next session of the Fishers River Union Meeting will convene with the church at Stuart's Creek, on on the 5th Sunday and Friday and Saturday before, in July, one mile west of Mount Airy, N. C. We hope you can come and be with us at this meeting.

Yours in hope,

SAM KING,

310 Factory St., Mount Airy, N. C.

NOTICE!

Any church sending in a club of 15 subscribers, together with \$15.00, we will mail The Pilgrim to each of them 12 months.

By this you can get a year's subscription for \$1.00. Get up a club in your church and save 50 cents each.

J. W. WYATT.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed by the Court of Chancery of the State of New York, to sell the real estate of the late John A. Smith, deceased, and to distribute the proceeds thereof to the persons entitled thereto. The sale will be made at public auction, to-wit: on the 1st day of March, 1881, at the Court House of the County of New York, in the City of New York, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon. The property to be sold consists of a certain lot of land, situate in the City of New York, and bounded as follows: on the north by the lot of John A. Smith, deceased; on the south by the lot of John A. Smith, deceased; on the east by the lot of John A. Smith, deceased; and on the west by the lot of John A. Smith, deceased. The property is described in the last will and testament of John A. Smith, deceased, and in the decree of the Court of Chancery of the State of New York, in the matter of the estate of John A. Smith, deceased, bearing date the 1st day of January, 1881.

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