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'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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THEN, NOW AND FARTHER ON

Where is now the merry party
I remember long ago,
Laughing 'round the Christmas fire,
Brightened by its radiant glow.

Some are on the ocean sailing,
Some in distant lands do roam,
Some have gone to seek their fortunes
In some distant western home.

Some are gone from us forever,
That they here no longer stay,
They have sought a fairer region,
Far away, far away.

Dark and stormy is the desert
Through which pilgrims make their way;
Just beyond this vale of sorrow
Lies the field of endless day.

Farther on but how much farther,
Count the mile stones one by one;
Jesus will forsake us never,
It is better farther on.

Chipley, Fla.

W. R. WHITTINGTON

CORRESPONDENCE

PREDESTINATION

by

The late Elder Jonas C. Sikes

I think it is hurtful and wrong to make a hobby of any one point of doctrine (even though it be the truth) to the exclusion of all others, yet I think we should preach a full gospel and not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. But I think it is the best, yea, the wisest and only scriptural course, when speaking of this or any other subject (and especially when we know that some of the dear saints differ from us), to be kind and gentle and meekly instruct them. It has been said

that "good words do more than hard speeches." The warm sunshine on a spring morning will make the farmer pull off his overcoat, while all the blustering winds of winter will only make him draw it closer to him. If we would do like Solomon, we would seek to find out acceptable words, yet we should not go so far in that direction as to forsake the truth. He says, "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which is written is upright, even words of truth." I think this would be a wise course for all of God's ministers, and I desire to follow it.

With this much said, I now desire to say something on the subject of predestination. I desire that after my departure my friends may have my views on this all-important subject. I think that the statement in the London Confession of Faith with reference to this subject is highly correct, i.e., that "this high mystery of predestination should be handled with special prudence and care." How well I shall be able to succeed in doing this, will be left for your readers to judge.

Predestination means a previous purpose or a previous determination. Webster defines it as the "purpose of God from eternity respecting all events." I accept this as its true meaning. Yet Webster was only a man and must not be considered as infallible in divine things.

This doctrine can never be understood, as long as we try to measure it by anything short of God himself. The

nearer we come to an understanding of him, what he is, and the nature of his divine attributes, the nearer we will come to a full and complete understanding of this doctrine.

1st. God is eternal. Hence, his purposes or determinations must also be eternal, if he is eternally perfect in all of his attributes. I shall not claim that his purpose is an attribute, but it is the outgrowth (to say the least of it) of wisdom. And here I would note that when I say wisdom, that I do not mean knowledge. Wisdom is one thing and knowledge is another, as you will find by consulting the 11th chapter of Romans. Wisdom in man is that natural attribute by which he is enabled to study or investigate and find out things which he would not otherwise know. Hence, when he gets to the limit of his wisdom or intellectual powers in an investigation he can go no farther; he has found out all he can know about it. But if his wisdom had been perfect, he would have seen through the whole thing at a glance the first time it was presented to his mind. Hence, his knowledge of it would have been perfect. God being eternally perfect in wisdom, has known all things. I shall not claim as to the order of time that God's wisdom is older than his knowledge, for then I would set up for a time a God of wisdom without any knowledge. But I will say that in the order of thought, wisdom is the real basis or foundation of all knowledge. Wisdom is the basic attribute of the Deity, by which he is governed in all his other attributes. Without wisdom, power would be misused, love would be without a true guide, justice and judgment could not exist, mercy would be a misnomer; in fact, chaos would reign supreme, and "God" would be a name for nothing. So then, wisdom being the foundation of all that is

right, I desire upon this foundation to build my structure.

It has been suggested by some that if we could prove that the first transgression was predestinated, then the predestination of all things could be established. So to this end I shall first direct my attention. In the first place, I would ask, did not God know that if he made Adam as he did and placed him where he would be subjected to the evil influence of the serpent, that he would transgress? If not where is the perfection of his wisdom? If he did, why did he make and place him thus? Was it because he was not able to make a perfect man? One that would not yield to temptation? One that could not be corrupted? If so, where is the perfection of his power? If he did not have the power then, and has never, nor will never increase in power, will he ever be able to take a poor, fallen wretch, and make a perfect and incorruptible man out of him? I suppose, however, that all who claim to be Primitive Baptists will admit that he had both the wisdom and power to have had it different, if he had wanted it different, but this would be an admission that he did not want it different, which would be to say that he wanted it to come to pass as it did. These are self evident facts. If God wanted it to be different from the way it came to pass is it not remarkably strange that he arranged things so that he knew that it would not work out as he wanted it when he could only have thought how he wanted it to be and said let it be so and it would have been so? It is a self evident fact that needs no argument to prove it, that either the introduction of sin into the world was according to God's purpose, or else the whole covenant plan of redemption, the advent of Christ into the world, all of his righteous life, all his sufferings and

death, his resurrection and ascension are not the result of God's free and independent purpose, for it was to redeem man from the consequences of this act and its outgrowth that all of the above took place. Hence, if the transgression was not a part of God's eternal purpose then it follows that the covenant of redemption owes its existence (not to the free and independent purpose of God outside of any extraneous influence but) to the act of a man by which it was made necessary and a way opened up for it to enter. So in the order of thought it would stand thus: 1st. God determined to make a man. 2nd. He saw that man would transgress. 3rd. He devised a plan of redemption. This cuts God's purpose in two, and sets them thus: 1st. God's free and independent purpose to create man. 2nd. God's knowledge of man's independent act in transgression. 3rd. God's necessitated purpose to redeem man, influenced by what he foresaw. If we follow this stream to its end where will it empty? If God had rather sin had not entered the world then it follows that there has never been one single act, or creature, or thing, in this universe that has been as God originally would rather have had it; because, every act, creature, or thing, has been in some way affected by sin, which God had rather had never existed. Even the earth, with which every living thing has to do, was cursed because of transgression, which God would rather have had different. Not even one act of the holy Son of God was as God would rather have had it for his acts were to redeem sinners, when God had rather there had been no sinners to redeem. Nor throughout all eternity can any thing be as it would have pleased God to have had it, for it will be one eternal song and shouts from redeemed sinners praising him for

their redemption, when God had rather that man had not sinned, then there would have been no redemption from sin and no shouting of praises by redeemed sinners. I shall trace this stream no farther at present, for I see from its course that it empties into the broad ocean of infidelity.

But all of the above is true and much more that might be said, if God did not purpose that sin should enter the world. It is said that God foreknew that man would sin and he **THEREFORE** made arrangements to meet it. But stop, my brother, this "**THEREFORE**" is what I object to. It says that the foreseen act of man was the cause of God making the covenant, so you see at once that if this act of man was not embraced in God's purpose then the origin of the covenant is owing partly (to say the least of it) to something outside of God, or his purpose. This branch empties into the stream which we have just left, so we will quit it. You say that God foreknew that man would sin, so say I. But I would ask upon whom did this foreseen act of man then depend? Man was not yet created, and his existence depended yet wholly upon God and the fulfillment of his purpose, and surely none can think that man's act could ever have been had there been no man to act. So then, this foreseen act of man could not have been any less dependent upon the fulfillment of God's purpose for existence than was the man by whom it was to come.

Having thus far confined myself to what seems to be self evident facts and irresistible conclusions, I will now notice some scripture on the subject. I will first call attention to Gen. 1:28. "And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." Now, the word replenish means to fill up. From this it will be seen that instead

of God meaning for them to remain in the garden, he meant for them to fill up and inhabit the entire earth. To this we will add the 29th verse. "And God said, Behold I have given you every herb-bearing seed which is upon the face of ALL THE EARTH, and EVERY TREE in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, IT SHALL BE TO YOU FOR MEAT." In the first place, we see from this, that man was intended to inhabit the entire earth, from the fact that the fruits that grow on all the face of the earth were to be for meat to him. And in the second place, we see that the fruit of every tree on earth was to be to them for meat. Some questions might arise in our minds right here. Was there any such a tree in all the earth that yielded fruit as the tree of knowledge of good and evil? If so was it to be for them for meat? If not, what does the above language mean? But I will pass this for the present.

We next call attention to Acts 17: 24-26. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." It is clearly seen from this as well as from Genesis, that God's purpose was (not that man should remain in the garden, but) that he should dwell on all the face of the earth. This is what Paul says that he made them for. Much might be said right here, but this article is going to grow lengthy, so I must pass on. I will now call attention to Gen. 2:5. "And there was not a man to till the ground." The next verse tells of

God watering the earth and making man. Now, what would we reasonably conclude from the above scripture, was God's purpose for making man. I think all reasonable men would say, "to till the ground." The other passages referred to show that God purposed that men should dwell on all the face of the earth and all of the fruits of the various trees thereof should be to them for meat, while this one shows that God purposed that man should till the ground. Some say, "O, yes, this is all true, but it is because God foresaw that man would transgress, that he purposed to scatter them on all the face of the earth and have them till the ground." But then we would be forced to admit one of two things, i.e., that this foreseen transgression was a part of God's original purpose, or else the cause of this purpose to scatter them on all the face of the earth and that they should till the ground, was outside of both God and his original purpose to make man. This again resolves itself into the absurd position which we have already noticed; 1st. That God freely and independently purposed to make man. 2nd. That he foresaw that man would not do as he wanted him to. 3rd. That God was governed in all of his other purposes concerning man, both for time and eternity, by the foreseen act of man rather than his own sovereign and independent will and choice. But I must quit this part of the subject and notice for awhile the reason why God created all things. It is said by Solomon that "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil." From this we learn that he made all things for himself. It is said in Revelations that "Thou hast made all things for thyself and for thy pleasure they are (now exist) and were created." From this we find that they were all created for his

pleasure, and they are still existing for the same purpose. In Colossians it is said, "All things were created by Him and for Him." This is enough to prove that God had a use for all that he created. Now it is admitted by all that some men come into the world sinners, they live in sin and they die in sin and go to eternal perdition. Will some one please tell me whether or not God's purpose in creating them is or will be fulfilled in them?

God's purpose in time and all created things is, I think, for the manifestation of his own glory. In other words, to manifest himself in all of his divine perfections and manifestly glorify himself in all of his attributes. Now, we read of his own eternal purpose, his immutable counsel, the counsel of his will, etc., so in the order of thought we say that God held a council in eternity. He was guided by wisdom, and consulted his own will. In this council was considered all things that he now works after the counsel of his will. As a result of that council the world was created and all things therein. Now look at this creation as it fell from the plastic hand of the creator. Is it not wonderful? Yea, marvelous? But how many of the attributes of the Deity do you see manifested in this wonderful work? Only two, wisdom and power. Wisdom to contrive this wonderful plan and power to perform it. Wisdom and power are here manifested as being infinitely great, but love, mercy, justice, wrath, and his immortal purity is yet unknown to man and must remain so as long as man remains in his state of innocence. He can love man just the same in his upright as in his fallen state, but love cannot be manifested in its fullness so as to glorify God in this attribute. "If ye love them that love you what reward have ye: do not even the Publicans the same?" So God's love could

not be manifested in its fullness on them that loved him. "Peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die," so if Christ had died for a good man it would have manifested no more love than perhaps some men would have done, so then it must be true that for God's love to be manifested in its fullness man must fall from his good and upright state. Man fell, and it is said that "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," also, that "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ." Here we have his great love most gloriously manifested on fallen man. Next we come to mercy. The above text says, "But God who is rich in mercy—" Yes. He is rich in mercy, but how can mercy be bestowed on one who is not a sinner? How could the great richness of God's mercy ever have been manifested without a transgressor? But man transgressed and now God can make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. Yet notwithstanding the greatness of God's love, and the richness of his mercy, they must have been forever unknown and unappreciated if man had not become a sinner. These two most glorious attributes, however, could not reach the case of, nor benefit, a sinner at the expense, or exclusion, of justice. Justice, in its greatness could not be manifested in a world of sinless, upright beings, but when man transgressed she laid her iron hand upon him; love nor mercy cannot reach him only through justice. Behold what unrelenting justice. Before she will swerve one jot or one tittle she will take the heir of heaven, the only Son of the Supreme Judge, who sits upon the great white throne, and slay him for the crime.

Love and mercy, guided by wisdom, offers him as a ransom. Justice, guided by wisdom, accepts him in behalf of all for whom he became surety. But God continues to show his wrath and make his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. Through all of this we can see God in his true character. His attributes are most gloriously manifested in the creation of the world and his dealings with sinners, and I feel sure that this course has been no second choice with him. Man may determine to do a thing and seeing that it will not work out as he desired it should, make some subsequent arrangements to meet and rectify in measure this foreseen, yet undesirable event. But the all glorious eternal "I AM," has never been so hard pressed as that. But this is exactly the light he must be held in by all who hold that he did not purpose that sin should exist. They must divide his purposes into two sets, anterior and posterior. His anterior purpose being his purpose to create all things, which purpose would be absolutely free from, and independent of, and in no way influenced, or hampered by, any unpleasant foreseen event, which was coming up outside of his purposes. His posterior purposes being all such as relate to man as a sinner. The covenant of redemption. The punishment of sin. In fact, all of his dealings with man as a sinner from the morn of transgression to the eve of eternity would come under the head of his posterior purposes, being made as the result of, and to meet and deal with, an unpleasant foreseen event, which was coming up outside of, and in no way attributable to, his purpose. Such a petty God may do to speculate upon, but it is not the God before whom the four and twenty elders fell down in wonder and admiration, and cast their glittering crowns before his throne,

shouting, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." The man who believes that the transgression was a foreseen event not embraced in God's eternal purpose, and that the covenant was made to meet this exterior foreseen event, must admit that God has anterior and posterior purposes. And that his anterior purposes are based on an interior cause (the counsel of his will), and his posterior purposes are based on an exterior cause (an unpurposed foreseen event). We are all bound to admit that in the order of thought God's knowledge of man's transgression was based on his determination to make man, for had there been no determination to make man there would have been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress, and if there had been no knowledge that there would be a man to transgress there would have been no covenant made to redeem man from transgression. So we are forced to either take the position that it was all from start to finish embraced in God's eternal and unchangeable purpose, or that he has anterior purposes bases upon interior causes, and posterior purposes based upon exterior causes. This latter is Arminianism straight, so you can see at a glance that I believe in the predestination of all things. I shall not try to add to the strength of this doctrine by the use of the term "Absolute," nor diminish its force by the use of the term "Permissive."

I have neither time nor inclination at present to enlarge upon this subject, for my article has grown too lengthy already. But I will say this much more, if the logic contained herein is true with reference to the first transgression, it is also true with reference to every other event of time.

This is my first, and may be my last, upon this subject, but I desired to record my views upon it before I go hence. With me it is either an Almighty God who works all things after the counsel of his will, or no God at all. I fail to find any standing room between this and atheism.

If this scribble should help any poor, halting child to a better understanding of this profoundly deep and mysterious subject I would be glad to hear from them. With love to all the household of faith I remain a poor, unworthy sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

(The foregoing article by the late Elder Sikes is re-published by request. R. L. D.)

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DEAR ELDER DODSON: The March *Signs* was so good! I shed tears when I read it. When you wrote me that you had received a letter from Elder Ruston enclosing three letters of mine to him which you were publishing in the April *Signs*, I appreciated your kind thoughtfulness very much, but did not feel it was necessary to bother you with a reply. However, I do want you to know that I appreciate your publishing them. Somehow I rejoiced that they were to be published. I want to tell it! As I look back on it it is a wonderful experience to me. In a letter to me in the summer when I was weary, Elder Ruston said I would go back to it with joy. He repeated Jeremiah (Lamentations) to me, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me," and I can truly say, "Great is thy faithfulness."

In your letter to me after my baptism you said, "My prayer is that you will always feel that God is your refuge and strength, and a very present help in

trouble." In my great joy and happiness it caused me to realize that there would be trials ahead for me. The Good Book tells us that in this world ye shall have tribulation. And how diversified are these trials. How often we have to cry out "unclean! unclean!" As I thought of it the other morning, *and felt it*, the hymn came into my mind with sweetness, "The Christian cries unclean, unclean, Even though released from guilt." The other night I was reading about the Cities of Refuge, and I noted, with interest, how three cities were built the other side of Jordan, and how they were placed so well balanced all over Palestine, a day's journey from one to the other, and it was sweet to me to think that there were as many Cities of Refuge for those outside the church as in the church. Many times over my years of experience I have had to flee to a City of Refuge from the avenger of blood, and now that I am in the church I expect I shall have to flee many times again. I came across a hymn which I do not remember having read before. It seemed so suitable.

"Why should a son redeemed with blood,
Born not of man, but born of God,
Feel an eternal war within,
'Twixt reigning grace and striving sin?"

'Tis but to make him every day,
From self to Jesus turn away:
His very falls shall make him wise,
And teach him where his victory lies."

Mrs. Gilbert Lee's letter was very sweet. As I read it a scripture that was very precious to me last summer came into my mind. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also (I love that) that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of

the contrite ones." I felt the dream she had of the end of the world was the end of the legal heaven and earth to her, and the light that shone, the gospel, and that when she dreamed that her brother was killed overseas he probably was. As Gertrude quoted, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

I think the passing away of that legal heaven and earth wonderful. I used to think when I read it it meant the end of time, brushing aside the fact that Jesus said it would happen while those very people lived, as it was the only heaven and earth I knew about so felt it must be that. I understand it now and what a revelation it is. I feel I understood experimentally the destruction of that temple, not one stone left on top of another, before realizing that it actually happened as a type. And how complete was his work! I very much enjoyed Elder Bellow's article. I often wondered what that meant. He expressed it very clearly and beautifully. I remember his saying one time, "How beautifully harmonious is the word of God when rightly understood."

I was reading "Josephus' Works" the other day where Jacob journeyed up to get a wife. It was very sweet to me. On his way he had the experience of having stones for a pillow. He poured oil on them. It said he would come back and pay tithes. When he saw Rachel he loved her. He had to serve seven years and he did not know it was Leah (the law) that was with him until the dawn—"he lay with her until the dawn." Yes, it is when the light comes we see these things. He had to serve another seven years. How necessary it is that we serve this seven years (a complete time) under the law, and how necessary that we spend another seven years (a complete time) before we are

given to embrace the gospel (Rachel). I used to wonder why Jacob had to serve these seven years. I feel I know now. James said, "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

I remember one time when I was very downcast sitting in the Ekfrid meeting-house when these words came to me with much sweetness. It must be fourteen years ago, and I thought of them many times along the way. Another time comes to my mind when I was on night duty six or seven years ago. Again I was very low. My patient was sleeping. I wanted to read and I could not, the book was sealed. I made the attempt three or four times. After awhile I thought I will try once more. I opened the Bible and the words seemed to come up before me, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." I was filled! I read on and on, and for a month I do not ever remember reading the Bible with more comfort and pleasure. In my Bible where I have this passage marked, right opposite I have the passage marked, "For he is faithful that promised." Many times I turned to it hoping. Two years ago at the May meeting Elder Topping took that very scripture for his text Sunday afternoon. It was beautiful! And whoever else it was for, I felt it was for me. Along with it he talked about Hannah, how she went year after year to the house of prayer. "Cast not away therefore your confidence."

Mr. and Mrs. Patterson's note touched me very much. "We are not church

members, but strong believers," said much I thought. I felt I knew where they were, and how they felt. I hope they will have the joy of being brought into the fold some day. You have to experience it to fully understand it. I have realized that. Since Lobo I have thought a lot about the Queen of Sheba. She heard about the wonder and beauty of the temple, but did not know just how wonderful it was until she entered it. She said the half was never told her. I had heard the members speak of the great joy, but with the Queen of Sheba I could say the half was never told me. Since Lobo I have looked back with amazement at the perfection of God's work over the many years I felt to say with the poet from the depths of my heart:

"And so I'll trust Him all my days,
And take whate'er He sends,
Love, life or death; on all His ways,
My thankful soul depends;
And when He comes, as come He will
I, looking back shall see,
From yon blest height, forever, still—
Whatever is, is best for me."

How often I have said to Sister Jennie Gillis this last couple of years, that everything I had ever hoped in, promises that I had felt, were from the Lord, time had revealed that I was mistaken and wondered if I was still hanging on to the hope of eternal life because time had not yet revealed it to me, and that when I came to my journey's end would I find that I was mistaken in that too. I feared very much at times, but in some wonderful way I can now see that the crooked things were straight, and the rough places plain, and can say from the depths of my heart that of all His good promises not one failed. You know the promise I received in the summer is wonderful to me, "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the

water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers," etc. It seemed as if all through the years I have been waiting for something, hoping for a hope, but at Lobo and since, it did seem that my teachers were not removed into a corner any more, that my eyes can see my teachers and I could, and can say I have a good hope. One time a few weeks ago I opened the Bible at the words, "Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him," and I was made to feel that I would be tried to the last inch too, and I was, right up until they received me into the church. I remember one time when I was just a little girl hearing Elder Coulter preach from the words "Jehovah-Jireh" (the Lord sees and the Lord will provide). Right there it was as if I literally placed my whole life (both naturally and spiritually) in His hands with implicit confidence and faith, and I feel that faith has held me all down through the years, but as Elder Ruston said in a letter to me last summer "If God gives one a grain of faith that faith will and must be tried. It is not an easy path. The scripture calls it much tribulation, but faith is stronger than fear." How true!

A couple of years ago that scripture presented itself very beautifully to me where Jacob was blessing Joseph's sons, and how Joseph pressed so hard for Manasseh to get the blessing. He put him at Jacob's right hand. How we push for the flesh! But it is said that Jacob guided his hands wittingly, and crossed his hands and through a cross Ephraim is blessed. Joseph still insisted, but you are blessing Ephraim. Jacob said, "I know it, my son, I know it." Yes, he knoweth the way that we take, and when he has tried us, we shall come forth as gold. We learn to take the spoiling of

our goods joyfully, knowing that in heaven we have a better and more enduring substance. Yours in a precious hope. (Miss) BECKIE McLACHLIN

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND EDITORS: It is time for me to send in some on my subscription, and I should like to send a few thoughts that would be a comfort to the readers of the *Signs* but without God's guidance I cannot do this. Indeed, I will say that without his guidance I can do nothing. So many times I am made to think on a few small words. Some times for days the words "fear not" will be so full of comfort to me. Our dear heavenly Father left it on record many times, "fear not." In his power to see the end from the beginning he knew what fearful creatures we would be, and many times said to some one or several of his saints, "fear not." I have tried so many times to write the letter I am now writing, but have been filled with a fear or dread of saying some unbecoming or unsound thing that would prove to the brethren what I often fear I am instead of what I sometimes hope I am. But this fear has been held in check and I am told to fear not, so I find myself revealing some of my scattered meditations. Other words I often think on and find comfort in is the phrase, "Be not afraid." Do the words "fear not" and "be not afraid" convey the same meaning? "Be not afraid" hold more comfort for me than "fear not." When the poor trembling saints saw Jesus walking on the sea and were so fearful it was a spirit, how wonderful to hear him say, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Even then Peter must try further to be certain and tried to walk on the water. Then he was truly and terribly afraid, and again was given assurance by the blessed Christ.

Several times in the Scriptures we see, "Be not afraid." Blessed words! I can tell of its being given a spiritual meaning to me many times, but also it has come to me many times when I was very literally afraid of very literal things. One way it has been the greatest comfort was when I have traveled alone to and from my meetings by bus since my dear husband passed on. I have not gone alone many times, but rather than miss attending I have done so a few times. Being lame and also subject to very sudden attacks of illness, I am fearful for several days before to attempt the trip, then when the day and hour comes to go I am really afraid, terribly afraid, of what may happen along the way to cause trouble and embarrassment to strangers.

It has been many years since anything but sickness kept me from meeting with my brethren and sisters. So I try to trust in God for strength and help I may be in need of, and comes the thought, "Be not afraid." I seem to feel that all will be well for He has said, I will be with thee, I'll never forsake thee, I am thy God, be ye not afraid. Oh, what comfort to be not afraid. What comfort to know I need not be afraid! Many times I have a task, a physical task, that must be done and I do not have the strength to do it, but comes the thought I must not be afraid, my God will supply all my needs. So I go from day to day. I have learned that he is my all, my life, breath, food and strength in this time world; my joy, my glory, my being in the next world.

I so often find myself inquiring as to my existence after the article we call death. Sometimes I am fearful I was not predestinated to glory and for a short time I experience what it means to be hopeless, and then comes the sweet comforting words, "fear not."

When the final moments of life are at hand will I be afraid? Truly I think not for I hope to then hear the blessed words, "It is I; be not afraid." Oh, may it be so, not only for me but for all God's dear saints. Truly he has said, I will never forsake thee, I will be with thee even to the end of the world. It is not too much to hope for. Dear friends, it is what I hope for; that the omnipresent God is every-where; the very merciful God is truly ever merciful; the all powerful God is really all powerful. My natural mind cannot grasp it, but sometimes this all powerful God gives me the power to see and know that all these things are true of him. Then with one of old I can say,

"I know that my redeemer liveth," and I can add in my own words he is many times more than what I hope he is and I believe him to be. How humble it makes me feel when I claim him for my God, when I can call him my Father, yet how glorious to be able to do so. Only by his love and mercy can I do so for if left to myself I am sure I would never even have desired to claim his love or his mercy.

Now I must close for I have written more than I expected to do and it is rather like myself, weak and blundering. I have received the *Signs* regularly and read every copy. I hope to take it as long as I live. It and my other Baptist papers mean much to me, and often I read some article or letter through tears of thankfulness. Yours unworthily.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

324 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur, Ga.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Have just received my June *Signs* and read the wonderful article written by you, "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." Prov.

9:1-2. It is so beautiful to me and the way you expressed it is certainly grand and glorious. Years ago when Elder Eubanks lived in Georgia he preached such a wonderful sermon from these same words: They have lived in my mind for all these years. There is nothing more glorious to me than to hear one of God's called ministers take a scripture and bring out the true interpretation of it. May God bless you to keep writing. (Mrs.) L. D. ADAMS

Newport, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: No doubt you think I am a little careless about sending in my subscription promptly but it is all my fault. I see, hear and know of so much confusion of late that my mind has been so upset, I have become nervous and I can hardly control myself enough to write any one concerning either natural or spiritual happenings. Natural confusions do not bother my mind so much, but when confusion enters among God's little children, as some hope they are, it hurts my heart to see or hear of such if we possess the hope that we feel we have been changed from nature to grace, or called out of darkness into that marvelous light, and have that feeling to know that "we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Then we as his little children love God because he laid down his life for us on Calvary's cross, bled, died and rose for our justification and redemption from our sins. Why is it we cannot lay down our lives for our brethren whom we should love and esteem more highly than we do ourselves? Then let brotherly love continue among us for God is love and love hides a multitude of

faults. If ye are of God and have overcome the world, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." If ye are of God, "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." So my plea to all is to love one another with an everlasting love, whereby we have been loved, having no confidence in the flesh but believing in one faith, hope and baptism; one God the Father of us all and especially to those that believe He gave his only Son that we might be one redeemed family of God to praise him for-ever-more.

The *Signs* and *Old Faith Contender* have been quite a source of comfort to me of late for I am, so to speak, a little shut in from the people I love and esteem so much. I can witness with so many as they express my feelings so well. I do not get to hear preaching often therefore my papers feed my poor soul to overflowing. In conclusion I would say that I visited our Association last fall which convened with the church at Muddy Creek. I had the pleasure of hearing Elder E. J. Lambert preach twice. I enjoyed both sermons and heard many more of the Baptists express their feelings. Said they loved and endorsed the doctrine he set forth. Think all would like to see him visit us again if he has the mind to do so. His article in the *Signs* was wonderful. Enclosed you will find money-order for my renewal. A little sister in hope of eternal life. (Mrs.) W. H. CANNON

2211 - 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending \$3 to pay for the good old *Signs* for 1949. I get so much comfort from all the good things that I find in its pages. I can hardly lay it down until I have read it through from cover to cover. I certainly did enjoy the very able article by Elder W. L. Slusher in the January issue. I heard him preach once here in River-

side a long time ago. I think that was before he was ordained.

Tomorrow, Jan. 19, 1949, will find me at my 88th milepost on life's rugged road; too feeble in mind and body to be of service to any one; even to write anything that would be of comfort to one of our Father's children. However. I do not feel to complain for the dear Lord has blessed me in times and ways beyond my numbering for which I know I have not been as thankful as I should in times past. In the midst of the deserved wrath he hath remembered mercy.

Long may you live to publish the truth as it is in Jesus is the prayer of your most unworthy brother in the love of truth and hope of a glorious immortality.

J. W. HAYNES

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have attended Little River, West Tennessee and Flint River Associations. The introductory sermons were the grandest, most glorious praise to our three one God. Elder I. N. Darnell preached the introductory at Little River; Elder R. L. Biggs, West Tennessee and Elder Matt Brock at Flint River. We sometimes feel it is too good for us that it be our lot to be enabled to attend and view such fellowship, such harmony and oneness. May it be the truth that when we pass away and on through our part of the furtherance of the gospel that God will go on raising up (if what we teach and preach be true and that is our hope) those whom he chose in Christ Jesus to further this gospel—this glorious gospel.

We meet, Lord willing, with the Bethel Association this coming week end. This family whose name we are sending in for your paper is a wonderful family in the Lord and we were much pleased to present what we think the *Signs* stands for to them. In fellowship. (Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

JANUARY, 1950

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NEW YEAR'S GREETING

In our greeting for 1948 we had the subject of *love* for our theme. In 1949 our theme was *mercy*. We have selected *grace* as our theme for this year. These three attributes portray the goodness of God more fully, perhaps, than any that could be chosen. The most the human mind can do is to become amazed with wonder in contemplation of them. For many years, we have endeavored to maintain, both from the pulpit and through the columns of the *Signs of the Times*, that the doctrine of salvation by grace, for time and eternity, is the one point above all others which distinguishes the Old School Baptist Church from every other religious organization in the world. Much has been written on this subject, but much remains to be said, and human nature being what it is, this point of doctrine cannot be emphasized too much or repeated too often.

Through the courtesy of one of our good friends, we have been privileged to read a book entitled "The Wonder of Grace," by Prof. Herman Hoeksema,

and published by William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., both of whom have kindly given us permission to quote all or as much of chapter one as we wish. This chapter is based upon Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved." The author in this chapter not only strongly emphasizes the fact that salvation is all of grace, but at the same time points out the fallacy of the contrary opinion, erroneously presented by evangelical and other so-called high ecclesiastical dignitaries. While the truth is presented in a slightly different manner from what our readers are accustomed, we believe it is the real truth, and we earnestly hope the variety in expression of presentation will make it all the more interesting reading for our family group. It furnishes unmistakable evidence to us that God is continually carrying on his work of making gracious characters of men and women of Adam's race in all walks of life, who are not ashamed to declare plainly his glorious truth, for all of which we desire to praise his most holy name. We quote below the article referred to in full, hoping that it will please our heavenly Father to use it for his own honor and glory, and for the comfort and edification of his redeemed flock, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

R. L. D.

THE IDEA OF SALVATION
BY GRACE

The subject, various aspects of which are discussed in the following pages, should need no introduction to the believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. That we are saved by grace, not by works, and that, therefore, salvation is the work of God, in no wise of man, is a truth that touches upon the very heart of the gospel. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:8.

The doctrine of salvation by grace is one of those fundamental truths of the Christian faith, the true knowledge and correct understanding of which is of great importance for the Church of Christ in the world, and for the believer individually. One who errs on this point must needs have a wrong conception of all the rest of Christian doctrine, and corrupt the truth concerning God and man, concerning sin and redemption, concerning Christ and the Church. Moreover, it is a subject of great practical significance for the believer, one that never fails to arouse his interest. He realizes that it concerns his only comfort in life and death: either he is saved by grace only, or he must needs perish. Hence, he never grows weary of hearing the gospel of salvation by sovereign grace proclaimed and expounded unto him in all the riches of its implications. And as he grows in the knowledge of this truth, he will grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus.

Small wonder, then, that from the earliest period of the history of the New Testament Church this subject occupied a central place of interest. It was the theme of millions of sermons. Many a volume was written to expound and defend this truth. It is the theme of thousands of hymns. And often it was the occasion of sharp controversy. And today, one may hear of salvation by grace in sermon and song, from the pulpit and over the air, literally every day. And if, perhaps, it might seem well-nigh impossible to say anything about so thoroughly exhausted a subject that has not been said hundreds of times before, we may comfort ourselves with the thought, that it may, at least be possible to recall some very old truths in connection with our subject that are either forgotten or denied in modern times.

Our subject is, of course, rich in

meaning, and presents several aspects. To say that we are saved by grace expresses the truth that salvation is of the Lord. This should be emphasized from the outset. For grace is of God, and God is free and sovereign. To be saved by grace, then, means that grace is the only source, the sole explanation, the ultimate reason and ground of our salvation, the efficient cause of all that is implied in the work of our redemption and deliverance from sin and death. We are saved by grace only, without the work or cooperation of man, or we are not saved by grace at all. Hence, one who would speak of salvation by grace, must understand that he is speaking of a divine work throughout. But all the works of God are eternal. Hence, salvation by grace has its source in eternity, and one cannot properly treat the subject of grace without considering the fundamental truth of divine and sovereign election: we are chosen by grace. For God "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." Eph. 1:3, 4. Grace is sovereign. It is divine, and, therefore, eternal. From the inscrutable depths of eternity spring all the spiritual blessings that lift us from the dark depths of sin and death into the glory of eternal life: the blessings of atonement and reconciliation, of redemption and deliverance, of regeneration and calling, of justification and sanctification, of the forgiveness of sins and the adoption unto children of God, of preservation and perseverance, of the resurrection from the dead and the final glorification. All these blessings of salvation are of pure grace, for "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:16. And all these various

aspects of salvation by grace demand our consideration.

However, we might do well, first of all, to consider the general question: what is salvation? This question is by no means superfluous. For, on the one hand, on our answer to this question must needs depend our conception of the part grace has in our salvation; and, on the other hand, especially in modern times, the truth concerning salvation is distorted and corrupted in more than one way. Salvation is not the same as reformation, the improvement of man and of the world; it has nothing in common with the modern notion of the building of character. This modernistic conception recognizes, indeed, that man is not what he ought to be. There is something wrong with him, and with the world he is making. Especially in our own times, now the whole imposing structure of human culture and civilization threatens to collapse, this is deeply felt. However, it is maintained that man is not inherently corrupt. He is fundamentally good. But he is in need of reform. We must apply ourselves to man's reformation, to the building of his character, as well as to the improvement of his environment. And in this noble effort we must take Jesus as our example, and turn to his teachings, especially to the sermon on the mount, for our program of reformation. If man only learns to follow in his steps, and to apply his teachings to all his life and relationships, he will be saved. He will then learn to acknowledge that, like Jesus, so he, too, is the son of God; that God is the loving Father of all, and all men are brethren. And thus he will become a good, peace loving creature, that is capable of making of the present world a kingdom of God in which righteousness shall dwell. Needless to say that in such a view of salvation there is no room for grace. Salva-

tion is the work of proud man, not of God. And it is quite superfluous to prove that this human philosophy has nothing in common with the biblical gospel of salvation.

However, it is not only in modernistic circles that one meets with a perverted presentation of the truth of salvation. On the contrary, also they who ostensibly preach the gospel of Christ, but in the meantime present the matter of salvation as something that ultimately depends for its realization on the will of man, distort the doctrine of sovereign grace. Salvation, according to this view, is something like a present that is all prepared and that is freely and graciously offered, but which one may either refuse or accept. Or it is like a kind invitation to some party or banquet, with which one may either comply or which he may politely decline. So the sinner is offered salvation, chiefly consisting in escape from hell and entrance into heaven after this life, on condition that he will accept Christ. This salvation is all prepared for the sinner. In himself he is damned, worthy of eternal death. But Christ died for every sinner, and merited for all the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal glory. So far it is all of grace. And that the gospel is preached to sinners, and this glorious redemption is offered them freely, that, too, is of grace.

But it is at this point that salvation as a work of divine grace and power ends. For beyond the merited redemption of Christ and the offered salvation, grace is not sovereign and efficacious: it is powerless to save, and actually to deliver from the dominion of sin and death, except by the sinner's consent. If the sinner only accepts the salvation that is offered to him, if only he will say: "I accept Christ as my personal Savior," all will be well with

him, and grace can proceed; but if he is recalcitrant, and stubbornly declines the earnest invitation to be saved, grace can do nothing with him. Many a preacher does not hesitate openly and boldly to declare that God is powerless to save the sinner, unless the latter gives his consent; and that Christ can do no more than he did, unless the sinner permits him to proceed with his work of salvation. Jesus is willing to save, but his willingness must suffer shipwreck on the rock of man's contrary and refractory will. He stands at the door of the sinner's heart, and knocks, but the key of the door is on the inside, and the Savior cannot enter, unless the sinner opens the door. Hence arises that very common form of preaching that is erroneously called evangelical, and that always reaches its climax in the well-known, extremely sensational "altar call." I say erroneously, for "evangelical preaching" is preaching of the gospel, and the true gospel never presents a powerless God, or a Christ impotent to save. Since the grace of God is dependent on the choice of the sinner's will, it follows that the persuasion of human language, of the voice of the preacher, pleading and begging, may assist him to make the right choice, and induce him to let Jesus into his heart! Thus Christ is travestied!

O, to be sure, salvation is deliverance from hell and damnation. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36. But, first of all, salvation is much more than the mere escape from punishment and hell, and a check on the bank of heaven that is to be cashed after death. It is a wonderwork of the Almighty, Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as if they were. Rom. 4:17. It is a work in which God

becomes revealed unto us in "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, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places." Eph. 1:19, 20. It is a work, no less divine, and even more glorious, than the work of creation. All that is required to make of the sinner, dead in sin, filled with enmity against God, cursing the Almighty and raising his rebellious fist in the face of the Lord of heaven and earth, walking in darkness and hating light,—to make of such a sinner a righteous and holy child of God, humbly asking what God wills that he shall do, filled with the love of God, and for ever singing his praises; and to place that sinner, thus redeemed and delivered, in living fellowship with the glorious company of all the redeemed and glorified sinners, so that they together constitute a Church, a beautiful house of God, a holy temple in the Lord, to the praise of the glory of his grace in the beloved,—all this belongs to the work, the mighty work of God that is called salvation! And, secondly, salvation by grace means that it is an exclusively divine work, absolutely free and sovereign, in which man has no part at all, and that does not in any sense depend upon the choice of man's will. Even as the work of creation is of God alone, which he accomplished without the cooperation of the creature, so the work of salvation is exclusively God's work in which man has no part whatever. Even as Adam lived and was an active creature, not in or before his being created, but by virtue of this marvellous work of God, so the sinner lives, and becomes positively active, so that he wills to be saved and embraces Christ, not in cooperation with God who saves him, but

as a result of the wonder of Grace performed upon him. Salvation by grace implies that grace is always first. True, "whosoever will may come," but the will to come is not preventive to grace, but subsequent to it as its fruit.

Consider from what depths of darkness and death salvation delivers man, and unto what heights of life and glory it exalts him, and judge for yourselves whether at any particular stage of this marvellous work of God could be a cooperating party with God. Popularly, salvation has often been defined as that wonderwork of God whereby he delivers the sinner from the greatest evil, and makes him partaker of the highest good. But what is the greatest evil from which grace delivers the sinner? Listen to the words of Scripture in Eph. 2:1-3: "And you—who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." That is the evil from which grace saves us! And what does it mean, that apart from grace, we are dead in trespasses and sins?

O, it signifies exactly what it says; that by our sins we are, by nature, just as dead unto God and righteousness, unto all good works, as the corpse in the grave is dead unto all activity of any kind. It means that, apart from grace, we are wholly incapable of doing any good, or even of thinking and willing anything that is pleasing to God. We are bound from within with unbreakable shackles of darkness and corruption. We are slaves of sin, willing slaves to be sure, but slaves withal,

loving darkness rather than the light. And this spiritual-ethical death is God's own wrath upon us: the punishment for sin. For we are children of wrath from our birth, guilty and damnable because of Adam's transgression. And we can only daily increase our guilt and our damnation.

Such is our miserable plight. There is a debt we can never pay, nor do we care to pay it. There is a power of corruption from which we cannot and will not deliver ourselves. There is wrath and damnation from which we can never escape, nor do we care to, or seek to escape, for we are enemies of God, and the carnal mind is death! In that horrible depth of misery grace finds the sinner.

Do you imagine, then, that he is capable or willing to cooperate with God to his own salvation, or that any emotional and sentimental plea of a preacher will persuade him to desire and to seek salvation in Christ? I tell you nay. Before grace takes hold of that sinner and raises him from the dead, he will always refuse to accept the proffered salvation, and prefer death to life, sin to righteousness, the devil to God! He must be saved by grace as a divine wonder!

And consider, too, unto what heights of glory saves the sinner. He is made partaker of the highest good! But what is the highest good? It is eternal life! Yes; but what is eternal life? Is it a sort of carnally conceived everlasting state of bliss in a beautiful place called heaven? God forbid! O, to be sure, heaven is blessed and beautiful. But it is so principally, because God is there, and Christ is there, and the saints in Christ are there. And the blessedness of heaven consists in this that it is the house of God, and that in that house we may dwell in fellowship with the living God, a fellowship that is more

intimate than the first man Adam ever tasted, for it has its center in the incarnated word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ! To be the perfect sons of God, knowing God even as we are known, righteous as he is righteous, holy as he is holy, loving and beloved forever, seeing him face to face, and having our delight in the doing of his word, and the keeping of his precepts, loving him with all our heart and mind and soul and strength in heavenly perfection and glory,—that is the blessedness of heaven, and that is the height of glory to which grace raises us in Jesus Christ our Lord! But do you imagine that there could be any cooperation on the part of that miserable sinner we just described to reach that height of perfection? Or would you say that the sinner who is an enemy of God even longs for that perfect fellowship with God, that he that loves darkness is capable of yearning for that state of perfect and everlasting light? I tell you nay. He is saved by grace, and by grace only, as a wonderwork of him who raises the dead, and calleth the things that are not as if they were!

Saved by grace! Delivered from wrath, guilt, damnation, corruption and death,—all by grace! Clothed with righteousness, holiness, life and glory,—by grace only! Translated into light, from death into life, from shame into glory, from hell into heaven,—all by the power of God's wondrous grace! And all because of the eternal, sovereign love of Him, who chose the things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence!

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." Deut. 32:11-12.

Elder Williams of Decatur, Miss. has requested views on this scripture. May God bless us with light of thought and liberty of expression to comfort God's little children with some thoughts on the wonderful care God exercises upon his own. We enter into the discussion of this scripture with a deep felt sense of inability. We fully realize our dependence upon God to *stir* us up at this time to properly meditate upon this scripture.

Jacob, who is the "lot of his inheritance" is the object of these expressions. As God dealt with Jacob, he deals with each and every one of his children. Read the context and you will find that Jacob was passive in the hands of a merciful God. It was God who found him; it was God who led him about; it was God who instructed him; it was God who kept him; and it was God who *made* him ride on the high places of the earth. Jacob could not claim any credit for anything, but must bow to God and realize that it was by God's mercies that he was so wonderfully delivered.

In this text God is likened to an eagle in some of his dealings. The kings of Assyria, Egypt and Babylon were likened unto eagles for their *power* and *dominion*. The Chaldean armies were likened unto eagles because of their swiftness. The Edomites exalted themselves and made their nests *high* as the eagles. It is said that the eagle builds its nest in high places in the tops of the rocks—in the highest rocks which no man can reach. Of course the outer part of the nest is constructed with

rough, jagged, coarse and thorny material. The innermost part is lined with smooth, soft matter that affords the eaglets a place of sweet repose. This is certainly a comfortable place of refuge until the nest is stirred up. The soft down that interlines the eagle's nest typifies the seeming righteousness of the flesh and the confidence that the unregenerated child of God has in his own cleanness and ability. He is content with himself and with his place of abode. He is at ease and does not care to venture from this sweet place of self-righteousness and carnal affections. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes."

As the eagle stirs up this soft nest and makes it a bed of thorns to the eaglets, so the Lord stirs up the souls of his people, and makes bare the thorn in the flesh so that their place of sweet repose becomes a miserable place of abode. When God begins his work there is a *stirring* in the soul that nothing can still, silence, quench or quell. When this begins with you you become very greatly alarmed and anxious. This anxiety becomes so miserable that you try to rid yourself of this condition by your own activity. You become just as restless as the eaglets with the same results—the thorns prick you more every turn you make. You are pricked in the heart as those spoken of in Acts 2:37. As the God of Israel stirred up the spirits of the kings of Assyria and prompted them to action, he awakens and disturbs you and causes you to become much concerned over your miserable condition.

Have you ever been awakened to the fact that you are a sinner? Have you made resolutions to better that condition? Have you tried to deliver yourself and found that all your trials availed nothing? Have you been shown that all your righteousness is as filthy

rags in God's sight? Have you lost confidence in your own self? Has there been a time that your soul fainted in you and you had no hope in this world or that to come? If you can answer the above questions in the affirmative, (I am persuaded) God has stirred up your nest and has fluttered over you. You have been shaken from that nest and you are falling toward the abyss below. What a fear accompanies this fall! You have nothing to rely upon! You fear the consequences of the jagged rocks and the abyss below which surely means sudden destruction to you! I experienced this falling for many miserable months. I could see nothing before me but this blackness of darkness forever. I was afraid to live and afraid to die. I cried out in anguish of soul, "Woe is me! for I am undone!" As the eagle watches the young eaglet as it falls toward the abyss below, I trust that God was watching me. As the eagle swoops down beneath the falling eaglet, "Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," I feel that God so dealt with me. What a glad surprise when he came to my rescue!

The thought that God watches us and protects us before regeneration brings to mind that he was the God of Jacob. Jacob is the unregenerate name of Israel. Who is this God of Jacob? The God that gave him the blessing of the birthright though he was a junior; the God that delivered him from the murderous hand of his brother in the day of trouble; the God that protected him and manifested himself to him; his covenant God. God sometimes says, I am the God of Jacob. This means I am your God before regeneration, as well as after when you attempt to supplant me with proud free will and blunt my sovereignty with your rebellion; when you took my covenant name in a

covenant character, I am your God still.

Yes, it was a day of rejoicing when God came to your rescue to prevent you from being utterly destroyed by the jagged rocks and the abyss beneath. He rescued you on his wings of love. He whispered to you, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He informed you that he was a merciful and gracious God. He restored your soul. Jesus informed you that he had fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for you. He told you that he had taken your sins upon his own shoulder and had paid the penalty, satisfied justice by shedding his own blood for the remission of sins and had died in your stead. He spoke sweet peace to your soul that he had wrought out eternal salvation for you. He put a new song in your mouth that praised God and confessed Jesus as your Savior. You are resting in the sweet embrace of his love. Your soul is absorbed in this experience. You are blessed to exclaim, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." You can say with one of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." You feel that your worries and fears are in the past and that you will ride forever upon his wings. You can see the Father, Son and Holy Ghost enacting, determining and covenanting for, and mutually swearing each to each for the accomplishment of your salvation. Did this sweet experience continue? No, if your experience coincides with my experience, it did not continue. It was of short duration.

After the eagle rescues the young and bears them comfortably upon her wings for awhile, she tilts her wings and permits them to fall again toward the abyss below. Did God deal with you as the eagle deals with her young? While you were riding joyfully upon his everlasting love and sweet promises, all was well with your soul. You said,

my God reigneth, and "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Then, all at once, you realized that you were again falling toward destruction. The sweet embrace of that love was gone. Your former experience taught you that there was one who did rescue you, but, would he rescue again? You looked for him but you could not find him. You sincerely asked, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Psalms 77:7-9. You are falling down, down, down! You yet have a faint hope that almost vanishes away. Just before you would die in despair, God rescues you again from destruction. The wings of God's mercy and love comes underneath you and raises you up, and soars high above the cares and troubles of this world, and you again rejoice because of his amazing grace that can descend low enough to prevent you from dashing your head against a stone. It is our lot to be shaken many times from the wings of God's manifest love and mercy, but he yet cares for us and carefully watches over us.

It is necessary that we be taught again and again of our infirmities and weakness in the flesh and our total dependence upon him. We are made to cry out so often to him to be merciful to our unrighteousness. We shall have tribulations and suffer trials and afflictions here in this world, and to realize that, "here have we no continuing city." These joyful experiences are not continuous but it is a mixture of joy and sorrow.

We trust that the grace of God enables us to "Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in

Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:14. At that time when he shall take us upon his wings it will be forever. All will be joyful for-ever-more. No more trials and tribulations. No more heartaches nor fear of falling into utter destruction. When he takes us upon his wings and carries us into the Holiest of Holies where Jesus dwells we shall forever be satisfied.

E. J. L.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder H. O. Nash, 431 Hardendorf Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga. has very kindly consented to serve as Associate Editor of our family paper. This is good news, indeed, for our readers.

R. LESTER DODSON

MEMORIAL

Inasmuch as it has seemed good in the sight of Almighty God to remove from our midst by death, our dearly beloved Brother and Pastor, ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS on the 18th day of August 1949, and

Inasmuch as we, the churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, do realize that we must bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord and Savior; and that we do feel most deeply bereaved in this loss of our dear Brother and Pastor who has so faithfully served us as an undershepherd, teacher and minister for an unbroken period of thirty-nine years; and that we do feel to praise our Lord and Savior for the wise counsel, the faithful and fatherly interests and admonitions and the unceasing efforts in ministering to our spiritual needs and comforts, and for the sincerity and earnestness of our departed Brother, and for his gift in the ministry of the Word, and his prayerful desire to be kept a true servant to the church and to his people, be it

Resolved that this memorial be written and sent with our deep and heartfelt sympathy to his bereaved companion, Mrs. Ella Adams Lefferts and to his family. Their loss and sorrow is likewise our loss and sorrow, yet we must know that this departure is his eternal inheritance of that promised possession. Thus rather than voicing our present sorrows, we would pray to be enabled to keep our eyes upon Him that has promised never to leave us or forsake us, and to offer praise for the blessings bestowed upon us through his fruitful labors. This life and these blessings will live on in the memories of all those with whom he associated. Also be it

Resolved that a copy of this memorial be sent for publication in the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** and that it be printed in the

minutes of this meeting.

A. D. ALSTON, Moderator
G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
ARTHUR CARTER, Asst. Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. NANCY ELLEN CULLEN was born May 11, 1853, and passed away May 21, 1949 in her home on North Broadway, Providence, Ky. at the age of 91 years. She was a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Andy Curry, and widow of the late Z. B. Cullen. Born in Webster Co., she and Mr Cullen were married in Shawneetown, Ill., July 25, 1875. Eight children were born to them of which five survive. Mrs. Les Herron, Nashville, Tenn., Mrs. Ellie Melton, Mrs. Ida Bell, Mrs Everett Givens, and Clarence Cullen of Providence, Ky.

Funeral services were held at the home May 23, 1949, conducted by Elder L. P. Harriss of Du Quoin, Ill., assisted by Elder W. T. Clayton of Providence, Ky. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence for more than fifty years. Burial in Cullen Cemetery near Providence. The following was one of her favorite songs after Mr. Cullen's death.

"My head and stay is called away,
And I am left alone;
My husband dear who was so near
Has fled away and gone.

It breaks my heart, 'tis hard to part
With one who was so kind;
Where shall I go to vent my smart,
Or ease my troubled mind?

In wisdom's ways we spent our days,
Much comfort we did find;
But he is gone, in dust he lays,
And I am left behind.

Naught can I find to ease my mind,
In things which are below;
For earthly toys but vex my joys
And aggravate my woe.

But I'll repair to Jesus, where
I'll ease my troubled breast;
To Christ above, who is my Lord,
And my eternal rest.

And O that he would send for me,
And call my spirit home,
To worlds of rest among the blest,
Where troubles never come.

Written by her daughter, (Mrs.) IDA BELL.

ELDER HORACE HOGELAND LEFFERTS of Leesburg, Va. was taken from this life on the morning of August 18, 1949. He leaves his dear wife, Mrs. Ella Adams Lefferts, and six children: William G. Lefferts, West Allis, Wis., Henry H. Lefferts, Arlington, Va., Hurst A. Lefferts, Charleston, W. Va., Mrs. Sarah L. Ramsey, Miami, Fla., Horace L. Lefferts, Wilmington, Del., and Miles S. Lefferts, Arlington, Va. There are also eight grandchildren and one sister, Mrs. Naomi L. Rounds, South Yarmouth, Mass., surviving.

Elder Lefferts was a son of the late George W. and Sarah L. Lefferts. He was born at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., April 23, 1879, making him at his death 70 years and nearly four months of age. September 24, 1903, he was married to Miss Ella Adams, daughter of the late Elder William Adams of Newton Co., Ga.

At the age of seventeen, while a student at the West Chester Normal School, where he was preparing for the profession of teaching, he received a hope in Jesus and four years later he asked for a home with the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pa. His Pastor, Elder Silas H. Durand, being sick at the time, he was baptized by Elder F. A. Chick, December 16, 1900. By the same church he was licensed to preach on April 12, 1902, and was ordained on June 5, 1903. The ministers attending his ordination were Elders, E. V. White, P. D. Gold, J. T. Rowe, J. G. Eubanks, P. Y. Sawin, L. B. Hanover, G. D. Robertson, F. W. Keene, J. E. Gore, J. C. Mellott, D. M. Vail, W. W. Meredith, F. A. Chick and Silas H. Durand.

Elder Lefferts was called as Pastor of the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. in 1905. Three years later in 1908 the churches of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting called him to serve them. After a year he accepted their call, and in 1909 became Pastor of the churches of Frying Pan and New Valley, Va. and Mill Creek, W. Va. Later he accepted calls from Mt. Zion, Va., Sidling Hill, Needmore, Trough Creek, Pa., Welch Tract, Del. and Southampton, Pa. churches.

In July 1914 Elder Lefferts became Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times with Elder H. C. Ker. He became Editor in May 1923. In July 1923 Elders R. L. Dodson, George Ruston and C. W. Vaughn became Associate Editors. Elder Lefferts served as Editor until he resigned in 1935. Up until his last year he continued faithful with his civilian employment along with his ministry. For more than fifteen years he was Deputy Treasurer of Loudon Co., Va.

Our Elder Brother stood firm and ever contended for that blessed doctrine once delivered to the saints. He preached total depravity of this flesh and salvation by grace alone; the doctrine of eternal election and final perseverance of the saints that not one shall ever be lost; and the

doctrine of the resurrection of this body.

He was blessed with an unusual gift in teaching and comforting the flock. Although he was given a deep insight into the word of God and led the thoughts of his hearers into the depths of the Scriptures, his words and manner of unfolding were so simply set forth as to enable even a child to understand and to profit under his gift. He was quick to divide the Word of Truth and to correct error, yet the love received from his Savior simply radiated from his ministry. His greatest desire was that he might be made a true servant to his Lord and to his little flock with whom his life was spent. Truly his life belonged to his people and his church, and he was not satisfied unless his labors of love were among them. He taught humility in his walk in this life as well as in his words from the pulpits. In the last meeting before his death he quoted Matthew 20:27. "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." O that we might be made as servants and as little children. How easy it would be then to accept admonitions without offense, to forgive and forget, to trust and to love, and for all human strife and contentions to pass away while we sit at our brother's feet.

Our dear Elder was spared the suffering of a long illness. Although he had suffered several heart attacks before, he preached two sermons and baptized one sister the week end before his death. Even the day before his passing was spent in visiting and comforting the sick and afflicted.

Funeral services were held at the New Valley Church in Loudon Co., Va. on Monday, August 22, 1949, where his membership was, and at the Southampton Church in Bucks Co., Pa. on August 23rd. Ministers present were Elders George Ruston, A. H. Bellows, D. V. Spangler, J. D. Wood, J. P. Helms, R. L. Dodson, W. J. Berry, J. W. Gilliam, H. M. Bennett, and G. L. Weaver. The chapter of his life and of his more than forty-seven years in the ministry and as a servant of his Lord, was opened and again closed in the Southampton Church. Interment was in the William Penn Cemetery in Bucks Co., Pa., near his parents.

Our dear Elder Brother has finished the course set for him on this earth. If we may judge, he has fought a good fight, he has kept the faith, and died in the work as a good and faithful servant. He shall be sadly missed, but by faith we know that God doeth all things well and "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." May that Holy Spirit that gave life to his heart and soul, and supported him all the way through this journey, bear him on high unto the bosom of the Father where he can praise Jehovah God eternally and in a more perfect manner is our prayer in the name of our Savior.

A. D. ALSTON

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a. m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor.
137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church near Stockton, Cal. meets first

and third Sundays in each month and Saturday nights before. For further information write SETH BYNUM, Rt. 3, Box 800G, Stockton, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship third Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5214 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.
B. O. JEFFREYS, Pastor, Weiser, Idaho.

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.
C. H. EVANS, Pastor.

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a.m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p.m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 1:30 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.
ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY
Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.
R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Elder W. N. Green, an Old School Primitive Baptist preacher, of Altus, Okla., will preach each fifth Sunday, at 2:30 p. m. in Municipal Auditorium room 214, Oklahoma City, Okla.

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
18th & Spring Garden Sts. Philadelphia, Pa
(Chapel of 5th Baptist Church)
T. C. KOCH, Clerk.
2764 N. Talyor St., Philadelphia, Pa.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas. Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.

C. B. TEAGUE, Clerk, L. D. ROSE, Pastor.

Forth Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m., on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor.

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor.
HOWARD EASON, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4

miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church, ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m.

C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash., meets every third Sunday, 11 a. m. in the meeting house.

I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

J. L. Howell, Conn., \$2; Mrs. M. V. Thomas, Ill., \$23; R. P. Eaton, Can., \$1; Mrs. M. E. Gambrill, Md., \$2; Eld. J. D. Wood, Md., \$1; N. H. Akers, Va., \$1; Mrs. T. H. McColl, Can., \$5; Eld. H. M. Bennett, Md., \$1; Middletown & Wallkill Church, N. Y., \$25; Miss M. D. Addis, Pa., \$2; Mrs. J. W. Jackson, N. Y., \$1; I. T. McIntyre, N. Y., \$2; E. K. A., N. Y., \$2; R. L. Buckner, Okla., .75.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118

RUTHERFORD, N. J. FEBRUARY, 1950

No. 2

The night is dark, the hours long,
My soul is sore depressed;
I'm weary with life's heavy load,
And long for peaceful rest.

My feet are sore, my eyes are dim,
The path is rough and narrow;
I stumble, fall, then rise again,
To grasp a new tomorrow.

I must not faint, for lo, afar
There gleams a shining light,
'Twill guide me on, and on, and on,
To where there's no more night.

(Mrs.) FLORA BOOKER

Shirlesyburg, Pa.

CORRESPONDENCE

Lillie, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I am enclosing an article on the subject of "Musical Instruments in the Church" at the request of Mr. B. D. Sledge and his sister, Mrs. Nila Edwards. There are some in their part of the country using musical instruments in the churches and calling themselves Primitive Baptists. They asked me to write an article on the subject which may be useful as I have not seen anything on this subject in the papers of late. Since the Limited or Conditionalists are traveling in this direction we should give in our papers scriptural reasons for not using them.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MR. B. D. SLEDGE, RINGGOLD, LA.

DEAR MR. SLEDGE: I arrived home safely Sunday evening about 8 o'clock and found all well as when I left. I was delighted to be with you all in your home

and at the appointments also. I was especially delighted to see so much interest manifested. I truly hope and believe it is the will of God to restore the church there.

I promised you and your sister, Mrs. Edwards, that I would look up the scriptural data concerning instrumental music in the church. I know that almost all, except Old Line Primitive Baptists, use and think nothing about the use of such instruments in the church regardless of what the Scriptures teach on the subject.

I will say first that Jesus and his apostles did not use them, or if they did nothing is recorded in the Scriptures to that effect. If Jesus and his apostles did not advocate the use of such instruments in the church where is there any inspired justification for such practice? Jesus said in Matt. 28: 20, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." We can see from this passage the absence of any record of Jesus or his disciples using them, then if we should use them we know it would be in open violation of his commandment, and the use of them would, in my opinion, at least be something in addition to what the Scriptures teach which I think would be as great a sin as not doing the things he has commanded. Read Rev. 22:19, which shows in so many words that it is a violation to either add to or take from what inspiration

has recorded.

Let us see what the Scriptures say on this subject. I will first quote Gen. 4:21, "And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." If you will notice Jubal was the grandson of Cain, the murderer of his brother Abel. This would seem to me to signify that Cain and his crowd invented and used it. To me this shows, though a literal fact, the type in worship, that it was a tool invented by the generation of Cain, the murderer, and him that God had placed a great curse upon. Read the entire fourth chapter of Genesis. This all being true it is very significant, coupled with the fact that neither Jesus nor his disciples used this invention of Cain, the cursed of the Lord.

Next I will quote Job 21:12: "They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ." Read also the seventh verse of this same chapter which shows that those who do this are wicked. Read from the seventh to the twelfth verses inclusive of this chapter which, to my mind, shows that regardless of the source and invention being from a generation who is wicked and cursed they rejoice in the sound of it. Now I will quote Job 30:31, "My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep." I think Job here is showing that these instruments have become different from what they had originally been to him, but since the Lord God has laid his hand upon him it is so different, and sounded mournful and as the voice of weeping. This would preclude any prospect of there being any scriptural ground for the use of instruments of music in the true church of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the Lord himself did not mention such a thing.

I think Abel was a figure of Jesus Christ, and if so Cain was a figure of

those that crucified Christ; then instrumental music in the church to me is nothing more nor less than the evidence of spiritual wickedness from the source of a murderer, and of him who was under a curse from the righteous God of heaven. I feel sure there is every scriptural indication that such instrumental music is a mark or signal of a wicked origin, no matter what the intention of those who indulge in it is.

Now I want to quote the main scripture that is relied upon to establish scriptural authority for instrumental music. If you mention the subject to ordinary professors, there is not more than one out of one hundred but will say something about Psalm 150:4 which reads as follows, "Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs." This text is the only scripture that anyone can mention on the subject. Why do you say that, some one would ask? Because that would seem within itself to authorize it, and would if there was nothing else on the subject to the contrary, but we find that inspiration condemns David who is the author of the language in Psalm 150:4 on his inventing this wicked instrument or method of worship. In order to thoroughly prove this point I want to quote Amos 6:5. "That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David." This is sufficient to crudely explain why it is that those who are blessed with a true knowledge of the Scriptures, and who are upheld by the spirit of faithfulness, do not tolerate instrumental music in their churches.

All that I have related out of the Old Testament Scriptures is sufficient to condemn it even in Old Testament times, but the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ came and set up his church, and wrote or inspired the whole of the New

Testament without one single example or authority for the use of instrumental music in the church that he established, can leave no doubt that the Old Baptists who refuse this custom, or man made invention, are well within the bounds of scriptural authority in so doing. We also observe that Jesus renewed the use and practice of vocal music in the New Testament church which was practiced in the old church under the law as will be shown by the great songs that Moses and the children of Israel sung when they crossed the Red Sea. Read Exodus 15th chapter and then the songs of David, Solomon and others. This plainly shows that they used the vocal music then, and when the Lord established his church it is found the last night before his crucifixion that he instituted communion, foot washing and also when he was through they sung a song and went out. Matt. 26:30 and Mark 14:26 says, "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." This reference shows beyond any doubt that the Lord himself might have engaged in this hymn, but if he did not it is certain that he encouraged it with his countenance and presence. If there was not something wrong with instrumental music I wonder why He or His apostles did not get an organ or some other kind of instrument? It shows very clearly to me that there was something wrong with it in the sight of God. This is not the only place in the Scriptures that it is shown that David was not always countenanced as being right. In I Chron. 21:1 it shows that Satan moved David to number the children of Israel, and the same thing was very displeasing to the Lord. This being so we can readily understand that the same thing could have happened when David did this inventing or adopting the use of instrumental music. To say

the least there can be no Bible authority found for their use in the light of all the arguments made in connection in this article.

I think what I have written will show thoroughly the ideas the Primitive Baptist Church have had on this subject all through the ages of the New Testament Church of Jesus Christ. Instrumental music is in many ways popular and is charming to the nature of depraved Adamic creatures, but regardless of this if Jesus and his disciples did not encourage it, and if even the teachings of the Old Testament condemned it, then may God forbid that the Old Baptists should adopt it in this dark and degraded age of the world. Our Lord is soon to come, and my desire is that we should be found clothed and adorned with the doctrine, precepts and examples of him that established the church in its beauty and peculiar garment that the world has no desire to wear.

I would like you to send this to your sister after reading it as I have forgotten her address. After she is through with it I would like to have it back for the references on the subject. I may have it published in one of the papers, the Lord willing. It might be useful as I never see anything on this subject published in the papers this day and time, neither do I hear much said about it from the pulpit.

I want to thank you all again for the interest you have shown in our being in your midst, and we want you to visit us any time you feel like it. I expect to be with you all again on the date announced at Mt. Olive on Sunday, the Lord willing. Hope the Lord may prosper our journey in your midst at that time if according to his holy will. May the Lord bless all the household of faith everywhere to the glory and praise of his high and holy name, and may his

people be comforted and built up in that most pure and holy faith is my prayer. Yours in hope of heaven and eternal glory through grace and mercy through Christ.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

As we have a recent request for our thoughts on the foregoing subject, we wish to follow Elder Rhodes' remarks by what we had to say editorially in the October 1944 *Signs*, in response to a request from Brother D. W. White, Mount Pleasant, Texas.

As much as in us is we like to comply with the wishes of our brethren, but we hope they realize our dependence upon a higher power than our own to bring forth those things which are profitable to the household of faith. Therefore we cannot write at will upon any subject, but must tarry until the Lord is pleased to exercise our mind and give us light, otherwise we shall be unable to feed his flock. We cannot truthfully say that we have never had any exercise of mind upon the subject of instrumental music in the church. On the contrary, at different times, we have given the matter very serious concern. Generally speaking, we are particularly fond of good music and as a natural gift or art we think it ranks near the top. We know of nothing, perhaps, that is more soothing, uplifting and inspiring to the average human being than music of the right kind, but we feel there is a time and place for all things and we are persuaded that in the gospel church, among the saints, is no place for musical instruments. Many have been the times when we joined others with great delight in the homes of relatives and friends, with a piano or organ to lead us in lifting our voices in songs of praise to God, as we were made to hope, and we commend this in the highest degree to

others, but we cannot give our approval to either of these instruments, or any other, in our solemn and sacred assemblies where God is worshipped only in spirit and in truth. Our main reason for objecting to the use of such instruments in our churches is that neither our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is declared to be the head over all things to the church, nor any of his immediate disciples, who established the early churches, saw fit to make use of or reference to them in any way, shape or form as being necessary in churches of the Christian era. We prefer to adhere to the pattern which they gave us, and do not feel that we should attempt to add to or take anything from that which has been laid down by them. It is no doubt true that David, the psalmist and sweet singer in Israel, employed musical instruments in the worship of his day and perhaps they were used in other times under the law, or during the legal dispensation before the gospel day, but when Jesus came and fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle, he put an end to all other sacrifices and ushered in a new and better day or order of worship. He himself said to the woman of Samaria, "Woman believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship 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." Our honest opinion is that wherever instrumental music is a part of religious worship today it is indicative of legal worshippers, those who have not yet known by experience the liberty and simplicity of the gospel. Let us say further that it is our considered opinion that these things

are employed by religious organizations for the purpose, in part at least, of attracting the young and others to their gatherings, regardless of whether they have or have not been born again and have the grace of God in their hearts. There is in fact quite a spirit of rivalry in some sections of the country as to which so-called church can supply the best music, and particularly at Easter, Christmas and other special seasons of the year, are elaborate and expensive plans made for a grand display of musical talent. At such times the musical program in many instances is by far the most important part of the service and people who seldom attend church services otherwise will on such occasions be found seeking the choicest pews and highest seats in the synagogues, and will go away feeling they have paid their obligations to God for a whole year thereafter.

Little, if any spiritual consideration is shown in the selection of the musician, whether he be organist or vocalist, the main object being to get the best artist at the most reasonable rate, regardless of whether he knows anything about grace or not. We have known of more or less disreputable characters, because of having excellent voices, occupying prominent places as soloists in church choirs and singing before the people Sunday after Sunday. Apparently it never occurred to those responsible for engaging them that they should possess character in addition to musical talent or other qualifications. We have a friend in New York City who has had a fine voice and for years he was in great demand by practically all kinds of religious organizations, especially at their outstanding ceremonies. Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you

out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

The great apostle admonished the church at Corinth in the following manner: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light and darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

When Israel came up out of Egypt and was delivered by the high and mighty hand of God, they brought with them trinkets of gold as friendly tokens of the Egyptians, but these things proved a curse rather than a blessing to them. It does not pay for the church of God here in this world to copy after or borrow from the religious orders of the day. If the people of God are to maintain their identity as the visible church of the first born they must stand aloof from all that pertains to worldliness in their true spiritual worship and hold fast to the principles of the doctrine of God our Savior as enunciated by his blessed Son and his chosen apostles. In concluding our remarks on this part of our reply to Brother White, we wish to repeat that we think good music is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by a divine providence upon the human race, and in some respects it typifies more nearly and strongly the things of the spirit than anything

we know of, for good music is music in any and all languages, breaking through race barriers and, to a large extent makes for unity of peoples on the face of all the earth, nevertheless, when Christ appears to his regenerated people, he becomes the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely so that they desire none besides him, and when he speaks his voice is sweeter by far than any earthly dulcimer, and then there is a melody in the heart and soul of his people that earth knows nothing about. R. L. D.

THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." S. S. 2:14.

The Lord and Savior looks down upon his people, his church, his bride, his spouse, his dove, in love, compassion and pity, and comforts her with his words, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!" He says to her, I know thy trials, tribulations, discomfiture and thy condition entirely: I am fully aware of thy suffering and thy persecutions, and look upon thee with love and pity, but thou must be where thou art for it is the only safe place for thee. Although thou art ugly to the world and thy voice is not heard among men, to me, thy countenance is comely and thy voice is sweet. The child, forced into the clefts of the rock and ready to give up in utter despair, hears these words from his Savior and is strengthened to go on.

The dove is pursued by birds of prey, and finds safety in the clefts or cracks in the rocks. The dove here represents his little ones on the earth and in this time state. The rock is Jesus. The rock was perfect and it was whole; then how did the cleft come about? The clefts

are the sufferings of Jesus. They were made by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. It was the law that thrust the sword in his side and pierced him; it was the law that pierced his hands and his feet with the nail. It was the same law under which you and I stood guilty and condemned.

The law came by Moses. Twice Moses smote the rock that water might come forth, that the children of Israel might drink. The second time, when Israel was nearing the promised land, Moses spoke inadvisedly, and the Lord spake to Moses, "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." Moses had to die without carrying his people into the promised land though he was allowed to see that land from the mountain top. So must the law be fulfilled and pass before his people are delivered. Love cannot save or deliver. The law struck Jesus and spent all of its power against his body. The cleft was made; the cleft for the safety of all of his bride. When the law had spent all that it had, and was dead and conquered, the work of the Savior was done and his body must die, yea must be raised again that his bride might follow. Thus was the cleft made in the rock of salvation.

When He caused his goodness to pass before Moses (Num. 20:22) he put Moses in the cleft of the rock. Then as he passed he put his hand before Moses' face that he should not see his glory before it came or as it passed. Moses was held close in the cleft; he could not go to the right or the left, he could not go backward and the hand of God covered him in the front. Moses would have had room to move an arm or to take a step, or turn his head, but no, he was hedged on every side! Even

an effort to move only pressed him against the sharp edges of the rock. Nor could he move out of his state or condition for the very hand of God held him there. My brother, we are told to be still and see the salvation of God. Then as the glory of God passed, he removed his hand and allowed Moses to see his glory from the rear parts. So we are allowed to see the mercy and the protecting love of God and his blessings only after the thing is passed. Before it comes, or while it is before us and with us, we can see no good that can come out of it for his hand is before our face.

Consider the cleft. It is not a pleasant place for this flesh. It is so narrow as not to allow the slightest move on our part; and every effort that we make to move only presses our flesh against the sharp and cutting edges of the cleft. It is indeed a restricted place. It is a hard and uncomfortable place; there is no reclining there, there is no sleeping there nor is it a place of rest. In the cleft we are hedged about with the firmness of the rock. Thus it is a most unpleasant place to be, and the flesh has to be *forced* into the cleft. As it is pressed and forced in the narrow cleft, all of the false hopes, false pride and self-sufficiencies are circumcised and cut away by the sharp edges of the rock. There is not room in the cleft for any of the false hopes, idols or doctrines of the world. Jesus did not suffer for such things, nor will he have any part of them. So as we are forced into this cleft the body is crucified with the cuts and pricks that it receives. But the cleft is a safe place, and the Lord will have his in that place. Abraham dwelt in the mountains in the clefts of the rock, while Lot went to dwell in the plains and in the city of Sodom. But later in God's own proper time all of the riches (worldly

goods) of Lot were burned up and destroyed with the wicked city, and Lot, by the mercy of God, escaped with his life, and went to dwell in the mountains in the clefts of the rock. Such is a safe place and God will have his in such places. The world seeks not these places, indeed the world hates such places. So His are safe from the world when they dwell there. We do not seek safety while we lay on beds of ease, while we are at rest in this body; but when we are in afflictions and when troubles beset us on every side; when we are in the furnace, or in the lion's den, or when we are helpless in the great fish. It is then we are "bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus," and it is then we find safety from the world in the cleft of the rock; it is then we are climbing the winding stairs and passing the secret places of the stairs where Jesus dwells.

Jesus knows the sufferings of this place; he has borne every affliction that any of his will ever face. He looks down and sees his dove in the cleft of the rock, and in tender love and compassion he addresses her, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs" I know the thoughts and pangs of thy heart, but thou art in a safe place: thou art in the clefts but the clefts of the rock, and the world cannot reach thee there, thou art protected by my strength, and thou art safe indeed. "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice." O Lord what is my countenance before thee? Are they taken away from the things of this world and the things of this life? Is my face turned toward thy kingdom? Are my hands stretched out toward thee, and do my feet step in thy direction? Am I submissive and obedient to thy will? O that I might! But thou knoweth that this flesh is strong and that there is a great conflict within

me, and that the struggle is for my life indeed. This flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh so that I cannot do the things that I would. O Lord, canst thou hear my voice? It is so weak and feeble! Wilt thou enable me to call upon thy name, and to be found seeking and crying unto thee? "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

Are not these words of the Lord and Master a matter of instruction and admonition to his dove and his bride? Are we not admonished to be found in the way of seeking after him, and crying unto him? And being thus admonished and instructed shall we not be made to do just that? In the 91st Psalm we read, "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." We are brought into such a condition that we are forced through necessity to call upon him, not for trivial things, but even for our very life itself. We are forced into such narrow, confining, cutting and piercing clefts that we are made to turn our face unto him; made to show him our countenance; made to cry in despair unto him. Lift up our hearts O Lord, that we may turn our face toward thee, and our hearts and our voice unto thee!

"For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Shall the Lord not hear thy voice; and shall he not notice our countenance? Does your brother in the church ever notice your countenance? Does he not detect the very look on your face, and sometimes tell your troubles and experiences better than you can? Does he not hear your voice; detect either the pride or the humility as the case may be, in the very tone of your voice, and even call it to your attention before you realize your trouble yourself? Does not the contrite heart speak through the

tone of your voice and the countenance of your face? Then, dear little one, if a brother with all of his imperfections and failings, can detect it, what thinkest thou of the Lord? The Lord who knoweth the very thoughts of your heart from afar off, the Lord God who chose you from the foundation of the world. Yes, the cries of his are sweet to him, and the countenance is comely for his robe of righteousness has been spread over them. The Lord sees his little ones in a redeemed state and speaks to them, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Arise and come away from what? Lift up thy head, thy face, thy voice and thy heart; lift them up above and away from the things of this world and this life, and show them unto the Savior and Redeemer, for they are all fair unto him. As we are enabled to obey this instruction and this admonition, even so are we lifted up to see his glory and his salvation.

The Savior speaks to his dove; and he speaks to her while she is yet in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs; he tells her what she *must* do, and sends her a message of love and devotion. O may we be enabled to hear his instruction, and given strength to *obediently follow* his command.

A. D. ALSTON
418 Monroe St., Herndon, Va.

Perrin, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending in my remittance, and also a letter from Brother W. H. Staggs that I would be glad to have published in the *Signs of the Times*. Our dear Brother Staggs passed away June 30, 1949. He was a great man in Israel. He united with the Ft. Worth Church a few years ago and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. He was a faithful mem-

ber until God called him home. The writer, assisted by Elder W. A. Little, tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved family and friends in connection with his belief. Your brother in hope.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEEN

ELDER C. Y. OSTEEEN, MY DEAR BROTHER: Your letter received this A.M. So sorry to hear of your wife's misfortune. Your letter was certainly glad tidings to me, except the part telling of your wife's injury. As for my writing anything that would comfort you, I feel to be what Job said his friends were—poor physicians. However, here in this old corrupt world, on which God put a curse, things do happen to us that are very unpleasant; they are hard to endure; we wonder why it is thus with me; they bring trials and hardships; our plans and arrangements are all gone, and our wishes and desires have all come to naught. But, my dear brother, we have been made to believe in a God who controls all things both in heaven and in earth, and is too wise to make a mistake and too good to be unkind. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. 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?" Job 26:13-14.

Last Friday morning a neighbor of mine started to work as usual with his wife and two year old baby: they were young and very ambitious; buying a home and had great plans for the future. She drove with her husband to where he was employed and was taking the baby to her mother to keep while she was working on her job. But, alas! God had other plans for them. While enroute to her mother's home, the car seemed to swerve and hit a telephone pole, throwing her and the baby against the front of the car, killing them in-

stantly. Poor man, his family all gone without giving him a moments notice. Calamity! Yes, it certainly was as we mortals view it, but not to Him who controls all things in heaven and in earth. Brother Cad, God has promised his people that he would not put more on them than they could bear, and with every temptation he would provide a way of escape. Looking back over my life at the trials and temptations I have had to face—which was very small compared with what many others have endured—it seems that deliverance just got there in time; had it been one second later I would have been gone completely. But we believe that our God has all the good and perfect gifts to distribute among his people, and he is never late or early in his giving to any of his children. All their needs shall be supplied according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:19.

My dear brother, it has been my happy privilege, many times, to sit and listen to you preach the unsearchable riches of our God, and exalt the name of the conquering Prince Immanuel with such force and power that it carried me away from the dumb and corrupt things of nature and caused my mind to dwell on better things; it made me more determined to not draw back, but to press forward; it was food to my hungry soul. So, I believe that you have an anchor, my brother, in your present unhappy condition, that the world knows nothing about. That anchor is, to my understanding, that hope which God has put in the hearts of his children. "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." Hebrew 6:18-19. We read in Jer. 17:7, "Blessed

is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." With our modern preachers it is the other way around. They say, if you will only trust in the Lord, and put your hope in him, then he will bless you and claim you as his child. It seems to me from what the old prophet has said, and my own personal experience—if I have one—if it don't please the Lord to bless you with some knowledge of him; show you what he is, and also show you what you are; that the very breath in your nostrils circulates strictly in keeping with his command; that he is the Lord, the God of hosts; that all the pleasure and happiness you have comes down from the Father above, and without him you can do nothing; if it don't please the Lord to bless you with some of these things, all the soul winning campaigns, prayers or sermons will never be able to raise this dead creature. It just don't come that way, does it brother?

Would love to come to see you and will if possible. I am not well, have trouble in my chest. However, I think it is improving. My wife and myself is the family at my house now. My youngest boy, Leroy, went into the army about two months ago. The other boy, John, comes to see us most every week end. Rather lonesome here, just the wife and I. Have often thought of the bird; she builds her nest, lays her eggs and then sits on them until they hatch; then she feeds them and they grow to where they are able to fly. Then they are gone in as many different directions as they are in numbers. It takes the bird only a month or so to raise her family, but it takes many years for man to bring his flock to maturity; however, it seems to me to be about the same process.

When we think of the multiplied millions of things that are going on, con-

tinually, in this world we are forced to believe that our God has a master mind, or he would forget some little part of it, and there would be a wreck that he did not foresee. But let us admit that his foolishness is far greater than all our knowledge and stand on the following thus saith the Lord, "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." Isa. 46:10. His thoughts are as high above ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. If the God that we have been made to believe in had desired to make us his equal, we would have been. We read, Whatsoever he desireth even that he doeth. I believe every object of his creation, that has life, is just as wise as he desired to make them here in this world, and they know just as much about him spiritually as it pleases him to reveal to them and no more. If we know anything about him spiritually it is a gift from him. Faith is a gift and it comes from God. It does not come by works under the law, for the law is a curse sent on us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. 3:13.

Well, I reckon that this should be brought to a close for I do not know that I have any knowledge of what I have been trying to say. However, I believe I love you, and all that believe as I do. Of course this is foolishness to those who do not believe as we do, for they believe it is optional with them to accept or reject. But we read in John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Well if our Captain has said that, I believe the door is closed until he gets ready to open it. He says I open and none can shut; I shut and none can open. Isa. 22:22. Yes, he opens the blind eyes; the mouth of the dumb; the

windows of heaven; the scriptures; the graves and the door of utterance. The apostle Paul asked his Ephesian brethren to pray for him, that utterance may be given him to open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.

Well I'll now quit. It is my wish, and prayer when possible, that your wife will soon recover from her injury, and that it may please the Lord to give you strength and courage in your hour of need, for he is faithful who promised. Your brother, in hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lie, promised before the world began.

W. H. STAGGS

2321 Seargent, Joplin, Mo.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It is with a shameful heart and in a confused state of mind that I write you this morning. My subscription expired in the early spring of '48 while I was in Gould, Okla. and I have neglected to renew to my own hurt.

I have been too much concerned with worldly position and pride I am afraid. I humbly believe I have been taught of the Lord and most of the time I am quite content. I have spare time now and read the Bible more. Most of the time it condemns me. The poet wrote of my state when he said: "I am so vile so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again." In July 1947 I offered myself to Hopewell Church, Mangum, Okla., Elder W. N. Green, Pastor. I had so very little to offer in evidence that God had done anything to or for me, but the church saw fit to accept me. Elder Green baptized my sister and me on the same day we offered to the church. I was happy in the extreme. I was even using, that the church accepted me, as an evidence that I might be one of His, but before night I was afraid I had done them a great wrong,

afraid I had deceived the very saints of God. The next meeting day was the day for the Lord's Supper and the washing of feet. I felt a desire to get on my knees and wash their feet, but I felt there were none there but were too good to wash mine. If not deceived His spirit was with me and told me it was not for any good that I had done, the honor and glory was all to Christ, the Son, who paid where I was unable to pay. I did wash their feet and they washed mine and I felt satisfied about it. I knew that God was being worshipped in Spirit and in truth. The next day, as usual, I looked back afraid. Not at the whole service but at my part in it. Was I not an imposter?

The brethren tell me that I am not to feel fit save in Jesus. Hearing their experience makes me feel better for a time but I always come back to the thought they cannot know me as I am. How can they say they have been and are in the same state? My father in the flesh is a great comfort to me, or was, I now live too far away to see him often. He seems always to answer my questions just right. He always seems so right in everything and I so wrong.

I have taken up too much of your time already. If you will put a note in the *Signs* that I would like to hear from readers and Old Baptists in the Joplin, Mo. area I will appreciate it. Pray for me if you can be enlightened to do so. SHERMAN F. BUCKNER

Route 1, Box 21, Maynardville, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing check to further my subscription to the *Signs* and that of a dear sister. I lost my wife, the pride of this vain life, in Dec. 1946. My barn burned May 2, 1948 and I was thrust in the hospital in Knoxville, Tenn. for eight days in Aug. 1948. Amid it all the Lord has been very good to me and merciful to my

unrighteousness. I feel he has put death, hell and the grave under his feet for a wretch like me.

Mother came from Halifax Co., N. C., at the age of fifteen, with her parents in 1860 and settled on the north side of Union Co. near Powell's River, now North Fork Norris Lake. Father, the late Elder Jos. C. Walton, of Union Co. and mother met and married in 1874. I was born Dec. 18, 1877. Time passed and I spent my boyhood days thinking I would live a long, long time and eventually if I had to die God would have pity and mercy for being a good boy, etc. But ah! what a mistaken idea. I spent my school days in a one room school-house. Satan's blind captive all the while. I married Sept. 1, 1901, Miss Viola Perkey, Tuttrell, Tenn. To this union seven children were born, three survive. I am left with a fourteen year old granddaughter. Father, mother and two sisters have died. I am the eldest of father's family. Time passed and in March 1923 I professed a hope in Jesus the Savior of sinners and united with the church at Powder Spring Gap at the head of Dotson's Creek, Union Co., Tenn. in the Powell's Valley Primitive Baptist Association of Tenn.

We believe in one eternal, all wise, all powerful, complete, sovereign God in all things. He makes no discrimination as to good things and bad things, but every event of time and every atom thereof honors, praises and glorifies his great name which is above every name in heaven or in earth. It has now been over twenty-five years since he was pleased to manifest his goodness and greatness to this sinner, the chief of all sinners, and to bring me down, down to death until my soul (whole life) fainted within me, and I was constrained to pray, "Lord save me." The voice said, I have put death, hell and the grave under my feet for you. Not

only so but for the sins of the whole world (covenant world). I am Ruler, King and Judge, these mortal powers must fail.

"Deep harrow then, my vitals froze,
Death struck, I ceased the tide to stem,
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the star of Bethlehem."

This is a brief sketch of my unprofitable life and I must close lest I take too much space. I like the *Signs* and may they long continue to praise His name. "Now, brethren I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." In a glorious hope of eternal life beyond this vale of tears. JOHN E. WALTON

DEAR ELDER DODSON: At the request of some of the members of Liberty Church, Los Angeles, Cal. I am submitting a letter written by Sister Helen Jane Jones, 1200 N. Poinsettia Drive, Hollywood-46, Cal. received by the church during the absence of Sister Helen on a motor trip to Vancouver, British Columbia in August, 1949. I feel sure the readers of the *Signs* will enjoy such a fine spiritual letter.

MERLE WILSON, Church Clerk.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD: From a heart full of fellowship I greet you in the name of the Lord to tell you in a feeble way how much we will miss being with you this Sunday. We are seeing some of the most breath-taking scenery to be found in the whole country. I am reminded constantly on all sides of the hand of the Lord. He has created such a beautiful world and, in contrast, man defiles and destroys everything he touches. Towering trees and mountains that seem to touch the heavens really cut man down to his

true size—that of less than nothing.

In my stumbling way, I want to convey to you in writing how much you, the church, means to me. Your kindness, your love and esteem manifested toward this poor sinner have meant more to me than I can ever say. I pray the good Lord to keep me at your feet, loving you and esteeming you for the truth's sake.

On the fourth Sunday this month (August) it will be twenty-five years since I united with the precious old church, Sharon, in Iowa. Six years later mother and I left for the East Coast. The Eastern Baptists were so wonderful to us and we will always love them dearly. There was never any lack on their part, but we could not feel we would be living in the East permanently. God set our feet toward California with intervals in Indiana and Louisiana. Truly our church home here is infinitely precious to us. I have tried to thank God for our dear Pastor. His humility and his prayerful preaching mark him truly a man of God. I hope we all appreciate him and his high calling as we should.

The Lord has been so good to me all the days of my unprofitable life. His will in my life has been demonstrated to me so many times that when I am high and lifted up I wonder how I can doubt his love and merciful care. Yet when I am in the slough of darkness and despondency, which is my condition too much of the time, I am tormented by doubts and fears. He is mindful of his promises and never fails us. He does not always give us what we ask for, but he does send what we need. We always have enough for our needs, but never enough for our wants.

When our minds were changed for us about coming to California from south Louisiana where there were none of our churches we could attend, and

before we were led here, I was constantly reminded during my work, at home and at play, of the scripture, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33. Month by month I see these things being added in my life, and the promises being fulfilled. I feel that scripture was given to us so forcibly by the Holy Spirit it caused both our minds to be changed. My mother was given the same scripture at the same time I was and we did not know of it until later.

Liberty Church has been a haven to me, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:2. Elder Dearing, I have often prayed that you might be led to preach on that scripture some time, but perhaps my prayer was selfish. Mother and I are sending a contribution for the church. When and if the good Lord wills we will see you before too long. Pray for us, dear people. Especially speaking for myself, pray for me in extra measure, I seem to need so much charity for I have so many faults to be overlooked. Your unworthy sister if one at all. HELEN J. JONES

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver formerly Amelia, Ohio is now located at 1902½ Marcum Terrace, Huntington, W. Va. Please address him there.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder James W. Linn has moved from Hammond, W. Va. to Route 16, Hopewell Road, Fairmont, W. Va. and requests that his mail be sent there.

The many friends of Elder W. N. GREEN, Altus, Okla. will be saddened to know of his passing Nov. 21, 1949. A suitable obituary will follow. Route 4, Vernon, Texas. MRS. C. M. KESTER.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

FEBRUARY, 1950

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Rutherford, N. J.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:12-13.

At the request of Sister Christine Hudson of the Pratt City Church, Birmingham, Ala., I am attempting to examine this passage of scripture. I do so with reluctance, because I know that much controversy has been carried on about this particular text. I feign would attempt to write with the expectation of removing controversy from the minds of the dear brethren, nor with a thought that I might heal the wounds caused by such argumentation. Since it is her request, I will, if blessed of the Lord, proceed to give such views as I have. I do not lay any claim to superiority over any one else about any portion of the written truth. The views that I will lay down are not to be looked upon as a standard for any one to follow, for I freely confess that I may be wrong about it all.

From the time that I started to read over thirty-five years ago I have been finding this question in various Old School Baptist periodicals. I have read many versions of it by different translators, and many views of the different versions by the brotherhood. I have not been able to accept all that I have read, nor, for that matter, all that I have heard from the pulpit. I have heard at least three views presented that are outstanding. Some of each one have, at times at least, left me to think that theirs was given direct from heaven or the Spirit. This cannot be true with at least two of these views, and maybe with all of them, even though I am agreed with one.

If we must cut up or leave out, misquote or change the wording of the Bible to carry our point, we cannot lay any serious claim to having our views considered by the Old Baptists. Parts of the text can be quoted and we may be found advocating strange doctrines. It seems to me that I have beheld a tendency to cut out parts of the scripture until only the word "work" was left. On the other hand, it seems to me that in order to avoid anything that would say something about "time salvation" that we have left the high and glorious meaning that the apostle had in mind. Mind you, dear brethren, I say that it seems to me that this is true. It may not have been your intention in either case to have misconstrued the Scriptures.

I want to examine the Philippian letter from the beginning down to and including the text. As we scan the first chapter we find: 1st. (verse two) Grace and peace from God to you; 2nd. (verse three) Paul thanked God upon every remembrance for them; 3rd. (verse six) Paul's confidence in God beginning and ending the work in them; 4th. (verses 9-10) That your love may abound more

and more in knowledge and in judgment, to the extent that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, and in connection with this let us note what the apostle Peter said. His corroboration of Paul is too good to pass. He says, to add charity to all the other things enumerated, and then he gives us a key to the whole. If we did not have these keys as we read the Scriptures we might often stumble at what is written. He says, "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-8) 5th. (verse 11) They were filled with fruits of righteousness (not by their own filling, but) by Jesus Christ. Paul now turns to the events with which he is surrounded and says, "I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." The words "which happened" are supplied by translators. If such words are to be reckoned with at all in dealing with the Bible, let us, inasmuch as we do not read that the Lord has appointed any certain translator, read it as Paul used it in other places (See Rom. 8:32; Eph. 1:11; I Thes. 3:3) and say that, the things which were appointed unto me have fallen out to the furtherance of the gospel (verse 12); His bonds, as a result of these things befalling him, were manifest (verse 13); and the brethren, seeing the things befalling him according to the appointment of God, and the bonds that accompanied it all, they waxed confident and became bolder in preaching (verses 14-18); 7th. Now he comes to that place that every child of God comes sometime in his life. He acknowledges that whether we live or die that Christ is

magnified in our body. In both conditions it is wonderful for him to contemplate—to know that God rules life and death to the end that he is not, nor cannot be robbed of his glory. For me to live is Christ (look at Gal. 2:20 in connection with that), but to die is gain (verses 21-28); 8th. Do not be terrified by your adversaries, for them appearing against you is evidence of their perdition (Isa. 54:17), but to you of salvation, AND THAT OF GOD, for unto you is given in the behalf of Christ (but not in your behalf) to not only believe on him, but also to suffer (not for what you have done but) for his sake.

Now let us leave that chapter and launch out into the second in which our text is so well placed. But, in leaving it, we do not want to lose sight of what has been and is being done for the saints, not only at Philippi, but all of the Lord's humble poor. This salvation is of God. This the apostle has emphatically told us. It being of God, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." (verses 1-2) Now we are coming to the text. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (verse 5). What is the mind that was in Christ Jesus? Was it not a mind of obedience? Are we as a people afraid of his obedience? Must we dodge and run from the fact his people are obedient in him? Are we afraid that somebody will call us names if we say anything about God's children obeying him? Let us see. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness

of men: And being found in fashion, as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and to the glory of God the Father." (verses 6-11.) This is the mind that was in Christ, and it is the mind that the church at Philippi was told to let be in them. The exaltation of Christ; the giving of the name above every name; the bringing of all knees to subjection before him, and the confession of all tongues was predicated on his Father's will. There is not a scintilla of truth that the obedience of Christ, and certainly that of his little children, is separate and apart from the inwrought work of God. He, as our Redeemer, and we, as his brethren, bow in humble submission and confess in meekness of spirit that we cannot do anything without our Father. (John 5:17; 5:30; 6:38; 8:28; 15:5;) God did not exalt the Lamb for doing all this; he did not have the mind of sacrifice in order to have all this done to and for him. But at the time, or simultaneous with his having that mind, he was exalted. The text is predicated upon these self evident facts. As Christ was not exalted for having this mind, so are the children of God not exalted for having a like mind. If we could just for once realize what a great blessing it is to have a mind to obey; to have grace given for the hour of need; to have the will and the do wrought in us, we would then quit once and forever talking about being blessed for doing what is right. When we see so many that seemingly have no thought towards God

and godliness; that are without God and without hope in the world; that are pursuing the ways of death, and then are given a mind, and an unction from on high, and the mind of Christ bearing witness with our mind, we thus draw back in objection to saying that we deserve a blessing for the blessing.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." If language means anything; if the inspired commands, as written by the sacred writers, carry any weight at all, then it will be impossible to separate the word "wherefore" and the command to "work out your own salvation!" That they had been obeying, none surely will deny. That they were commanded to continue as they had been none will question. Their obedience was wrought in them in the past and is assured them for the future. This mind that they are commanded to have is the same mind that Christ had. Their working out this salvation is produced in them in the same way that Christ implored his Father to do the will of God instead of his own. It is a mind that supersedes the human or natural mind. The church is told, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Col. 2:6, and it will be applicable in this case. Ye received Christ unconditionally did you not? Did he not come to you? Had you made a start towards him? Did you perform certain stipulations before he was received by you? No, no, dear child, none of that. There are great and grand mysteries here. That he finished the work of the salvation of the saints we know that none can deny. But here is a command to work out that salvation. It is not inconsistent. It is compatible and in perfect harmony with the will of God

concerning the children of the kingdom. It is as much the will of God for them to work out this salvation that is finished as it is for them to labor to enter into the rest that remains for the children of God. Heb. 4:9-11.

This working out of their salvation is the mind of Christ in action. I see and hear much about the children of God not being active. I just do not understand what is meant by this. I cannot find that in the Bible; it has not been my experience. In the Scriptures there is as little to support the theory that God's children are not active, as there is to support them in working for salvation. Working for a salvation, whether a timely one or eternal is to say that doing right is not enough reward or blessing. It is the same dress, perhaps with attractive colors and changes, that has been lurking close around the church since the days when Jesus trod the shores of Gallilee. To say that the children of God are not active, is to say that the inwrought righteousness of Christ is not effective in them. This church-in-action thought is not in order to something more, but it is **BECAUSE OF GOD WORKING IN THEM TO WILL AND TO DO OF HIS OWN PLEASURE**. When the mind of Christ is prevailing in his people they always please the Father. The pleasure that the Father has in the Son, he likewise has in his people. I am not talking about such trifling things as my fleshly mind would lead me to do; I do not have time for such a doctrine as that; I want to spend my few remaining days talking about that God who is pleased in both his Son and his people, but that that pleasure is in the righteousness of the Son and not in our filthiness.

The mind of Christ in action in his brethren brings them to making themselves of no reputation. How low in shame and ignominy he did go in work-

ing out a lasting salvation for his bride; how did he bear the jeers and taunts of his people to bring them home to God; how exquisitely precious is his treading the wine press alone for them. If his mind is in us and is abounding, or to say it another way, if we are being moved by the working of God in us to the working out of what is ours, then we are being brought to servitude in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. How desolate would be our condition should we be deprived of giving a cup of cold water in his name. Dear child of God, as you go your way by the footsteps of the flock (and Jesus is part of that flock), would it not be most miserable to never be blessed any more to follow? Ah, precious reader, how your pure minds are stirred, and how your poor heart is moved in joy and is thrilled with the peace that passeth all understanding, as you are counted worthy in his name to bear the toil through evil as well as good report, to even be blessed to be counted the offscouring of all things for his dear name's sake. (1 Cor. 4:15.) His mind led him onward and upward to the zenith of his earthly visit. He became obedient unto death, and it is worthy of note that that death was not an honorable death to receive the applause of men, but that it was in shame, even the shame of dying for sinners, of being numbered with transgressors and making his grave with the wicked.

Ah, dear sister and all that truly fear His blessed name, I am carried away in awe and wonder at the grand and glorious beauty in the text. That word "also" means so much to the whole. Not only did he become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, but his Father was exulting him also. It was a glorious thing for him to die. It was a glorious thing for him to lay down his life, but his Father also gave

him a name that is above every name. What majesty and wisdom is displayed in his dying. What things are also hidden. One thief knew it, the other did not know a thing about it. The mob knew nothing about it, for, says the apostle, "had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." I Cor. 2:8. To them a lawbreaker died, but to the humble followers a Friend died, and to his Father, his Son, as manifested in the flesh, died, and in dying "led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Eph. 4:8. In this (but not for it) he was given a name that is above every name. It is such a name, that at the mention of it, every knee bows and every tongue confesses that he is Lord. Now there is a counterpart to this in the lives of God's children. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord," Isa. 54:17, and that righteousness as wrought in them and made manifest by the glorious work of the Spirit in their minds, brings this vile and wicked and ungodly world to bow to them and to confess that they are the anointed of the Lord. "Who is she that looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" cries Solomon as he is given to view the church. And how does this world, with their jargon of tongues, and their kneeling at all kinds of altars, save a throne of grace, to bow and confess to the superiority of the children of God? Ah, dear saints, there is the key. By their hatred of you. As you go forth in the race, running in that good old way of grace, first, last, and all the time, you shall be hated by all the world. Why? The echo comes again and again, why? Because even the devil knew, and his evil hordes know as much to-day, that you have something that they do not have. If your only conversation is the blood, the soul-cleansing blood of

the Lamb, mark my words this world will lay in waiting to spy out your liberties and to cast your name out as evil. If you are enabled to work out that salvation that God works in you, it follows that your sole trust will be in what was in the mind of Christ. And every tongue will confess that you are a follower of that wine-bibber, and they will mockingly bow to you that you believe in the sovereignty of God in earth, hell and all deep places, but that your life here on earth is a life of poverty and hardship!

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This has been so from the beginning of your experience. He has not tried to work, nor walked in the aisles of heaven wringing his hands in anxiety because you would not let him work. He has not been an idle spectator of your travel here in this world, surmising how well, or even how much better it would be, if you would work out what God had worked in. The apostle did not intimate such unstable qualities about our God. He did not leave poor hobbling sinners to rest and trust in their own strength and ability. Job did not know where to find him (Job 23), David fell into grievous sin (Ps. 51), Jonah had to learn that salvation was of the Lord (Jonah 2), Paul had to learn that, even though the will was wrought in him, he could not perform that that was good (Rom. 7), and Peter, even though he was sure to the point of boastfulness that he would never deny the Lord, had to be shown that he was nothing but a poor, vain, deluded liar (Matt. 26:75). But here is an opening for every dear child of God. It is an opening into the sweetest rest that a poor pilgrim has ever found. It gives a command. To Job it would say, He will be a light springing upwards and outwards to guide your feet; to David it

would say, I am your righteousness and by my Spirit, I will work in you all your righteousness; to Jonah it would say, that as you have been my witness heretofore you shall also be my witness in Nineveh; to Paul it would say, my grace is sufficient for you; to Peter it would say, when you are converted, strengthen thy brethren. To one and all thus the Spirit sayeth to them, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Arminians may handle that much deceitfully, making merchandise of the souls of men, but to them who are the called, both Jew and Greek, it speaks of far better news based upon a far better covenant. It speaks of the mercies of David, the sure work of the Spirit. It would not change the meaning of the matter if we were to say that the children of God, when this is brought to them in the power of the Spirit, cannot help but work out this salvation. Do you mean to write that can't-help-it-doctrine? I would write it as Paul wrote it, yes. I would not use it as a cloak for my unrighteousness, no, a thousand times no, for no writer has thus used it in the Scriptures. It has always been the same kind of enemy that would hide behind the predestination as it has that would accuse the church of it. Neither party has been blessed with the Spirit of God. But that God's little children are helpless, the Scriptures clearly teach. To those that have the mind of Christ, they, and none others, realize it. To them the Spirit declares, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Only a will to do it would leave you as helpless as Paul, but the do worked in you, has its reflection and counterpart outwardly.

W. D. G.

"After this manner therefore pray ye:
Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed

be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Matt. 6:9-13.

We have been asked to give our views on what is commonly referred to as "The Lord's Prayer." To begin with, so far as we know, Old School Baptists are pretty well agreed that the real prayer of our Lord is found in the seventeenth chapter of John. Luke tells us that in response to the request of one of his disciples, who said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray," Jesus replied by saying, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." We would particularly like to have our readers note the difference between the wording of Luke's quotation and that of Matthew. Matthew quotes our Lord as having prefaced the prayer by saying, "After this manner therefore pray ye." We would like to stress the point that the manner was seemingly more important than the exact wording, which is not quoted verbatim by any of the apostles in any of their writings. Having said this, we would like further to ask our readers to turn to the sixth chapter of Matthew and read from the fifth through the eighth verses and see how Jesus taught them, first, how *not* to pray. They were particularly told not to pray as the hypocrites do: "for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." He

then told them in the affirmative how they should pray, by saying, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." He further emphasized how they should *not* pray by saying, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." We can but wonder, at times, if they are not *heathen* who are constantly using vain repetitions in repeating what they term the Lord's Prayer. Our understanding of the meaning of the word *heathen* is one who does not know the true God, whom to know is life eternal. We need not go abroad to some foreign land to find them, for there are millions of them here in our own great country. How true it is that many of them are using vain repetitions in repeating these words Sunday after Sunday, year in and year out, having no real understanding of their true significance. Let us again emphasize that it is the manner of prayer, rather than the literal saying of these words. By going back to the beginning of this memorable sermon (chapter five), we will see that Jesus was addressing his disciples. None but a real disciple can in the true sense of the word address God as his Father, for it is by the workings of the Holy Spirit that we say "Abba Father." God is the creator of all mankind, as well as all other creation, but he is not the spiritual Father of any but his chosen children. Only those who are born of the Spirit can rightfully say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name," meaning thereby, "Holy and reverend is his name." This appel-

lation does not rightfully belong to any but God. The high sounding titles which church dignitaries and others apply to themselves are condemned by the word of God. Jesus said, "Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Notwithstanding this, literally millions of men and women in the world to-day are required by their so-called under shepherds to call them "Father." Others freely appropriate unto themselves the appellation of "Reverend," and some go so far as to add "The Right Reverend Dr. So and So." They have no authority from the Scriptures which they profess to interpret and expound for applying any such titles to vile and corrupt humanity. They are of like passions as others, for all are made of the same corruptible clay.

By way of proceeding with our subject, we wish to call attention to the fact that Jesus was here in the flesh with his disciples when he taught them to pray, saying, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." We believe that this prayer concerned particularly the coming of the Gospel Kingdom which he and his disciples were to shortly establish here in the world, which would not take place until after his death and resurrection. Shortly thereafter we find that Jesus himself said to them: "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Mark 9:1. The apostles and others witnessed the coming of his kingdom in great power and glory, and all bore testimony to the things which they saw and felt. The preaching of the gospel in Paul's day was, as it must be to-day if any good is accomplished, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from heaven. We humbly

hope we have experienced in some wonderful sense the power of God's kingdom, which is not of this world, and neither is it seen except by an eye of faith. Unless we are a terribly deceived mortal, we have been quickened by the same mighty power of God which was wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead. We hope we can truthfully say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." It is here in this life of toil and struggle that we are continually made to cry, "Give us this day our daily bread." David feared that he would some day perish by the hand of Saul, and when we are left to ourselves we are fearful that we will be overcome by our fleshly enemies. How precious are those promises which declare that, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be," and "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Such bulwarks as these are, indeed, strengthening and will hold the weak believer up in the distressing hour.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." In Luke it says, "Forgive us our sins," and it would appear that by the word *debts* is meant sins. God's people are said to be ten thousand talents in debt, and not having a farthing with which to pay. Therefore in order to be set free and delivered from the bondage of sin, our only hope of having the debt canceled is through forgiveness by the atoning blood of the blessed Lamb of God, who was slain before the foundation of the world, in the mind and purpose of God, that in the fulness of time he should come into the world, suffer and die and by rising again redeem and sanctify his chosen people. If we are made to feel the need of God's forgiveness towards us, should we not likewise be willing to forgive those who have wronged or are indebted to us? We fear this is often not the case. Many who have received

the forgiveness of God by and through the atoning blood of Jesus, appear to be hardhearted and unforgiving towards their brethren, demanding an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. These things ought not to be. If God has forgiven us of our sins, how readily ought we to be to forgive others their trespasses against us. We hope these things will be pondered in the hearts of those of the household of faith.

We have never understood to our own personal satisfaction the meaning of the words, "And lead us not into temptation." 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." On the other hand the record declares that "Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil." Luke 4:1-2. This, in substance, is also recorded by Matthew and Mark. We are satisfied that it was the purpose of the infinite God that his only begotten Son should, among other things, be tempted in all points, like as we in order that he might become a glorious High Priest whose feelings could be touched with our infirmities, and yet be without sin. Likewise, it must be in the purpose of Almighty God that his people must needs encounter temptation, along with other trials and tribulations, but we are definitely persuaded that James was right when he said, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Most assuredly, as long as we abide in this tabernacle of clay, we shall of necessity be made to pray to our God to "deliver us from evil." In the purpose of God, Pharaohs and Goliaths are raised up to confront and bedevil the Lord's people, but God will also raise up his Moses' and Davids to lead his people

out of the land of bondage and to overthrow the powers of evil. The mightiest weapon of all is the sword of his Spirit, and the devil will always inevitably have to yield when we can say in the name of Jesus, "Get thee behind me Satan." We can find no staff comparable to that of faith in God to lean upon, for he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, and he will deliver us in due time. We shall be made to know that God is good, immensely good, and kind are all his ways, when he has passed by and we behold his backparts. One said in substance, he hath delivered, he doth deliver, and in whom we trust he will yet deliver.

The petition we are considering closes with the declaration, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." How fitting and becoming it is in the Lord's people in their prayers and supplications unto God to acknowledge his omnipotence! Truly, it is he who has made the worlds and all that in them is; it is he who gives us our daily bread; it is only he who can forgive us of our sins and deliver us from all evil. Why not, therefore, as Moses did, ascribe greatness unto our God, for he is the Rock, and his work is perfect. It is he who has preserved us in Christ Jesus and will keep us from final falling, and at last receive us unto himself, where there are pleasures for ever more. Should we not, therefore, rightfully proclaim that the kingdom is his, the power is his, and the glory all belongs to him, and not for a day or a year, but for untold millions of years, yea, throughout never ending eternity. We are satisfied that our readers can all join us in saying to these things a hearty, Amen, and Amen.

R. L. D.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, our heavenly Father, infinite in holiness and unerring in wisdom, has removed by death our beloved Brother in Christ, and our faithful and capable Pastor, **ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS**, of Leesburg, Va. and

Whereas, we the members of the Old School Baptist churches of Trough Creek, Needmore, and Sideling Hill, Pa. mindful of the irreparable loss sustained by the passing of our esteemed and efficient brother, who for thirty-nine years has come to us dispensing heavenly manna to our comfort and edification, confirming us in the doctrine of God our Savior, and strengthening us in our holy faith, making our sorrows and happiness his concern, therefore be it

Resolved, that we submissively bow to the divine decree and express our heartfelt sympathy to his beloved companion, Mrs. Ella Lefferts, and family in their loss and to our sister churches who are bereaved by the death of Elder Lefferts, who contended so earnestly and with holy boldness for the faith delivered to the saints, and shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, and has bequeathed to us the priceless legacy of sweet and tender memories. Therefore be it further

Resolved, that we send a copy of this tribute to his memory to his bereaved companion, Mrs. Ella Lefferts, and that a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** of which he was chief editor for many years, and also to **Old Faith Contender** for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference October 8 and 9, 1949.

(Elder) **ARNOLD H. BELLOWS**, Moderator
ORIEN MELLOTT, Clerk

RESOLUTION

In memory of our brother, **S. A. CROSS**, who passed from this life May 28, 1949 in his 79th year, we desire to leave on record a few important events of his life as pertaining to our church. Aug. 31, 1924 he related a bright experience of grace to our brothers and sisters composing Soldier Creek Union Meeting of Old School Baptists, held with our sister church, Zion, Mayfield, Ky. He was gladly received and baptized the same day by the late Elder J. C. Chester.

We of his church ever regarded him as a true, staunch believer in the truth, as we hope we believe the truth in the Lord, not turning to the right or the left, a friend to the church. His home was a home for the Baptists and his friends. Brother Cross is missed by his church as well as by his immediate family.

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission under the mighty hand of God who doeth all things well.

Resolved that a copy of this memorial to Brother Cross be kept on our church book, a copy sent to his family, and one sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Written by W. A. Bowden by request of Zion Church, Mayfield, Ky. when in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in June 1949. Read and received by the church Saturday before the first Sunday in Aug. 1949.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS, Moderator
W. T. CHESTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

CHRISTOPHER MADISON TURMAN was born July 28, 1871, in Carroll County, Virginia, and was taken by death September 15, 1949. He was the son of James M. and Tabitha Gardner Turman. On April 4, 1896 he united with Little Flock Old School Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder Amos Dickerson. Soon afterwards he was liberated to speak in public and later given license to preach. In 1903 he moved his membership by letter to Harmony O. S. Baptist Church, and then in December, 1910, he moved to Loudoun County, Virginia, where he placed his letter with Mt. Zion Church and was ordained to the office of deacon. In 1944 he moved from Loudoun County, Va. to North Wales, Pa., where he attended Southampton Church, his membership remaining with Mt. Zion.

On March 22, 1891, Brother Turman was married to Miss Lillie Susannah Vaughn by Elder F. C. Reynolds. To this union eight children were born, three of which, James Elmer, Emmett Forrest and John Wilson, preceding their father in death. He leaves his widow, Sister Lillie Turman, and the following children to mourn his departure: Mrs. I. C. Warner, St. Petersburg, Fla. Mrs. G. M. Harbert, Galax, Virginia, Doctor Christopher M. Turman, Wyncote, Pa., Miss Lillie S. Turman, Wyncote, Pa. and Mrs. W. H. Carper, Burlington, N. C.

The funeral service was held at Southampton Church, Southampton, Pa. and burial was in the church cemetery. Brother Turman was a firm believer in the electing grace of God and loved to talk of the goodness and mercy of God to sinners. The writer endeavored to speak of the same things to the large and attentive congregation which was gathered to pay their last tribute of respect. The text used was, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." etc., 1 Thes. 4:13-18. May the Lord bless those

that mourn and give them grace that they may be reconciled.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

ROBERTA LAMB GULICK, departed this life at a Leesburg hospital August 16, 1949. She was a daughter of the late George and Eliza Lamb, and was born near Manassas, Virginia, September 2, 1876, where she spent the early years of her life. She was a graduate of Osborne Institute, now Osborne High School, and about two years ago she attended, along with three others, the 50th Anniversary celebration of their graduation from that school. Her husband, George F. Gulick, died in 1932.

Sister Gulick joined Mt. Zion Church July 25, 1936, and was baptized by Elder H. H. Leferts. She was a faithful member of the church and, although she often had to be carried after she suffered a stroke of paralysis, she seldom missed a meeting of the near by churches. She loved sound doctrine and her chief interest for many years was the affairs of the church and her brethren. Possessing a keen memory, Sister Gulick was often consulted for information on matters of church or family history which she observed and seldom forgot.

She is survived by one brother, John T. Lamb, New York City, and one son, George S. Gulick, Rochester, N. Y. and two grandsons, Robert and George Gulick, Rochester, N. Y. One sister preceded her in death several years ago.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at Mt. Zion Church and the interment was at Manassas, Virginia. It was a time of much sorrow for the community and brethren, for not only had they lost a beloved sister and friend, but their pastor, Elder H. H. Leferts, who was expected to conduct the service, had passed away the morning of her funeral. May God give grace to reconcile all to His will.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

DEACON ROBERT WESLEY O'NEAL of Seagraves, Texas passed away May 22, 1949, making his stay on earth 74 years, and 3 days. He was united in marriage to Maggie Currie, July 19, 1899. To this union eight children were born, seven of them still living. They were planning to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary July 19, and hoped to have all their children, grandchildren and four great-grandchildren with them, making fifty persons in all. But the Lord saw fit to take Brother O'Neal away a short time before, and to give him a home in heaven that outshines any earthly home that man can build.

Brother and Sister O'Neal united with the Primi-

tive Baptist church August 1903 and were ordained as Deacon and Deaconess July 1917. They lived south of San Antonio before moving to Seagraves, Texas and their membership was with Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas at the time of his death. Brother O'Neal was a staunch Old Baptist and was loved by all who knew him. He filled the office of Deacon well. We know that his wife will miss him greatly, but at the same time she knows he is at rest. He did not suffer long before passing away. His children and grandchildren also will miss him.

The unworthy writer once brought them two hundred fifty miles on a visit to his home in the Rio Grande Valley where they could see the orange trees with their golden fruit, and see the good things of nature, but the best of all was to hear Brother O'Neal talk of heavenly things and what the blessed Jesus had done for poor sinners. It is when the Lord spreads his wing over us and gives us of that heavenly sweetness that humbles us as little children and where love reigns supreme, that it is heaven here on earth, and I believe when we are given a short season of this kind of meetings it is just a little foretaste of better things to come after this life.

They were readers of the **Signs of the Times** about fifty years, and their parents were subscribers before them. Sister O'Neal lives at her home in Seagraves, Texas, P. O. Box 691, and will be glad to have any Old Baptist come to see her. There are children close that will look after her. May the Lord guide, direct and comfort her in her bereavement. Written by her request. Her Pastor, (Elder) E. B. AULT.

MATTHEW WEBSTER RAULSTON of Lyons, N. J. departed this life Dec. 10, 1948. Born Jan. 7, 1884, he was the son of the late John and Florence Raulston. Besides his mother, Mrs. Florence Raulston, he is survived by one son, T. Stewart Raulston, Chattanooga, Tenn., one daughter, Mrs. John Lager, Summit, N. J., one brother and two sisters of Chattanooga, Tenn.

Brother Raulston united with the Old Sweetens Cove Baptist Church Nov. 2, 1902, and was baptized the same day. He came to New Jersey about twenty years ago to take a position as mechanical superintendent in a Veteran's Hospital and resided here since. In the spring of 1935 he heard of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell and came to one of the services. He came regularly after that and brought his letter from his home church to Hopewell in June 1935. He was unanimously received and proved to be a devout member. In 1938 he was chosen Deacon and later was made a trustee. He drove nearly fifty miles every day of worship but it was never too far, too cold or too stormy. When Elder Vaughn would be away filling other appointments he would con-

duct the services which he did in a very meek and quiet way, always feeling so humble and giving all praise to God. The church feels the loss of Brother Raulston very deeply, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

His funeral was held from the Hopewell meeting-house, Sunday Dec. 12, 1948 at 2 P. M., conducted by Elder C. W. Vaughn then Pastor of Hopewell Church. Interment in the churchyard adjoining.

Four months after the death of Brother Raulston we buried our Pastor, Elder C. W. Vaughn. We feel to be very much alone in this world, but know it is right or it would not be so. The same hand that took them away has power to raise others in their place. May we be given strength to carry on in the same meek and quiet way, putting our faith in God alone, and in humble submission say — Thy will be done.

(Mrs. LETHA A. BLACKWELL.

BROTHER BART D. DRAPER was born May 3, 1883 and passed away Sept. 11, 1949. He was united in marriage to Miss Lula Crisco, March 11, 1902. To this union were born three sons and one daughter: David Draper, Crossit, Ark., Bert and Mrs. R. L. Beard, Kilgore, Tex., Marvin D., Longview, Tex. Also surviving are two sisters: Mrs. Bell Langford, Faber, Ark., Mrs. Carrie Jones, Malvern, Ark., one brother Will, Donaldson, Ark., two grandchildren, Mrs. Roland Witherington, Windin, La., Donald Beard, Kilgore, Tex.

This writer had the pleasure of baptizing Brother Draper and his dear companion, May 9, 1939. He leaves her to sorrow on account of his passing until she is called to her people in that blessed abode where parting is no more. Brother Draper was ordained Deacon of Massedonia Church soon after he became a member and was faithful in looking after the interest of his brethren. He was indeed a kind, tender and lovable man; meek and humble, feeling the need of the God of love and mercy to bear him up. He had been failing in health for several years, but was patient and did not murmur at his lot. He was settled and grounded in the doctrine of sovereign grace, acknowledging that all God's blessings were of his free mercy, flowing to his people for his own name's sake.

Elder E. J. Lambert and the writer tried to comfort the loved ones and many friends who gathered to pay the last tribute of respect. The remains were buried in Massedonia Cemetery to await the resurrection of the body. May God bless and keep dear Sister Draper her remaining days and fill the absence of her dear companion with his manifest presence. Written by request.

(Elder) J. T. EVERITT.

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J. L. Turner, Tex., \$2; J. F. Lax, Ill., \$2; Mrs. R. B. Shortridge, Ill., \$10; Mrs. V. Machesney, Cal., \$10.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE TWO SCHOOLS OF PREDESTINATION

By ELDER LYTTLE BURNS

Florence, Ala.

I feel somewhat impressed to write on the above subject today. Before discussing the subject, we will define the word. Webster says: Predestination is the "Purpose of God from Eternity respecting all events." The two schools are defined as follows: Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians. Supra means before and lapsus, fall. This view is in line with Webster's definition, "The purpose of God from eternity."

God's purposes, like himself, are eternal. We will ask what are the properties of God's divine purposes or decrees. They are eternal, most wise, absolute, and unchangeable. This view is in line with the London Confession of Faith, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably all things whatsoever come to pass." The things decreed are various and many, but the act of decreeing is one eternal decision. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24.

Owing to God's infinite power and wisdom, his omnipotence and immutability, and the unity in the Trinity, it would be unreasonable to argue that God's decree regarding man's salvation, were after the fall as the Sublapsarians

teach; that idea would lead us to believe that God waited to see what man would do, before he decided what he would do. This makes God's will depend on man's will, which is contrary to all Bible teaching. It was God's will to allow man to fall, by a voluntary permission. The law given Adam was not a prohibitory law, but commandatory; Adam was told what the result would be if he ate the forbidden fruit. Sin entered the world by man's transgression of the law "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are." God was never deceived nor disappointed; this world is just as God intended it should be. There are numerous passages in the old scriptures proving that this world is just as described. Prov. 8:22-31, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:*****Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the

habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.”

The above shows clearly that Jesus’ delights were with the sons of men, that elect family, that the Father had given him, his bride, the children of promise. The Father is not willing that he should lose one of them. David, in the Psalms 139, first sets forth God’s omniscience, then his omnipresence; then he describes the church, Christ’s body, verse 15-16. “My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”

The above shows that God’s all-seeing eye beheld all the members of Christ’s body, and were written in his book. This chosen material is what composed the house, “wisdom hath builded her house,” in the mind and purpose of God the house was complete. “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” The Father chose the material for the house; the Son purchased it. The Holy Spirit brings the material chosen by the Father and purchased by the Son, into the building. “In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” God is so infinitely perfect in his nature, that his poor depraved creatures cannot add to his perfection but only through his Son alone are we quickened into divine life and made partakers of the divine nature it is then that we please God. He alone is the source of all good and his government of the world is such, that he causes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder he restrains. Our enemies frequently call us fatalists; the person who does not be-

lieve in the absolute sovereignty of God and that he controls and directs all events, is a fatalist.

God created all things by the word of his power “that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist;” some people teach and believe that the devil is a fallen angel; that he rebelled against God and was cast out into the earth. Go with me to Job 26:14. “By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him?” Isa. 27:1 says, “In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.” See Rev. 12:9 and 20:2.

Some one may ask why did God form a crooked serpent? It is for the same reason that he raised up Pharaoh—that he might show his power in him that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. God, through Moses his mediator, delivered the last one of his chosen race from Egyptian bondage; likewise through Christ he will deliver all his chosen race from the bondage of Satan. Evidently it was God’s will and purpose that sin should be in the world because he made arrangements for its cure before it came. If there had not been any sin in the world God’s love and mercy would not have been manifested in forgiving it; His power and wisdom in overruling it, and his justice in punishing it. “Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee.” Jer. 2:19.

The London Confession of Faith,

Chapter 5, Art. 5 says, "The most wise and gracious God doth oftentimes leave for a season his own children to manifest temptations and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength or corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts (2 Chron. 32:25, 26, 31. 2 Sam. 24:1; 2 Cor. 12:7-9) that they may be humbled, and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin and for other just and holy ends, so that whatever befalls any of his elect is by his appointment, for his glory and their good." (Rom. 8:28).

Our enemies have charged us with Antinomianism, that we are against law. We believe in law in its proper place, but there is no law given that can give life. The Apostle asked wherefore then serveth the law, it was added because of transgression till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." But the law stops our mouths and makes us all guilty before God.

I will soon be 81 years old and have been trying to preach Christ as a complete Savior for 44 years; I was almost completely blind for about one year. I had a cataract removed from my eye last November and now thank the Lord that I can again see to read and write. Brethren, these are perilous times, but our God has the situation in his hands and all will redound to his praise, glory and honor. My Christian love to all the saints throughout the land.

Stem, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Your very kind letter, received a few days ago, was such a pleasant surprise. It is a source of comfort to know that I am some-

times in the mind of those whom I esteem as highly as I do you, I hope for the truth's sake, and for what it has wrought in you. When I first learned of your being in Rocky Mount, my thought was, "I do wish it had been another time," for I saw no way of going, as I would not feel right to be absent from my home meeting, unless in a case of emergency. After that, I had a nice letter from Elder R. B. Denson, asking me to go down Friday and spend the night in his home with the friends and brethren he expected to be there then, and that I could return in time for Saturday afternoon meeting. It seemed he had arranged it all for me, though it was not convenient at that time for me to be away over night. You know, of course, that I believe that the Lord arranged it through him. As the years go by, more and more I learn that "All our times are in His hands, All events at His command." And this includes the smallest, as well as those we may consider more important. I felt then, and do still, that the privilege and pleasure of being there was all mine. I was sorry to rush out of the meeting, but asked Elder Denson to please explain. Reached home just about two, so had plenty of time for dinner and to get to our meeting at three.

On Friday night, before, for some reason, I was wakeful, and as I lay there in the silence of the night, my mind was filled with many and various thoughts. Some of comfort, others trashy that insisted on intruding. Among the better ones, suddenly, without any cause that I could understand, the words of that short hymn, which we call the "Long Meter Doxology," came into mind. I had not read, or heard it sung for a long time, and was surprised that it should come to me just then. Word by word it came to me, and I had never seen before the

depth of meaning, or the majesty expressed in those few words. I wondered how I could have been so blind all these years not to have seen it before. For a little while there was given me such a sweet season. Not so long after, I was busy in preparation to start to the Falls meeting. As I was alone on the way, (except the driver,) there was plenty of time to think, and I questioned *why* I was going that far just to hear some one preach, and if the Lord was in the matter, I wondered if the desire was all of the flesh, and feared that my ears might be closed to the word preached. There was such a mixture of confused questioning. But when you began to speak, I was favored to forget these annoying thoughts, and lose myself in the things preached. No doubt, I have read that chapter many times but had never understood it, as you were blessed to open it up. And when, suddenly, you referred to the words of that Doxology, and their meaning, and expressed so nearly the words and the frame of mind I had been blessed with not many hours before, you can hardly imagine my feeling. Sometimes it seems, I doubt *everything*, when all at once something comes which assures me so fully that the Lord reigns, even in the most minute things, that for a little while I *doubt nothing*.

I wish very much it were so you could be at our Association. If you have found, since I mentioned it to you, that you can, please come right on. Am sure you enjoyed your visit in the home of Elder Denson, and with the friends and brethren there. He has the gift of being a most genial host.

Remember me kindly to Mrs. Dodson, and I thank you for your thought of me, which brought me comfort. In the best of bonds, I hope I am

Yours in fellowship,
(Mrs.) LAURA REED GOOCH

Route 3, Snow Hill, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: It has been requested that your letter to me on the twenty-fifth Psalm be published. With your permission, since it has meant so much to me, I am willing to share it with others. I consider this letter as a part of my experience. My original question to three preachers about this Psalm was different. You were the last one I asked and you were the first one to write about it. In my other letter to you I stated that I especially appreciated your pointing out to me the 12th verse and then the 14th verse. I think His lovingkindnesses and tender mercies is what led me first to this Psalm. As a child I did not understand anything in the song, "His Loving Kindness" on page two of the Durand and Lester Hymn Book but His Loving-kindness. This winter I was very conscious of fearing and wanting to trust in the Lord, and wanting him to teach me in his ways; however, I desired so much that he forgive all my sins, that I had in a way overlooked or had not been really impressed with the 14th verse until I received your letter.

When we went to sing at Elder Kearney's home he told me that something I said to the church when I was received made him think of the 89th Psalm. He was sick and had to miss church in June, but in July he talked from this Psalm, using verses 14, 24-26 to lead up to his main subject for the day. You had shown me that He will show his covenant to those who fear him. I was grateful that Elder Kearney followed this with the thought that if His children forsake his law he would punish them, nevertheless he would not utterly take his lovingkindness from them, and he would not break the covenant he had shown them. (Verses 28-34.) Yours in gospel bonds.

(Miss) BEULAH MEWBORN

MISS BEULAH MEWBORN, MY DEAR YOUNG SISTER IN CHRIST: First, allow me to say that I was very sorry you were delayed in reaching the meeting at Elder R. B. Denson's, and I am also sorry that we did not have more time to talk over the points referred to by you in the 25th Psalm. I keep very busy, as a rule, and hence have not felt to write to you before this. I hope I may be given something that will be of interest and comfort to you concerning this Psalm.

Second, let me say to you here, as I have said publicly on previous occasions, that the Psalmist David, in my humble opinion, had a wider range of experiences than almost any other of the Old Testament writers. The Lord took him from the sheep cote and exalted him to be the king on the throne of Israel, and because of this great variety of experiences I feel he can and does visit and comfort the Lord's people in all walks of life. All of his experiences do not necessarily apply to each one alike, but I believe there is food for hungry souls, from the cradle to the grave. The 25th Psalm is thought to have been written by David following a great trial, that of the rebellion of many of his subjects, including his own son, Absalom, as the leader of the crowd. This caused David to verily lift up his soul unto God. Notwithstanding all of his difficulties he reaffirmed his trust in the Lord, and desired that He would not let him be put to shame, and neither that his enemies should be allowed to triumph over him. He earnestly desired that none who waited on the Lord and looked to him for aid should ever be put to shame. He also desired, most earnestly, that the Lord would show him his, (God's) ways, and that he would teach him his paths, and lead him into an understanding of his truth, for he

realized that he was the God of his salvation, and his wish was to wait all the day upon him. I feel there is a great deal in all of this that is of vital interest to you, and I truly hope you may be led by the Spirit to glean much from these fields. This great searching of heart through which the Psalmist was being put to, undoubtedly brought to his remembrance his whole life, from his youth to that present time, and in the sixth verse you will observe that he recalled God's tender mercies and his lovingkindnesses, which had followed him all the days of his life. Having these things in mind all the more, perhaps, made him think of his sinful life, from his youth up. There were many sins of his youth that were doubtless very minor in comparison to the great sin after he became king of Israel. This latter sin stood out above all others, for God had searched his heart and made him to know that He was acquainted with all his ways. He himself had been made to know that he could not hide from God. As I said to you in Brother Denson's home, I can but feel that the sins of his youth, his transgressions and his iniquities are all expressive of the same condition, but varying in degree. His transgressions and iniquities were an enlargement upon his sinful condition, revealing to him that the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and who can know it. It would seem that he began with the sins of his youth and then came on up through his transgressions and finally in the 11th verse he says, "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." This expression is in the singular and may denote what we may term the worst of all his sins, involving in effect the murder of Bath-sheba's husband, and bringing reproach and everlasting shame upon Israel. This iniquity he

himself speaks of as being great. If you will turn to the 51st Psalm you will see his pleadings with the Lord on this account. He says, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever 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." In the 12th verse he asks, "What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." Then he goes on in the 14th verse to present what to me is a gem of sacred and glorious truth: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." I believe you are one who truly fears, or loves the Lord, and that He already has shown you his covenant of everlasting love, wherein you were chosen in his blessed Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, even before the foundations of the earth were laid. If so, your eyes shall ever be towards the Lord, and he shall pluck your feet out of the net. God most assuredly does turn unto his people, and have mercy upon them who are a poor and afflicted people. He continued by saying, "The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins." How we do yearn for a complete cleansing from all unrighteousness, and this is to be had only in that fountain which was opened to the spiritual house of David for sin and uncleanness. When our eyes are opened to the ways of God and his holiness, we are made to mourn and groan beneath our load and burden of sin. What an affliction sin is! Only those who are truly taught of God can have a deep appreciation of its awfulness, and only

such characters can truly evaluate the gloriousness of God's salvation. We can sometimes look unto the pit from whence we were digged and unto the Rock from whence we were hewn, and then we can say the Lord brought me up out of an horrible pit, etc. I hope I have been given something to say that will be comforting and edifying to you. Yours in a precious hope in Jesus.

R. LESTER DODSON

Box 315, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: My subscription expires with this issue just received, read and very much enjoyed. I am enclosing my check to renew for two years.

Yesterday a friend was in my office from Paragould, Ark. who is a Baptist but not of our faith and order, while here he noticed the *Signs*, and he read and was, it appeared, very much impressed with it and especially it seemed he liked Elder L. L. Schenck's article on "The laver and his foot," Ex. 30:28, which was the principal part of the reading he had opportunity to do. Not having a chance to read much more he asked me for my copy. I wanted him to have an issue but did not want to part with mine since I have always kept all issues filed away. I promised him I would ask you to mail him a copy of the August issue, telling him that when he read all the articles I hoped he would subscribe.

Brother Dodson, I certainly did enjoy and endorse all you set forth in your editorial in the August issue on the verses in the second chapter of Luke, replying to Sister Gertrude Pyatt. Your views are in accord with what I feel to hope, believe and understand about it better than I could express my own views myself. I believe and have many times made the statement that the religious world

could not produce any evidence that Dec. 25th was the birthday of our Savior. Like you, my view is that the exact date of the birth of our Lord remains a secret. It has not been pleasing in the sight of God to reveal it to man. I also agree with you that the expression in the 10th verse "to all people" does not mean every Adamic creature, nor a mere offer to every creature, but means all God's people everywhere and from out of every nation, both Jews and Gentile. You explained all that so satisfactory to my view, and it was very comforting to me. I feel and hope the thoughts given me on this scripture coincide with your views as expressed all through your editorial. Feeling and hoping to be given to witness with an article or sermon read or heard is a comfort and consolation. Your editorial was meat and drink to me.

I have seen and talked with Brother Lambert since he had the pleasure and privilege of meeting you in person and hearing you preach. He expressed great joy about getting to see and hear you and be with you what time he was blessed to do. I hope and trust all things are well with you and may the God of all grace keep and bless you in his ways is the prayer of your little brother in a blessed hope.

(Elder) W. A. SPEER

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 3:15.

I am not in the least uneasy about the fixed work of Almighty God. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. What more could you want than any-thing to be done and stand fast? He speaks "study" and it is done. Where is the power to prevent? Not principalities, powers, life,

death, things present, things to come, height, depth, nor any other creature. Then what could mortal man do but obey God? Study, not to show that God will approve you, but shew unto thy brethren that you are approved (past tense) unto God. Search out the secret chambers of your heart, weigh your thoughts and see if they corroborate with the holy men of old who wrote as God gave them utterance. Then, if so, it is an evidence that you are a workman created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that you should walk in them. Where is the power that can withstand God? With the word of a king there is power and this word "study" is spoken by the King of kings, and Lord of lords to living creatures capable of studying and learning, not to the natural mind, but to those characters who have been made alive by the washing of regeneration.

"A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." God is truth. He spoke in thunderous tones, the law on mount Sinai its fixed place, and not one power can move it, hither or thither. The law was good and perfect and served its purpose in that day. God spake and rolled it up as a vesture and laid it away not to be administered any more. He spake and mercy and truth met together; righteousness and peace kissed each other; truth sprang out of the earth, and righteousness looked down from heaven in the person of the Son of God clothed with all power of the Godhead. The word of truth rightly divides law and gospel. The night cometh when no man can work, but thanks be unto God a dividing line comes and there begins the dawn of a new day; a new era for all things are passed away and behold all things become new.

Not many days ago I heard a man deliver an introductory discourse at an Association. In the beginning he said, "I understand full well it is not as some think, that God rains the gospel down on your head and it runs out at the mouth. I know if there is any preaching done here to-day I will have to do it or some other man. God is not going to do it for me." I read in the Bible, study to shew thyself a workman. They called themselves Primitive Baptists. I thought O, my soul have I been deceived all these years or is some one else deceived. As the sermon went on I hope I was made to study and weigh my thoughts with the writers of old and do hope I was not found wanting.

Who can deny the predestination of God in splitting the smallest atom to make the great bomb? Who can deny this splitting the great bomb to tear down the works of man? It was God's almighty power that made the lion; it was his almighty power that locked its jaws that it could not harm Daniel for he was a chosen man to rightly divide the word of truth; it was God's almighty power that unlocked the lion's jaws to destroy the enemy; it was God's almighty power that put Paul in prison; it was God's almighty power that loosed him for he was a chosen vessel to bear his name to the Gentiles to preach the gospel which is the power of God to every one that believeth.

I sometimes wonder why it is said that Primitive Baptists are sitting on the stool of do-nothing. They are the busiest people on earth for they are about their father's business, but not trying to attend to another's business. The shepherds are given a shepherd's bag full of food to feed the flock of God, and also in that bag are five smooth stones and a sling to slay Goliath, yea, power to bring down the enemy

even so much that not a dog shall wag its tongue against them, but every tongue shall confess that he is God, and every knee shall bow to his power. If I could be given to go down into the deep and sweet mysteries of the absolute predestination of God in all things to satisfy my soul it would be enough for I know it is sound doctrine that will stand all the storms, subdue all powers and put to flight the devil. Not only will it do that but will preserve the truth which is so precious to God's little children in this world, and when their walk on earth is done be their shield, guide and transport into that glorious kingdom where there is perfection. How wonderful, dear children of God, when your father speaks "study." It is a power that illuminates the mind far above all natural things to look by an eye of faith into the beauties of God's holiness to behold that holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven.

David so much desired this word to be spoken to him when he said, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He felt the Lord was gone from him and he could not weigh his thoughts for he could not reach the scale. Don't you know if he could he would have as earnestly as he was begging. In due time the Lord restores the joy of his salvation. He has promised eternal life, and he is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance. Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God fully persuaded that what he has promised he is able to perform. He hath spoken and shall it not come to pass? Will the creature to whom God has spoken not obey his voice? "The

word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world." Again we hear him saying, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Now we can see why Paul could say, "Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me, if I preach not the gospel!" If Paul by studying could have preached the gospel he could have gloried in himself.

I do not know whether I have the right interpretation of this scripture or not. I do not know whether I have been given to study or not, but weigh it in the balance and if it measures up to the truth it is the predestination of God in all things that brought it about.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE LEE HAYES
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DEAR PASTOR OF EBENEZER CHURCH,
NEW YORK: Having just awakened in a frame of mind which went reaching back to that sweet place of humility in the dear old church in New York I must hasten to express a few thoughts. Sleep is not even needed here in this kind of resting place. "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. My little mother wanted to move away from Vancouver, just anywhere near an Old Baptist church. She knew full well there would be a school provided for me to teach. This reminds me of a song: "Oh for the wings, for the wings of a dove, far far away would I fly." Just before she died she was clinging to this same resting place, the sanctity of Ebenezer Church and her sweet memories there. I am not fit to approach that quiet waiting group, who listen contritely for a certain sweet sound of inspiration and comfort. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28. This quiet people are adding "to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." 2 Peter 1:5-7. They travel ways they know not and paths past finding out.

It is now the third Sunday at Ebenezer Church and I know of no sweeter place than that humble resting place for the people of God. It is exactly the same wherever two or three are gathered together in His name, East, West, North or South. The same pure truth is proclaimed without hesitation. So like Ruth of old, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Ruth 1:16. His people will always be waiting like patient witnesses, ascribing honor and glory and all power to him as do the four and twenty elders above.

I remember one day when immersed

in the beauty of his holiness, being caught up and held praying for a sweet moment, begging our gentle Savior to take all of me. Now I read in the dear *Signs of the Times* from the pen of Brother David B. Lawson, "Yea Lord, thy blessings are upon me abundantly, and wilt thou accept my soul as a token of the thanksgiving for that is all I have to offer thee?" When we are made willing in the day of his power the rest of this world fades away into its own insignificance, away from mount Zion, the city of our God. How closely I would cling to this frame of mind! Jacob did not want the angel to leave him either until he was blessed. But alas! I must go down like Peter from the mountain where he wished to build three tabernacles. "Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Luke 9:33.

Have you ever wakened and almost caught the sound of an angel's voice, perhaps the last lingering one ministering? "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." Job 33:15-16. Sister Rosa Coleman dreamed in the midst of a stroke that her deceased mother's hands were smoothing her bed so carefully. She said, "Those are my mother's hands, but what is the beautiful light under them?" The answer came, "That is your mother's love." So God is abundantly able to minister just the right comfort to each lamb. Paul says, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." Phil. 4:19. This happy summer I have heard about the food prepared on Wisdom's table for each and every need as I worshipped in the churches in the West at Naches, Riffe and Chehalis. "Now our

Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." 2 Thes. 2:16-17. My mother left this page turned down at the corner. There is no end to this sweet story. Therefore, I shall simply pause until another day, when I find without warning that my blessed Savior has filled the loneliness for my beautiful church and parents with further meditation. "Therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee." I Chron. 17:25. I am enjoying Isaiah 25 and 26 (3, 4, 12, 20.) I wish you could have heard Sister Beatrice Haan sing the hymn, "Hide Thou Me" as she and I rested very high up near the glacier on Mt. Ranier in rare atmosphere.

"When the world its power is wielding,
And my heart is almost yielding,
Hide me O thou Rock of Ages,
Safe in Thee."

Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

1030 Bruce St., Memphis 4, Tenn.
MR. AND MRS. R. L. VEAZEY, DEAR AND PRECIOUS FRIENDS, I HOPE IN THE LORD: The cold, icy weather keeps me indoors most of the time. May be I am just getting old. The ice on the trees is very pretty although it makes them look so barren of life. It reminds me of the seasons of coldness we experience when feeling no evidence of life. Dear friends, we must have the presence of the Spirit, whether we feel it or not, that is the spirit of truth makes us to understand the written testimony of God's word, and I do not know that I understand any part of it. God does, and knowing self as I do I am made to fear that surely I am just a deceitful

wretch. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." For some time my mind has been upon the 10th chapter of Romans, verses 1-4 reading as follows: "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 unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." I have heard it said that this scripture embraces the children of God in the churches not of Primitive Baptist faith, and they are ignorant as yet of the true doctrine yet are saved. Let us see what Paul says about it, and what the holy scriptures teach concerning such as Paul spoke of. We see in the preceding chapter Paul is talking of the coming of the Gentiles. We know there is a natural Israel and a spiritual Israel as all of Abraham's children are not the children of promise. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "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." In the last of the chapter Paul says, "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they 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." Rom. 9:31-33. Now we proceed as to who was under consideration. Jesus said to Nicodemus as he came to him *by night* "Except a man be born again, he *cannot see* the kingdom of God." Nicodemus did not understand this, and in connection with this Paul records for us, "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." Now back to Romans 10:2, "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Zeal means active interest and who is it Paul said hath not attained to the law of righteousness? "Wherefore? (or why) Because they sought it not by faith but as it were by the works of the law." How could this apply to children of God in other churches for these people are ignorant of the righteousness of God and going about to establish their own. We have a people to-day that believe in works in order to obtain salvation, thus making self their Savior. They teach the keeping of the law and there is no promise of life in the law, only ye shall eat of the fat of the land. As it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence," and this ignorant people stumbled at this stumblingstone, and Jesus is the stumblingstone under consideration, "and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." This ignorant people surely knew nothing then and know nothing now of the grace of God, or they would not go about to establish their own righteousness in order to obtain salvation, thus denying Christ as he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. I am made to believe that God has a people in every nation, kindred

and tongue but, dear friends, they are not ignorant of God's righteousness, the finished work of Christ, they have an experience of grace, I believe, or they would not be children of God. Paul says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any many should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained (predestinated) that we should walk in them." Eph. 2.8-10.

Grace means divine favor, a free unmerited spirit bestowed upon an unworthy creature. Is something free that which has to be worked for? An experience of grace is a heartfelt experience of divine favor. Now back to Jesus words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The kingdom of God is within you, Christ in you the hope of glory. Now to Paul's experience and I hope mine and yours. We see Jesus said, ye must be born again. To be born again would of necessity bring about a death, but not a corporeal death. Paul says, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." How well I remember when I was a self-satisfied creature full of (supposedly) good works. I was alive without the law then, but when the commandment came—(There was given a commandment in the garden of Eden. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 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." "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin

abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.") Now back to the verse, "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." This is that original guilt and we felt it, we hope, when we were made to see ourselves as sinners guilty before a just and holy God. When they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, their eyes were opened and they say they were naked and sought to cover themselves. Oh, when we saw our guilt we fled to the law; we read our Bible but it only condemned us; we tried all our good works for cover but to no avail; and Paul states now, "And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, *deceived me*, and by it slew me." Is not this that original guilt felt? "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." Now comes the warfare. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do." "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." This warfare makes us to cry as did Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The law is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith, and faith makes Paul to thank God through Jesus Christ for deliverance. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

We see how this corresponds with the new covenant made with the house of Israel, (Spiritual Israel) when the

Lord saith, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his 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 iniquities will I remember no more." Here is a people embraced and promised mercy to their unrighteousness. Who is it to-day that teaches saying, know the Lord? Is it not the ignorant of God's righteousness, those who have no experience of grace? For when grace shines in the heart of a guilty sinner it makes him to see his depraved, helpless condition, and knowing he has no goodness to claim of himself, he is brought to the end of the law, and made to see Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he (God) hath sent." "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39. Who testifies of him and who is ashamed of him? It is those having an experience of grace, no matter what group they are affiliated with, that testify of a finished work of redemption by Jesus as he came to save his people and finish the work the Father gave him to do. He saved all that were chosen in him before the world began. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which 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;" and then "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." Who are the ignorant that have no knowledge of Christ and his righteousness? It could not be they are saved if they never knew him as the Savior of sinners for Jesus said, "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me." I cannot believe one of those wills and shalls will ever fail.

1 John 5: 10-12 tells whether the ignorant have eternal life or not, and if they are ignorant of God's righteousness, and go about to establish their own salvation they are working in order to obtain salvation, and not because of salvation and make self their own Savior thus denying they know Jesus as the Savior of sinners. As further proof Christ said while here on the earth before he was crucified for the sins of his dear ones, "I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." John 10:7-9. In the first verse of this chapter he says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." He says also, "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, (how quickly they note discordance) but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." (Do they not recognize a road they have been brought over when others tell of the marks along the way?) How this compares to the parable in Matt. 25:31-36. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the

throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one, from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." They shall say when did we do all these things as he said, and he shall say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." They knew not even when they fed one of His or gave them a cup of water, but he knew it for they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained they shall walk in them, yet not as the goats that see and feel self righteous, and he turns to them and says, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."**** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Are not the goats crying have we not cast out devils in his name, and in his name done many wonderful things? Yet the sheep say, Lord when did we see thee and do these things? The flesh is prone to feel proud and would immediately rise up and boast in its selfrighteousness should it see any good it had done, (Look what I have done) as those working to gain salvation as they believe. The ignorant of to-day are those (I believe it is so) that believe if they work or do good works for God and keep the law he is in debt to save them. How different

from the poor, helpless afflicted child of God. Affliction surely cripples the old natural man, and this corresponds with the experience of Paul as I have heretofore stated. Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. 6:24.

Now seeing the awful creature that I am, I am made to wonder and stand amazed that God is so gracious as he is to such a sinful wretch. If ever I did anything right in my life I cannot remember when and where it was, yet for some reason known to him he has given me a love for the doctrine of truth and his dear ones. I hope I am not deceived in this yet it surpasses my understanding as to why, and the depth of the feeling given. I am so prone to look to the things that concern one in the flesh, and I know if God ever thought upon me for good it was in mercy and love. So it is my hope that he look not upon me as I am in the tabernacle of clay, but unto his holy Son who was obedient to the law, fulfilled it to a jot and tittle, and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints according to the will of God. In love of the truth and begging God's mercy I am in hope of rest beyond the grave. A guilty sinner.

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

Island City, Oregon

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BROTHER IN GOSPEL BONDS: I am sending you a report of the ordination of Brother R. R. Wolfe, who is now Pastor of the Big Springs Church. Elder G. E. Mayfield was Pastor of this church for many years. After his death, Elder C. W. Bond was chosen Pastor, which place he served for a number of years. For several years he realized his

work would soon be finished, and there was no one to take his place. He wrote to Brother Wolfe, asking him to make us a visit, and if possible locate here. Brother Wolfe arrived here three days after Elder Bond was buried. He was shocked and grieved at this, but felt the Lord had sent him, and that he was needed here now more than ever, but he was only a licentiate.

The Baptists here love and fellowship him. Of course he could not officiate as a minister until he was ordained, hence the ordination. It often occurs to me how gratified Elder Bond would be to know, and who are we to say he does not. "They may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." In fellowship and hope, your sister of like precious faith.

(Mrs.) MARTHA H. BOND

MEMORIAL

Whereas, our God has removed by death the last male member of the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y., Brother Isaac T. Dolson, we desire to pay tribute to his memory. We of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, Middletown, N. Y. feel saddened by his passing as his place was always filled at the meetings. He was a lover of the truth as it is in Jesus. May the Great Judge give us grace and reconciliation to his divine will and be a widow's God to his widow, our sister Blanche, who feels her loss deeply.

W. D. CHAPMAN

(Miss) M. E. HYATT

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the Signs of the Times at the following prices: 1 copy 25 cents; 3 copies 75 cents; 6 copies \$1.50; 12 copies \$3.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

Route 1, Greenwood, Miss.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed are a few verses I composed in memory of my father, MARION A. RISO, who departed this life Nov. 11, 1942. He was a member and minister also of the dear Old Baptists, and if after reading these verses you have space and think they are worthy of printing I would be so glad to have a copy. Your sister in Christ I hope. (Mrs.) A. J. BOYETT

A precious one from us has gone,
A sweet voice we loved is still;
There's a vacant place in our hearts
That never can be filled.

The loneliness in our hearts
Seems more than we can bear;
We miss you more each day
Since God called you to his care.

God needed another angel
To worship before his throne,
So looking down from heaven
He called our loved one home.

Seven years ago you left us,
Friends may think the wound is healed,
But they little know the sorrow,
That is in our hearts concealed.

Now that he is gone to heaven,
We can only plant flowers on the grave,
Of the one we loved so much
But were powerless to save.

Sleep on dear father
And take your rest;
We loved you dearly
But God loved you best.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

T. S. Chester, Ky., \$5; W. G. Anderson, Ky., \$5; G. A. Paul, Ala., \$2; Mrs. M. E. Holloway, Md., \$2; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., \$5; Miss M. Dunlap, Me., \$2; Mrs. B. L. Jones, Ia., \$10; A. S. Robertson, N. C., \$2; Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. Y., \$1; D. H. Bradley, Tex., \$10; Dossia Deal, Mo., \$2; Miss C. M. Duffus, B. C., \$4; T. W. Robertson, Tenn., \$2; T. T. Reid, Tex., \$2; J. T. Bratten, Md., \$3; Mrs. C. Twilley, Md., \$1; S. R. Prewitt, Okla., \$5; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., \$5.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

MARCH, 1950

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Rutherford, N. J.

WHAT IS TRUTH

I feel to comply with your request to write something for the *Signs*. I have been asked recently why I did not write for publication. My answer was the same that I gave a sister a few years ago, who asked why I was not as ready to give my views on scripture now as I was when I first began to preach. My reply was, "that I did not know as much now as I thought I did then." I feel, however, to contribute to the columns of the *Signs* to the best of my ability.

In John 18:38, Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth," Just previous to this statement Pilate said to Jesus, "Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*****To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of

the truth heareth my voice." This statement prompted Pilate to ask, "What is truth?" My sheep hear my voice, and the voice of strangers they will not hear. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him." Jesus said, "I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in my name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The scripture of truth is as inactive as the sword. The sword will never come into action, until some one takes it in hand and wields it. So the truth, in the letter, will never come into action until the spirit of truth takes it in hand and reveals it unto us.

Jesus is the truth, the way and the life. In the Bible is found truth in the letter. In the hearts of God's people is revealed truth. Divine truth is not known except by revelation. When Jesus was walking with his disciples after his resurrection from the dead, he was hidden to them so far as their knowledge or understanding of him was concerned. It was as necessary for him to reveal himself to them as it was to Thomas, who said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails,

and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Spiritual truth is in the hearts of God's people because the Savior said to his disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless," but would send the Comforter, which would take of the things of His and show them unto them. A large portion of the human family know truth in the letter, and can preach it in the letter, but that will never cause one to know truth in the spirit or in power. The disciples asked the Savior why he spake to them in parables, and he said it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom and to others it is not. Yes, it is given to you to know what a blessed gift it is to know him, whom to know is life eternal. If truth in the letter had in it any life or power, then I would be in favor of sending it into all the world. Truth in the letter has no convincing or regenerating power. When the disciples told Thomas that Jesus had risen from the dead, it did not make Thomas believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. It takes the same revelation to-day to cause one to believe as it did Thomas. When Jesus revealed his nail prints, and said, Thomas be not faithless but believing, Thomas then said, "My Lord and my God." Jesus said, if you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. This was not a proposition by which they would become his disciples, but it was a test of their discipleship. To continue in the old paths and not be drawn away by the lo heres and lo theres is proof that you know the truth, and that the truth has made you free from all the pleasing and enticing words of men. How blessed it is to read the word of God and feel that it is drawn out of the letter and infused into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God in the

face of Jesus Christ. I feel that we should read and study the word of God and familiarize ourselves with the letter of the word. At the same time, I know that we will never acquaint ourselves with the truth in its power by reading the word of truth.

The only time that I remember hearing Elder Eubanks preach, he told of a young boy who had been driving with his mother to church for several years, and listening to the truth preached by the same preacher. One day as they were returning home, the boy asked his mother what was wrong with the preacher, he is not preaching as he used to do? After he and his mother had talked awhile, the mother, with tears in her eyes, put her arms around him and said, "the change is not in the preacher, but the change is in my boy." This gospel did not come to him in word only, but in power.

I have heard it said that if you were honest and sincere in what you believe, you would be justified in that belief. We are not justified by our sincerity in a creed or doctrine, we are justified by faith. The people of God are not justified by what they believe in the head, but with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Paul thought that he was doing God's service when he was persecuting the saints of God, but he was not justified because he was sincere in that act.

I once attended a meeting of another denomination and the minister used for his text I Peter, 1:2 which reads as follows: "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." I never heard a more cogent argument on the subject of election than this man put up, but it was as dry as a bone. There

was no life or feeling in it. It is often said that man cannot learn to preach, but I beg to disagree. This man had learned to preach the truth in the letter, but I doubt if he knew anything about the Spirit of truth. This gentleman used two hymn books to convey his idea of how people are in Christ Jesus. He opened one book, placed the other inside and said, "now this is the way we are in Christ." "This book (he said) did not put itself inside the other book, but I put one in the other, and this is the way that we are in Christ Jesus." This is, of course, the truth in the letter, but when he had finished his discourse, he opened one of the hymn books and giving out a hymn said to the people, "that if there were any there who were not in Christ and wanted to be, that as we sing an opportunity is given, and just come up and give me your hand." This made me feel that he savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Evidently he did not know the truth that makes men free. When Jesus said everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice, he evidently meant every one that had this truth revealed to them, and knew Him who is the truth, the way, and the life. Truth does not come up out of the earth, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. My answer to the question of Pilate is, whatever God reveals of himself, and of his will concerning us. We are not so much interested in what he has revealed to others, as we are in what he reveals to us. "When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Thomas was not with these disciples at this time, but they said unto Thomas, "We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print

of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe," Yes, we want to see for ourselves and not another.

Peter said, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*****And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." It is what we see and feel for ourselves that does us good. There is no life in what we call the scripture of truth, except as it is taken by the living and incarnate word and truth, and made known to us. Preaching is a lot better to me if it has some seasoning in it. Paul said to the Corinthian brethren, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*****My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

When I was about seven years of age I felt an impression to preach, and I would slip the Bible from the house and go outside to read, thinking that all I had to do was to read and commit to memory what I read, and recite it as I did my speech at school. I am afraid that we have too much of this kind of preaching to-day. I like to hear the kind of preaching that Paul said his was, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. This kind of preaching penetrates the heart where God works. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." All other kinds of preaching is as sounding brass,

or a tinkling symbol to those who are of this truth, and heareth His voice. Paul said, "Thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

This truth in its purity and power comes down from above. Just as the manna that came down to feed the children of Israel. When they "saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." The Lord has given his people this blessed book which is called the scriptures of truth, that they may read and feast upon them as the Spirit touches our conscience to feel them, and our hearts to believe them. The little seed that fell upon the ground, and which the children of Israel gathered and called manna, fed them and sustained them while in the wilderness. So God has given his people the written word of truth to comfort them, and to feed their souls while here upon earth. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

May God reveal this truth to us, and sanctify his word to us, for his word is truth. I sometimes feel to say with David, "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." We not only want the light of God to illuminate our path, but we want the truth of God to support us as we travel the king's highway. We want the truth brought out of the letter, and ratified in our hearts with

divine power and sweetness. May God keep us and support us by his truth.

H. O. N.

"And 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."

John 10:16.

A sister in California has asked that we give our views through the *Signs* on the above verse of scripture. As much as in us is we like to comply with the wishes of our brethren.

Since the time the Lord said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and unto a land that I will shew thee," he manifested in innumerable ways his love for his people among the Jews all through the law age. Particularly, would we mention his watchcare over them in Egypt and in delivering them from the land of bondage with an high and mighty hand. The Lord made a covenant with Abraham, and renewed it with Isaac, and with Jacob, wherein he promised to bless them and bring them into a land which flowed with milk and honey. His dealings and relationships with them were such that it was proclaimed that "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun" (Israel), and that "The eternal God is thy refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone. the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellence! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and

thou shalt tread upon their high places." Deut. 33:26-29.

Following the death of Moses, the Lord raised up Joshua to lead the people of Israel across Jordan into the promised land; and after the death of Joshua the Lord brought forth others to rule over and serve them, including David and Solomon, to say nothing of his prophets to teach and instruct them in the way of righteousness. During the Legal Dispensation, only the Jews had the oracles of God committed unto them, while the Gentile nations were without the gates of Jerusalem, and had little or no standing in a spiritual way. However, there was some prophecy for the Gentiles even in that for them dark age, for the Lord spake, saying, "I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." Hosea 2:23. This unquestionably had reference to the day when Michael, the Great Prince, would stand up for his people among the Gentile nations of the world. At best, the law reflected only shadows of the good things to come, but the types thereunder were all pointing to the coming of Emmanuel, which being interpreted meant, "God with us." It seems to us that the Apostle Paul dealt most beautifully with our text in the second chapter of Ephesians, from which we quote, as follows: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Isreal, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by

the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph. 2:11-18.

Having presented the matter so clearly unto them, he then proceeded to enlarge upon this most gracious workmanship of God by saying unto his Gentile brethren, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." This was that workmanship which God had created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that should be walked in. And neither did the apostle leave any room for doubt as to who all the praise and all the glory belonged, for he said plainly, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." The bringing together by God into that most sacred relationship of Jew and Gentile was that which called forth that most famous declaration "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

We hope we have made it clear that

by the "other sheep," which were not of the Jewish fold, Jesus had reference to his sheep among the Gentiles. His spiritual people are scattered as salt throughout the earth among every kindred, tribe, tongue and people, and we are glad that our Lord said, "Them also I must bring." We are persuaded that none will come unto him of their own accord, for by nature they will not have him rule over them; and neither has he delegated this work to any arm of flesh, which is entirely too weak and corrupt, but it is altogether and entirely the work of the Holy Spirit and, therefore, there can be no failure in any age of the world of all his chosen ones coming to him, for he himself hath said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." We have in the chapter of our text the parable of the good shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, and in addition to Jesus saying he must bring them, he also says, "and they shall hear my voice." In the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses of this same chapter, we hear him saying, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." What wonderful security it is to feel that we are in Him who is one with the Father. If this, indeed, be true, then we are as certain of our heavenly home as though we were already there.

Our text continues by saying, "And there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." We like the definiteness about the things contained in our text. This Shepherd knows his sheep and calls them by name, and they follow him.

He is no weakling who pleads in vain with his own, but he speaks, and it is done, he commands, and it stands fast. He says to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by his name, for he has created them for his glory; he hath formed them; yea, he hath made them, and there is none, men or devils, who can hinder him in fully accomplishing all his pleasure. God shall gather the solitary ones in families from among the Gentiles and Jews, the bond and the free, and they shall all come and sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and none shall molest or make them afraid. For nearly two thousand years now, we believe, he has been gathering his lambs and his sheep among the Gentiles, and we do not know how long it will be before their fulness shall have come in, but whenever that may be, we are persuaded that he will then turn more particularly to the Jews and will graff them in again in a more sacred relationship than they have ever yet known, and then will they, in truth, confess and own him as their true spiritual Messiah. It may require thousands of years, as we count them, before this is accomplished, so we are not one of those who are prophesying the second bodily coming of Jesus any day. To-day there are almost innumerable shades and hues of Christians, so-called, many having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof, and all claiming to be wise about many things, but we are told in his precious word that our Lord shall come as a thief in the night, and that no man knoweth when the day of the Lord shall come. Of one thing we are convinced, and that is that time is marching rapidly on and that each day is bringing us nearer to the time when

the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever, and for-ever. God's time table, however, is not like ours, for with him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. But when that illustrious day shall dawn, every knee shall be made to bow before King Jesus, and the Royal Diadem shall be brought forth and he shall be crowned Lord of all, God blessed for-ever-more. Then will there, indeed, be one fold and one shepherd. We earnestly hope that we are getting a little glimpse from time to time of that which is yet to come, when we are enabled by the workings of his Holy Spirit to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we cannot agree with those who liken that Celestial City above to an earthly one, with many highways leading into it from all directions, rather would we see Christ as the only door by which any can enter into the fold, and his church here below as being the only one of her Mother that bare her, the New Jerusalem, and the choice one of him that loved her and gave himself for her. Even here in this topsy-turvy world God's children are given faith to see him and his church as the great apostle so wonderfully set it forth in his epistle to his Ephesian brethren, where he said, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye 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." When we are brought to this point we are prepared to receive and accept his admonition as a prisoner of the Lord in beseeching them to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavor-

ing to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

If consistent with his holy and divine will, may the Lord bless what has been said to the comfort and edification of his poor and afflicted people, and cause it to redound to the praise of his own glorious grace, through Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be honor and glory, now and world without end, Amen.

R. L. D.

MEMORIALS

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom to remove by death our beloved brother and able minister in the faith of God's elect, **ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN**, since our last Association, and

Whereas, the Lexington-Roxbury Association deeply conscious of our own loss and that sustained by the other churches where he preached or served as pastor in the exercise of the gift with which Elder Vaughn was richly blessed, his faithful and able ministration during his many visits to us for more than a quarter of a century, and the warm ties of fellowship strengthened by his coming among us, and the sound principles of doctrine set forth, and the power of God demonstrated in his preaching, therefore be it

Resolved, that we send this tribute to the memory of him whom we have loved and cherished, to his surviving wife, Sister Annie Vaughn, that a copy of these resolutions be placed upon the minutes of our Association and inserted in the **Signs of the Times** of which he was an Associate Editor for many years, and also published in the **Old Faith Contender**.

Done by order of the church in conference, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1949.

(Elder) **ARNOLD H. BELLOWS**, Moderator
EDWARD K. ADSIT, Clerk

Whereas, our infinite and Holy God, since we last met in an associate capacity, hath removed by death our beloved and gifted brother, **ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS**, who hath so often visited us in the past and declared with power, sweetness and holy boldness the unsearchable riches of Christ, feeding our souls and confirming us in our faith, we the members of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, realizing the irreparable loss that the churches of our own and other associations where he ministered have sustained, bow submissively to the will of God and express our

sympathy and sorrow to them and to the bereaved family, and be it further

Resolved, that we express this tribute to the memory of one we held so dear, whose preaching was a selah to our souls, as he brought to us things new and old as we fed upon the sweet manna of the word, and be it further

Resolved, that we send this expression of love and sorrow to his surviving widow, Mrs. Ella Lefferts, and that a copy of this resolution be published in the **Old Faith Contender** and also in the **Signs of the Times** upon the staff of which he ably served many years as Editor-in-Chief, and also that a copy be recorded in the minutes of this Association.

Done by order of the church in conference, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1949.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
EDWARD K. ADSIT, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SAMUEL A. CROSS was born in Graves Co., Ky., March 4, 1870 and was called from the shores of time May 28, 1949, making his stay on earth 79 years. At the age of twenty he was married to Miss Jennie Sullivan on October 7, 1890. To that union were born eight children, three boys and five girls. At the age of 58 years she passed away Nov. 26, 1931. He later married Mrs. Annie Mangrum. She and the children survive him.

Brother Cross united with Zion Primitive Baptist Church at Mayfield, Ky., Aug. 31, 1924, and was baptized by the late Elder J. C. Chester the same day at the close of a wonderful union meeting of Soldier Creek Association. He was a very fine man, speaking after the manner of men, he was much devoted to his church and to his brethren and sisters. The church has had to give up a staunch member, and his wife and children a devoted husband and father.

Brother Cross was strong in the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace and the final perseverance of the saints through grace unto life everlasting by Jesus Christ. Although it is hard for us to bid farewell to our brother, we are confident our loss is his eternal gain. We sometimes feel that death is only the door by which God's little children pass through to enter into that eternal haven of rest beyond this vale of tears.

Brother Cross and the writer walked side by side for over thirty-two years in sweet fellowship, and oh how much I miss him at our little church that he loved so well. He was always at meeting when it was possible. He leaves a dear companion behind. May God bless her and his children, reconciling them to his will in all things while here on earth.

The writer conducted the funeral service at Byrns Funeral Home, Mayfield, Ky., using for a text, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man," the every man meaning to me God's little children. There was a large congregation of sorrowing brethren, sisters and friends at the funeral, after which he was laid by his first wife in the beautiful cemetery at North Mt. Zion to await that last call from on high, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," there to see him as he is and be like him, to shout his praises forever and ever in a world that will never end. May God comfort all that mourn his passing is the prayer of the writer.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH (Sturgis) SIRMAN was born June 25, 1850. She died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Bertie Dryden, Salisbury, Md., May 30, 1949, at the age of 98 years, 10 months and 30 days.

She was the daughter of Joshua and Mary C. Sturgis of Worcester Co., Md. She was married to John T. Sirman, Feb. 22, 1871. To this union were born seven children: J. C. Sirman, John S. Sirman, Mrs. Mary E. Shockley, Mrs. Emma Riggan, Mrs. Ruth Twilley, Mrs. Bertie Dryden and Mrs. Eleanor Sistare all of Salisbury, Md. All of them survive except John S. who died Jan. 12, 1930. Also surviving are thirteen grandchildren, twenty-eight great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Sirman was blessed to live to an old age, almost 100 years, and her departure was quiet like the life she lived. She never united with the visible church yet she was as faithful as those thus favored. For a number of years before her death she was almost totally blind, but desired to attend the meetings as much as when she could see the people, never missing a service when able to attend. The weather did not prevent her from coming and she was brought to the service by her faithful daughter, Mrs. Bertie Dryden.

It was often an inspiration to the writer to see her enter the meeting-house, and see the joy it gave her in hearing the gospel and mingling with the Lord's people. She knew almost every member of the congregation by their voices and most of them had a word for her. All of her family were very devoted to her, and she had all the attention that loving hands could give. We believe she has gone to join the blood washed throng where death will never come. Her faithfulness to the house of God, her love for God's people, and her childlike faith in the God of her

hope will linger in our memories in the years to come. In the many years of my serving churches I have never known a more lovable character. Her funeral service was conducted by the writer.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

MRS. BESSIE (MURPHY) LAKE was born June 7, 1888, and it pleased the Lord to remove from our midst our dearly beloved sister in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Nov. 25, 1949, making her stay on earth 61 years, 5 months and 18 days. She suffered a long illness of several years which developed unavoidably worse a few hours before her departure at a hospital in Huntington, W. Va. At this time we feel that she ceased from her trials and sufferings, and is at rest with the saints that have already crossed to the other side.

She is survived by her husband, John E. Lake; two stepdaughters, four stepsons; her father, Elder J. S. Murphy; four sisters namely, Mrs. Bernice Linn, Mrs. Bycie Greathouse, Mrs. Bonnie Johnson, Mrs. Beulah Weese and two brothers, B. J. Murphy and B. D. Murphy; also several nieces and nephews.

She was married three times; first to French R. Ferguson. To this marriage was born a daughter, Elvira Edna in 1910 who passed away in infancy aged nine months; also during this marriage she raised a foster son, Elwood Ferguson. This husband died in Feb. 1931. Her second husband, Zan F. Weese, died Feb. 25, 1942. He was a member of the Leading Creek Church for six years. By this marriage she raised a foster daughter, Iona Jaggie.

She was received by experience and baptism into the fellowship of the Leading Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Montrose, W. Va., July 23, 1911, making her membership nearly 39 years. She was a faithful and worthy member, and a defender of the word of God. Her most earnest desire was to attend her church and mingle with the flock that Jesus commanded his servants to feed. She was blessed with a good understanding of the truth, and traveled long distances on many occasions with her dear husband when neither of them felt physically able to make the trip, but the power and glory of God was made manifest at these times as they were made to rejoice and forget their own troubles, and were lifted up with strength by the gospel as it was preached by our Primitive Baptist preachers. I am sure many will bear with me in stating that no one ever enjoyed more than she to entertain the brethren in her home. The brethren and friends were met with a loving reception and gracious warmth; their conversations were centered upon the scriptures; many beautiful old hymns were often sung and on different occasions preaching was held. During a period while the Leading Creek Baptist meeting-house was being rebuilt the regular church meet-

ings were held in her home. She was outstanding in the church and her advice was always good. She lived and died upholding the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and by the living faith of God. She will be sadly missed by those of her own immediate family, in the church and also by all who were acquainted with her both far and near.

Elder H. J. Bird conducted the funeral services, and she was laid away in the burying ground adjoining her home church near Montrose, W. Va. May the Lord grant his reconciling grace to her relatives and friends. Written by request.

V. B. LINN

JOSEPH ROOK departed this life Sept. 21, 1949. He was born Aug. 22, 1888, the son of Anselm and Minnie Rook. Oct. 29, 1913 he was married to Mabel J. Huber. To this union were born two sons, Russel and Walter. Russel has one daughter and Walter two sons. They, with the widow, Mrs. Rook, remain to mourn their loss. He lived near Southampton all his life in the same house in which he was born and died.

The church at Southampton feel it has met with a great loss in his passing. He was like a pillar on the outside of the church placed there by the Lord to help support it. He received a sweet hope in his dear Redeemer about twenty years ago, and at one time when Elder Lefferts and the writer visited him in his home he told us of a Sunday at the close of Elder Ker's sermon he had a great desire to unite with the church but was not given strength to go forward and ask for a home in the church. We have hoped many times since that he might yet be given strength to do this, but this was not to be. He loved to meet for worship with God's dear people and often when we had no preaching services at Southampton he would go over to Hopewell, N. J. to hear Elder Vaughn. Mr. Rook and the writer visited Elder Vaughn during his last sickness, and as we approached his bedside he reached out and took Mr. Rook's hand and said, "Mr. Rook I am so glad you came to see me for I dearly love you."

Mr. Rook was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Southampton Baptist Church from 1932 until his death. He was well known and greatly respected throughout this vicinity. Elder John D. Wood was called to conduct the funeral services, speaking words of comfort to the bereaved family. He was laid to rest in the Union Cemetery near Southampton until his Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God and raise him and take him home to ever be with his heavenly Father through all eternity. Written by request of the family.

CASPER G. FETTER

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118

RUTHERFORD, N. J., APRIL, 1950

No. 4

POETRY

I stood and watched a fountain flow,
That bathed my weary soul;
It takes away my sin and guilt,
And makes me ever new.

I love His work and praise His name,
I bear His suffering too;
I watched this fountain as it flowed,
And I no work did do.

I love this fountain as it flows
That men be ever free;
I watch and gaze, and wonder if
This fountain is for me.

'Tis yours He said, behold my side,
Behold my hands and see;
This fount was ever sent for you
'Twas given for poor me.

Lowland, N. C.

WORDEN LEWIS

CORRESPONDENCE

Kinwood, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND THE MANY READERS OF THE DEAR SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I desire to pen a few lines trusting that it may be worthy of space, and to the glory of God and comfort to his dear believing children. As a starting point we find in Romans 1:20 this language, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." To me this scripture penned by the apostle Paul to the Roman brethren fills or covers everything both naturally and spiritually. Permit me to say that it covers some of the great wonders revealed in two great books. One is the book of nature, con-

tained in it is all nature; the other is the book of Revelation, the holy Bible. I can but believe, dear readers, that we cannot together consider such marvels of creation without rising from nature to nature's God for even these magnificent wonders of the starry heavens fade from view in our admiration of the divine One himself from whom they all have emanated, and by whom they are all infinitely transcended. The great privilege of his children of the knowledge to worshipping the God of the universe is without question the supreme privilege of life. The great eternal One has revealed himself to the children of men through these two great books.

We shall here speak of the book of the starry heavens. Both are the issue of the same hand; both speak to us of God. David wrote, "Thy name is near thy wondrous works declare." Happy is the man whose faith is fixed on the everlasting God revealed in his works and in his written word. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Let us take a celestial journey together—a sight seeing trip through story land that will carry us far across the immeasurable space and amid the host of heaven that make up God's brilliantly lighted, swiftly moving life filled universe. We shall ride on the wings of light, flying more than 186,000 miles a second, a speed so great that we could circle the earth in three seconds after leaving our starting point. There is harmony and

design everywhere in the visible and invisible universe, but harmony is not God, neither is design. Even life itself is not an object of worship nor the forms in which it is manifest. The power of a working force everywhere is evident and yet these tokens are not God. More convincing than the exact laws of nature is the God that made these laws. For harmony and design there is the great Designer, and for the universe there is the Builder. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Rom. 1:20. Such wisdom, power and love is revealed in the world of creation. Surely these attributes belong to God who loved us as a loving heavenly Father and his Son Jesus Christ by whom all things in heaven and earth were created. (Col. 1:16.)

From the Bible we learn that God's throne is in the heaven of heavens. The Psalmist expressed a similar truth when he wrote, "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." As one stands gazing into the depth of space seriously meditating, and earnestly endeavoring to comprehend the full grandeur and glory of God's great universe he can but share the emotion of David as he exclaimed, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" The words of Christ are comforting indeed as we sense anew man's painful insignificance. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?*****Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." How can any intelligent being stand gaping in wonderment at

God's colossal universe, where millions of island like universes appear like a mighty illuminated armada cruising up and down the high seas of immensity, without experiencing in his soul a feeling of reverence and respect, a sense of fervent devotion and humility in the presence of his incomprehensible almightiness. How does God reveal himself to man? "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. 3:16. Through his inspiration "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. By whom was our world and also the other worlds created? "He (Christ) was in the world, and the world was made by him." John 1:10. "God hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world." Heb. 1:2. "For by him were all things created,*****by him (Christ) all things consist." Col. 1: 16-17. He "upholds all things by the word of his power." Heb. 1:3. by his created works which speak a universal language. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Rom. 1:20. "The heavens declare the glory of God.*****There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19:1-3. Dear children of God, when I ponder these things in my mind I feel to say with Job 40:4, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth."

(Elder) B. B. WALSTON

Route 2, Brantley, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, ASSOCIATE EDITORS, AND ALL KINDRED IN THE FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR BELOVED REDEEMER FROM ON HIGH: Please find the balance on my subscription. I feel that

the Lord has blessed me in many ways, but I cannot see how he has mercy on such a vile sinner as I sometimes feel to be. Still that little spark of hope remains, and what a blessed thought it is to feel and believe that we have a Mediator between God and man, the blessed Savior to make intercessions for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. My mind has been wandering back through Old Testament writings. There are some beautiful pictures and some sad ones. We find in the book of Jonah a twofold picture when he lay in the fish's belly three days and nights for his disobedience to God's command. There in that condition, no way whatever to help himself, surrounded in darkness all he could do was pray. It was God's will and purpose to make known his power, and when he prayed out of the fish's mouth the Lord spoke to the fish and then the fish vomited him up on dryland. Then he could say that salvation is of the Lord. He represented our blessed Savior lying in the heart of the earth three days and nights. Jesus spoke of Jonah concerning his resurrection. That is a beautiful picture manifesting God's power in Jonah and in Jesus Christ our Lord. The next one, the way I understand it, is the poor sinner dead in trespasses and in sin, down in the valley and in the wilderness of gloom and sorrow, his feet in the miry clay and no way to turn; he cannot find peace nor see a light, all he can do is pray to God for mercy; he cannot help himself, he is just helpless in the hands of the Lord; all he can do is pray, Lord have mercy, and when it pleases the Father of lights to reveal himself to him then he can say with Jonah, salvation is of the Lord. O God, what a wonderful thought, what manner of people ought we to be, knowing as we have been taught of the Lord his wonderful love and mercy and

his wrath. Sometimes I feel to know that I have a hope beyond this vale of tears and sorrow, and then it seems that all light is gone but just a spark, enough to sustain that little hope in Jesus Christ our Lord. But God has a purpose in all things both great and small; he withdraws his hand that we may see ourselves how vile and prone to sin we are.

We come now to the book of Judges which is dealing with natural Israel on account of their disobedience to God's laws. They were subjected to wars, bloodshed, depressions, trials and tribulations for their disobedience, worshipping idol Gods and taken in with heathen religions, other people were left among them to try them out to see if they would be faithful to God and to the law. It appears to me, though I may be wrong, that the natural Israelites in the book of Judges is a picture and foreshadow of the days of spiritual Israel, our wars and bloodshed, our trials and tribulations, pain and heartaches, but he has never left us alone; his power is unknown and his riches past finding out; we are just chaff in the wind, helpless as the unborn babe. It does my heart and soul good to meditate on the mercy and power of God for he has promised never to forsake us, and that spirit in my heart testifies to it being the truth. I do not worry about the things of this world for I believe to feel to know that every-thing will come to pass in due time, according to his good will and purpose. He purposed all things and so shall they stand. The most I worry about is my soul's salvation through grace and grace alone. Sometimes I have a peace of mind, but as I mentioned above, sometimes it seems almost gone.

I went to my church at Rutled yesterday and our Pastor, Elder Gafford,

preached a most wonderful sermon on Joseph going down into Egypt, and bringing his people to the land of Goshen. What a sweet thought it is that Jesus will bring his people home to him where they will not have to buy bread for that love and mercy—salvation through grace—is free to God's redeemed people, redeemed through the blood of our blessed Savior. I feel this morning that if I could just shout his praises on high I would be perfectly happy. Blessed be the name of Jesus that knew no sin and no guile was found in his mouth.

I would like, if the Lord will guide and direct my mind, to write some about the beautiful pictures set forth in the book of Ruth, seemingly the most beautiful book in the Old Testament. Just turn from the book of Judges over to the book of Ruth. It is such a sweet peace in contrast with the book of Judges. Every-thing is peace, love, friendship and happiness. The first scene is laid in the land of Moab where Naomi is under the necessity of residing, but after the death of her husband and sons she returns to Palestine. The loyalty of Ruth, her daughter-in-law, is one of the beautiful scenes of the Bible. She accepts the God of Naomi and is kindly addressed by Boaz. "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." How little they knew the greatness of that reward, that she, a Moabitess, should become an ancestress of Jesus Christ. The imagination of man cannot comprehend the beauty and grandeur of that reward that is laid up in heaven for God's chosen few, that were redeemed for his pleasure through the blood of Jesus. Jesus has said, if they cannot forsake mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters you cannot be my dis-

ciple. Ruth forsook all she had—country, mother, father, brother and sister to serve the same God that Naomi served. This peaceful scene furnishes a striking contrast to the picture of war, bloodshed and devastation portrayed by the book of Judges in the midst of their wickedness and apostasy. It is refreshing to return to this scene of pity and love, to the love and mercy so plainly manifested in the picture of Naomi and Ruth. The main scene of the book is laid in Bethlehem, the birth-place of Christ, and the city of David. The story of the purchased inheritance is a picture and a foreshadow of Christ being crucified on the cross, paying the purchased price for his inheritance, all that God gave him in that covenant of grace before the world was. Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said unto her, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley tonight in the threshing floor." Naomi laid all the plans carefully for Ruth, and told her just what to do and how, and not to let herself be known. When Boaz had eaten and drunk he laid himself down and Ruth went in and uncovered his feet and laid herself down.

My dear brothers and sisters and to all the household of faith, what a beautiful picture of the bride and bridegroom representing Christ and his church. It foreshadows God's humble poor coming to Jesus' feet at the foot of the cross. Ruth became the wife of Boaz who was of the tribe of Judah and to them was born Obed, the grandfather of David. Being a Moabitess she was a descendent of Lot, the ancestor of that race, and hence she was a Shemite as was Abraham. This supplies us with the historical thread as related to David and the line of the Messiah. The

book of Ruth seemingly is the most beautiful book in the Bible. It is all love and mercy, the way I understand it, it is just a picture of Jesus' love manifested for his redeemed people. Many pages could be written on this book.

We have left out many important points on account of space that would be more valuable to readers of the *Signs* than my wandering thoughts. I have turned those scriptures over and over in my mind. So many times having many sweet memories and many sad ones. Just wondering if I am one that Jesus died for. It is a sad thing to think about, knowing as we do by experience that if we were not included in that covenant of grace from God the Father through the shed blood of Christ Jesus there is no change now for there is not one thing we can do.

I am coming to a close by asking the prayers of all those that feel disposed to pray for a sinner such as I feel to be for there is nothing good in me without the help of the higher power. I sincerely enjoy all the editorials and correspondence for the *Signs of the Times* is a home comfort to me. May the Lord ever bless you, and I feel that he will for the good purpose he has in you. Remember me at the throne of grace. Your sister I hope by the grace of God. Brother Dodson, if this is not according to truth just lay it aside. I do not want anything in print that is not according to God's truth. Much love and respect for you and yours. If it is not asking too much of you I would like your views on Isaiah 65:1.

(Mrs) J. J. McNEAL

(The verse referred to by our sister reads as follows: "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name." It is quite

clear to us that this has a very special reference to the Gentiles. Under the Legal Dispensation the oracles of God were committed unto the Jews, and to them only, and the Gentiles were apparently altogether without God. They were, however, not without some prophecies concerning better days, for there are many of those. Speaking in their behalf this same prophet said the sixteenth verse of the sixty-third chapter, "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting." When Jesus came into the world he said, other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd. He came to break down the middle wall of partition which separated between the Jew and the Gentile and of twain to make one new man. The Gentiles, according to nature, did not seek after God until he sought them out and manifested himself unto them. They, like all natural men and women, sought after the things of this world, until Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost among them. Like Jacob of old, the Gentiles and all others even unto this day, were found by Jesus in a waste-howling wilderness, but he led them about and instructed them, and until he does they will have no desire whatsoever for him. Jesus must speak, saying, "Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name," before they see any beauty in him. According to nature, we know both by experience and the Scriptures that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, and neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. It has well been said, We love Him because he first loved us. In or-

der to understand this scripture, we believe we must handle and taste it as the words of life, for not until we are made to realize that we are the clay and have to be shapened by the hand of the Great Potter into a vessel that will be to the honor and glory of his name, will we truly understand the scriptures of eternal truth. Briefly, the foregoing is what we understand to be taught by the scripture in question.

R. L. D)

Route 5, Box 897, Miller Road 2, Houston, Texas
 DEAR ELDER DODSON: A few days ago I received the copies of *Signs* you sent me. Please accept my sincere thanks. I cannot help expressing my gratification and comfort reading them for they contain the first preaching I have heard in a long time. Both the editorials and correspondence are a feast. I think one copy of the *Signs* is worth many times the subscription price, especially to one so isolated (as I believed until receiving the *Signs*) from the Old Baptists as I. But I am right where the Lord would have me be or else I would not be here. I am not a member of the Old Baptists but I love and believe, I hope, in the gospel they teach. I love the *Signs* too, for the precious letters and editorials therein, giving God all the glory of our salvation.

I believe in absolute predestination, God being the Creator of all things, and by him all things consist; and I believe in salvation by grace in and through the merits of a crucified Lord; that we are not saved because of any merit or goodness of ourselves, but through the merit of our beloved Redeemer who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; and that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed on the cross for those that God chose of every nation.

These he predestinated before the world was, as his chosen ones to be with him in eternity.

Oh, how much I wish that I might be worthy of a home with the dear Old Baptists, to be numbered with the children of God. I know I am not a fit subject, and realizing only too well my utter unworthiness, I have not the courage to knock at their door for admittance. How could those dear souls fellowship one so vile and full of sin as I? Weak, blind, worthless, all unholy, all unclean. Well do I remember (about fourteen years ago) when first my sins rose up like mountains before me. I saw myself as the most vile, corruptible sinner on earth. For months I could find no joy, no peace for my troubled, sin-burdened soul. I knew I could not do one thing to save myself, and I could only cry for mercy. O Lord, my God have mercy on me a poor sinner. I was so burdened with the realization of my sins that food became nauseating, my children believed me to be really ill and pleaded with me to see our doctor, but I knew that there is but one physician that can cure a sin-sick soul.

Elder Dodson, since I am an outsider (and it would take up too much of your precious time) I shall make this as brief as I well can, please forgive me for I must tell you. When it seemed I could not bear my burden of sin longer there came a little ray of hope, (if I am not deceived) blessed hope. Oh, the blessed relief! Perhaps you can imagine my joy, comfort and *sweet* peace. With thankfulness filling my heart I give God all the glory. It is only a tiny hope (if it is a hope) yet not for anything else on earth would I exchange it. Times are (many times) when again I am depressed, gloom and darkness descend upon me, all anew in my heart is a feeling

of loss and loneliness. My spirits sink lower and lower. I am blue, all undone, and I am made to cry out, O, dear Lord remember me, forsake me not! At such seasons I want to talk and read. I find much comfort in the sweet words of our precious Lord Jesus, and I go unto my Lord in Matt. 11:28-30.

The questions that trouble me most are: I know that our precious Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross for his people, but am I one of them? What evidence do I have of a regenerated heart of a spiritual birth? Elder Dodson, I fear I have no evidence that will stand the test. It seems that about all I can think of is my sins, yet I cannot forget the many sweet, precious promises he left for his doubting, storm-tossed children cheering them along life's rugged road. I find myself wishing that I, too, might be worthy to share, if only a crumb, some of these precious promises.

Elder Dodson, I only meant to thank you for the *Signs* you so generously sent and to send in my subscription for the *Signs*. It just seemed I must have a talk with some one of the Old Baptist family. I know I have not written anything of interest. I realize only too well my poverty of spirit and ignorance of spiritual things, and pray for more light and understanding. I often pray: "Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." If I am not asking too much, please remember this poor sinner in your prayers, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and the Associate Editors is the feeble prayer of just a worm of the dust.

(Mrs.) HARRIET (nee

LITTLE) GRAY

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Your letter came

a few days ago and I wish I could express my feelings more explicitly, but can only tell you in my simple way that your letter was encouraging, consoling, lifting up my drooping spirits, renewing my faith and hope, if indeed I have a hope. Oh, if I could only know of a certainty that I am one of God's children.

You stated in your letter that "It is difficult for me to understand why one with such an abundance of evidence of having passed from death unto life still lingers outside the Shepherd's fold." Elder Dodson, I believe that if indeed I am one of his children, to be numbered as one of the Shepherd's fold, that there is an appointed time and at that time the spirit of God will move me, give me courage and strength to ask for a home with his dear children. Do you believe or not that I am right in believing as I do about this? There have been times I believe when I might have told the church what I hope the Lord has done for me, but since I married more than forty-four years ago I have not had the opportunity of associating with or even being near, so far as I know, the Old Baptists nor near a sound church.

I believe that whatever happens in this world comes by the will of God and is for some purpose. I feel that he is good and just in all things and that every step I take is ordered of the Lord and without him I can do nothing as he said, "Without me ye can do nothing." I have learned by bitter experience that I can no more change my nature than a leopard can change his spots.

I devoured every word of your editorial. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." It was a feast indeed for this poor old sinner, and, too, it is so beautifully illustrated, and the editorial by Elder Spangler is both

relishing and enlightening. I love reading the editorials, letters, etc. in the dear old *Signs*, they are all edifying and comforting. I am delighted with its arrival and feel almost as though I were receiving visits from members of the Old Baptist family. Having the *Signs* in the home brings memories of my beloved father, Elder Wm. Little, of his smiling blue eyes, and pleasant face (and his pipe) reading his latest *Signs*.

Elder Dodson, again I am guilty of imposing on your good nature and precious time, but it seems I must cover much space to say very little. Please pardon me and accept my sincere thanks for "Showers of Rain" which I received yesterday. I have read everything therein and enjoyed all immensely. I am surprised and humbled to know you think my recent letter worthy of publication in the *Signs*. I fear what I have in that or this will not be of interest to any one. I must close thanking you for your most encouraging letter. Remember me in your prayers and may God bless you is the feeble prayer of one who hopes of a hope in life eternal. A helpless sinner.

(Mrs.) HARRIET (nec
LITTLE) GRAY

Redwood, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN HOPE OF IMMORTALITY: Dear Brother, I have been a subscriber of the *Signs of the Times* for eight years. I have taken several different religious papers and in my judgment I like the *Signs* best of all. I like your theory of keeping your paper clear of advertisements. I want it with clean cut salvation by grace doctrine, and the total depravity of the works of men. I also approve of your humble way and manner of pleading and striving for peace and unity among our

churches and brethren. I enjoy reading your good editorials so much, and also those of the Associate Editors of the *Signs*. I feel the corresponding letters are good too. When there is with us a great hungering and thirsting after righteousness, these sacred truths are very good to us. If we are not made hungry and thirsty we cannot eat and drink of ourselves, and so it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy. By the Lord all things consist.

Brother Dodson I promised you last year at the Staunton River Association that I would try to get you some new subscribers to the *Signs*. It is now time for my renewal and I will remit for two years, also I have two new subscriptions each for one year. I hope I can get more new ones soon. I hope the Lord wills that you come our way again to the Staunton and Pigg River Associations. May the Lord bless and keep in peace all of the inhabitants of Zion is my prayer. A brother in hope.

J. A. PERDUE

Lillie, La.

DEAR. ELDER DODSON : According to agreement I am enclosing an obituary for Elder W. N. Green. I may have made this too long but that seems to be my shortcoming to make anything I write too long, but I hope it will not be detrimental to the *Signs* to lose this space. Elder Green was widely and very favorably known. He was a most enthusiastic preacher among us until his health failed.

Well, Elder Dodson, the year 1949 is now history with all of its terrible perplexities and distresses, and we know not what 1950 will bring us. God alone knows and will surely bring to pass only those things which he declared from the beginning, and those things he spoke from ancient times;

"the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." There is a great and serene feeling of priceless courage and confidence in my poor bosom, that the broad and glorious doctrine of the great and sovereign God has decreed and arranged all things that has and will come to pass for the good of his people, and to the glory and eternal praise of his ever blessed and holy name. If my poor soul does not believe and rest in this doctrine then I am a greatly deceived one.

There are lots of very fearful things that are being made manifest in the great advancement of science in modern warfare, and truly it is most terrible to think of, knowing the fierce, selfish and diabolical sins of men and nations, their contention and great desire for power and domination, and knowing that they will do anything to destroy and kill one another. If I did not believe in that sovereign Ruler and Governor, Lord of lords and King of kings where would I have any hope for this life or that which is to come? I would have no hope for health, wealth or any of the actually necessary things of natural life, much less for the things of the life that is to come.

I only meant to send in the obituary of Elder Green and not to take more of your time as I have done, but hope that you can read the remarks I have made with charity and not feel obligated to reply, although I always enjoy hearing from you. May God bless, keep, sanctify and preserve us blameless unto his heavenly kingdom, together with all his covenant people is my prayer for Jesus sake. Unworthily your brother in hope of continued mercy and grace.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

(See obituary in this issue)

Route 1, Box 104, St. Albans, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am passing on to you two letters for your consideration and judgment. If you deem them worthy give them space in the *Signs of the Times*. I had the blessed privilege of baptizing Brother Bowman Johnson, Sister Mildred Stanley and Brother J. R. Lane the second Sunday in May (1949) into the fellowship of Harmony Church. It was a time of the manifesting of God's love. Brother Bowman and Sister Mildred are the son and daughter of Deacon J. B. Johnson of Huntington.

I am enclosing some poetry I composed relating to this baptism. You may use it as you see fit.

'Twas fixed in God's eternal mind,
Ere time on earth began below,
Where each of you should mercy find,
And each of you his grace should know.

Your parents, native place and time,
Were settled, fixed and sealed;
Jehovah's plummet, seal and line,
Your life, your all revealed.

'Twas His dear, sovereign, holy hand,
Which turned you in your way,
And led you by his tender hand,
Into the straight and narrow way.

He visited grace in your time of need,
And filled your souls with awe and love;
Led you to pastures green to feed,
He'll bring you home to heaven above.

He gave you hope in Jesus' blood,
And made you long for home;
Redeemed your souls from sin's dark flood;
He hears your every plaintive groan.

When to the church our brother Lane,
Came humbly asking for a home,
Made willing to bear the cross and shame
A servant's place to seek, he came.

Down to the water's edge we came,
All righteousness to fulfill;
Baptizing in His thrice exalted name
All who gave witness to the seal.

Our sister came and trembling stood,

Like the lame man at the pool;
Sweet evidence that the Savior's blood
Had cleansed her weary troubled soul.

We buried her beneath the wave,
The blessed ordinance sweet;
Sweet emblem of the Savior's grave,
To rise with Christ, was counted meet.

Our brother could not come just now,
But could not long refrain;
He soon must come and tell just how
He had found peace in Jesus' name.

We buried him, oh sacred sweet,
Our soul and bosom moved with love;
The blessed ordinance, our brother meet,
Numbered with friends in bonds of love.

Dear pilgrims, sore trials await you here,
But Jesus is the sinner's friend;
His presence will disperse your fear,
His love is to the end.

My soul has longed to see you come
Take your place in Zion with those you love,
The church, your shelter and your home,
Your long sought rest, the place of love.

My prayers have often been
For you and others 'round the fold,
For God, our God, to bring you in,
He promised from of old.

The church to build, and settle here,
Upon this Rock, foundation sure,
Each member chosen, planted here,
Kept by Jehovah's hand secure.

My feeble labor in the Lord
I hope has not been all in vain,
His smile doth sometimes peace afford,
I hope I have not run in vain.

My favored soul has seen the day
When I, through grace, could lead you there;
The grave of Jesus before you lay,
Buried with Him, and raised his heir.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

Huntington, W. Va.

ELDER H. J. BIRD, DEAR UNCLE HARVEY:
I have a desire tonight to write you
although I do not know what I shall
write. Clarice is feeling some better
and the rest are as usual. I have been
down and out for some time. It seems

there is nothing for me but trouble. The
bed seems more a place of torture than
rest. Clarice tries to help me. She is so
concerned over my suffering, but I am
out of human reach even with my very
dear companion.

For two or three weeks prior to the
meeting I was made to feel or at least
I felt that if I would ask the church
for a home it would help my troubled
mind and give me some ease. I made
promises that I would do so, at the
next meeting, but I have broken all
those promises. All during the Saturday
meeting I was thinking it would be a
good time for me to go before the
church there were not many there. You
see I am so ashamed of myself that
usually I would rather crawl under the
seat than to sit upon it. But at the
end I could not go, I felt that I did
not belong there. I do so much desire
a place among the Lord's people, but
I am not fit. I know that none of
Adam's race is fit within themselves,
but some are made fit in Christ. My
trouble is, do I have that fitness?

"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?"

So much of my time I am trying to
pray for the answer but I do not know
how to pray. I cannot do anything
worth while. Much of the time I feel
that all with whom I come in contact
would be better off if I had never been
born.

On Sunday at the close of the meet-
ing, during the handshake (I do so love
to clasp hands with the dear saints
even though I am not worthy to be in
their midst) I saw a very dear soul
coming my way, and I was so afraid
that I wanted to run. I was afraid
she would tell me to go ahead; so when
I shook hands with her I was looking

in another direction. That was Mrs. Lake and if I could only see myself as I see her I would be satisfied. I can see myself as everything but what I would like to be.

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

I am hoping that Clarice will be able for us to go to the Providence meeting, but at that time I may be looking for an excuse to keep from going. There are so many things I would like to write but cannot find language to express them so will close, hoping it will be the Lord's will for us to see you the fourth Sunday. When you are before the throne of your God please pray for an unworthy sinner.

BOWMAN JOHNSON

Route 2, Box 60, Huntington, W. Va.

DEAR HARVEY: I seem to be burdened so that I cannot sleep so will write you. May be you can understand my feelings a little. You always seem so understanding and my understanding is so blind.

First I will begin with a dream I had in August 1939 just after Paul David's death. I dreamed I was sinking in quicksand, and when I awoke the thought came to me that the quicksand represented my sins. That thought troubled me for awhile, but I lost sight of that dream for a time. It would come back to my mind every so often and I would be troubled each time for awhile and then I would lose sight of it again. Of late it has been on my mind and I cannot sleep. It seems the quicksand (my sins) is closing around me until sometimes I can hardly breathe.

In December (1948) when Elders Taylor and Wingfield were so blessed

to preach, and all during the singing of the hymn, "My dearest friends in bonds of love," I could hardly stay back. The words of that hymn fit my feelings so well. Then during the rest of the week I could hardly wait until the week's end so that I could ask for a home with God's little children, the Primitive Baptists. I am such a sinner and so unworthy I am afraid I might do or say something that would cause trouble and strife among God's little ones, and that I would never want to do, but O the longing within me. When I think of Christ shedding his precious blood on the cross to save his people from their sins it seems too much for such a sinner as I. I feel that if my soul was sent to hell, His righteous law approves it well. God is all righteous, he is just, his ways are perfect and I am so imperfect. I am too unworthy to even speak his precious name. I know there is no good in me, no good that I can do, and sometimes, Harvey, when I go to meeting I feel so cold and lifeless.

"I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be;
Oh! is there any one like me?"

I was so burdened until Saturday morning. When I arose the burden seemed to have loosened until it was almost gone. I went to meeting Saturday and Sunday and did not ask for a home. Sunday night when I retired the burden came back and I could not sleep. It has been on my mind all day and I cannot sleep tonight. I know I should not bother you with my troubles and I am so incapable of expressing my feelings that I am afraid you will only be confused. I have left out a number of things that I wanted to write about. I would not blame you if you never speak to me again after receiv-

ing this letter and knowing how low and sinful I am. I hope you and the rest of the family are feeling better than on Sunday. Hope I have not written anything that I should not have done. I am so filled with doubts that I am afraid I might. I am so dependent and weak that I have not expressed my feelings as I wanted to do. Will close now from a wretched sinner.

(Mrs.) MILDRED STANLEY

Clinton, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It has been on my mind so long to write you, but with one delay after another I trust you will excuse me. I find I have to do as I can. I am the same old man in the chair, it seems I do not get any better. Have been in my chair ten years and the way seems weary and long at times. At times the beauty of this world is all gone from me, but one thing makes me glad, I am blest to go to church and hear the good preaching, meet the good people and better singing I never heard than we have. I read so much in your paper that I believe with all my heart. While we are many miles apart it seems like home folks and I feel we are close together.

I do not intend to write much but thoughts keep coming in about the little hope that came to me forty-seven years ago. I was just a young boy twenty-two years of age. At times I thought much about what would become of me, but could not see anything that I could do. I realized I had a soul to be saved or lost and it gave me a great deal of trouble. It seemed that hell would be my home, but it pleased the Lord, I hope, to come to me just in time. Not my time but his time. In a vision I seemed to be carried away and at the end the Master said rise and have your freedom. I was happy and seemed to be like a feather float-

ing in the air. As I grow older this hope seems more than the whole world to me and all that is in it. May God bless you and yours. C. J. DAVIS

Gantt, Ala.

ELDER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE: I have been thinking for some time I would write you my spiritual beliefs if I can. There is a scriptural verse which says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I do not understand this to mean who will, but he who has already. This shows me that it is not left to the creature to do, for the work is done by Jesus alone.

There are many beliefs, but only one that is right. One belief is, I understand, of the flesh and the other belief is of the spirit. God says, without the spirit ye can do nothing. He means his spirit, and if I am writing this by the spirit of the flesh it is nothing, but I hope that it is by the spirit of God which wants to prompt me to write this. It is only God's work that stands for he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

It appears in my mind that there are two ways and that there is only one way that is right and that way is, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," and "Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereat." I believe that those who find the narrow way are the people that God chose for his Son to save. Those that are on the broad way were left out by God.

I do not believe there is anything to be added to nor taken from what God has directed to be written beforetime, which was written for our learning. What we learn we believe, and I believe that belief comes by feeling. It is not

what we see and hear, but the true sense, I believe, is feeling. Feeling is the best of all.

To the straight and narrow path God, I believe, leads us or else we could not find it. Traveling that path is slow travel for when I would do good, evil is present, and so I have to stop and wait. The Lord said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man." When he is not there, one had better stop and wait for the Lord.

These are only a few of my thoughts which are very scattering, but I hope the Lord has led me so far if no farther. I will bring this to a close by asking you to look over all mistakes and do as you please with it. I remain as ever,

J. S. SCOTT

Route 4, Box 35, Willis, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have so many times wanted to write but was not able to do so. I feel so little and cast down trying to write you. I am a shut-in, having been afflicted with arthritis for eighteen years. I have not walked for eight years. Can sit up in bed and do not suffer any more. My hands are drawn so that I cannot write well. I am not writing for sympathy. It is the good Lord's work. He has blessed me in so any ways. Three years ago I was so badly off I could not be turned in bed and lay on my back for two years. Could only move one hand just a little but I felt that God was still with me.

One morning after I had spent a dreadful night they all left the room for a few minutes. I looked out of my window and said, "Lord if I cannot feel better just take me from this old world." But that was not God's will. A voice said plainly to me, "There is never a cloud so dark but that it has a silver lining." After that day I began getting better, it was slow but better. I said in my mind if the Lord

would bless me I would have preaching in my home. I had Elders Landon and Golden Harris come and preach. We had a nice company and a fine meeting. When they were singing the last hymn I could not wait any longer and said, "Golden before you finish the last hymn I want to talk a little." I felt like God was by me at the bedside telling me if I did not talk it was the last chance. That is just how I felt. I was not able to be baptized that year but the second Sunday at our Association at Indian Valley these same two preachers baptized me in a chair. It was the happiest moment I ever spent.

Brother Dodson, I did not think I could hold out to write this much. If I could write I would write all of my experience. I never knew there was such a good paper as the *Signs of the Times*. One of my neighbors borrowed a copy from a sister. I asked about it and for the address so I could subscribe and that is how I found the paper I get so much pleasure from reading. I am so thankful I am blessed to write again. May the good Lord bless you always. From a sister in Christ I hope.

(Mrs.) MINNIE TURMAN

Box 1643, High Point, N. C.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please find enclosed my remittance for subscription to the *Signs*. I am sorry I am late and thank you for sending it. I do not want to miss a copy as I enjoy the precious truths it sets forth so much. It is clean and instructive. I do not get to hear preaching often and I have no one close to me who believes as I do. It is like a good visit from some of the brothers and sisters and helps me on my lonely road. May God bless you in your good work is my prayer. Remember me when at a throne of grace.

(Mrs.) MARY C. WHEELLEY

EDITORIALS

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BECAUSE I LIVE, YE SHALL LIVE ALSO.

John 14:19

While attending the Virginia Corresponding meeting last October, one of our good friends asked that we write on the words at the head of this article.

From time to time we refer to the fact that an artist, in order to clearly portray the picture that is in his mind, must first provide the clouds and shadows that are a necessary background for the proper setting of the picture which he is to paint. It seems to us in this instance that before attempting to present the beauty and grandeur contained in the words of our text, it is necessary to present something of the blackness of that night which preceded the dawning of the new day about which so many of the prophets wrote. As a starting point, it might well be said, "Because we died, he died also," before considering the words of the Savior, "Because I live, ye shall live also." It is essential that we know something of the former condition or state His people were in before we can begin to describe their latter state. In

other words, we must first look unto the hole of the pit from whence we were digged, before we look unto the Rock from whence we were hewn. No one having spiritual eyes to behold the wonders of God's rich and reigning grace will attempt to minimize the wretched condition we were in before a just and holy God as we stood in our federal earthly head, Adam, after he transgressed God's law. It is no wonder that Adam and our mother Eve were ashamed and endeavored to hide from the face of Him who had so wondrously formed them of the dust of the ground and placed them in the garden of Eden, where nature was so wonderfully revealed in all her glory and the earth brought forth her fruits in such great variety and profusion. We can but believe, however, that God's predetermined plan embraced something far more wonderful and glorious than anything that Adam in his original state was capacitated to comprehend and enjoy. We are not one who believes that God made Adam able to stand but liable to fall, for had he withstood the temptation to partake of the forbidden fruit he would have frustrated God's entire plan to populate the earth and glorify himself in exalting his only begotten Son and lift the name of Jesus on high. Had Adam not fallen, heaven would have remained vacant throughout all eternity, so far as redeemed sinners are concerned, and there would have been none to sing, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." If there had, been no Egypt and no Pharaoh to hold the children of Israel in bondage and servitude, there could have been no manifestation of God's

power in delivering them by a high and mighty hand, and they could not have sung the wonderful song of deliverance, saying, "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." This was one of those experiences which the children of Israel were commanded to tell their children, and their children's children, generation after generation.

God in his wisdom purposed that one thing should be set over against its opposite, in order that his people might better comprehend and understand his greatness. If there was no darkness or night, we would not appreciate the light and the day; if there was no evil, we could not properly evaluate the good. Solomon, the preacher, said, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace." Eccl. 3:1-8. It seems to us that it is only by experience that God's people in this age of the world are brought into fellowship with the prophets and saints of old and can bear witness to the things testified to by them. They traveled much alone and by night, through the fires and persecutions of this vain world, but the Lord was faithful to

his promises and delivered them out of their distresses. When they passed through the rivers, the waters did not overflow them; and when they walked through the fires, they were not burned, and neither did the flame kindle upon them. The reason why they were not destroyed was their God, the Holy One of Israel their Savior, was with them. This same God is watching over and preserving his people to-day and saying to them, "Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Isa. 43:5-7.

The law contained many types and shadows of the substance of our text, and the household of faith all down through the ages looked for its fulfillment. Prophecy concerned the advent of our Lord into the world, in the fulness of time, and holy men of old testified before hand of his sufferings, death and resurrection, and the glory that should follow. The chapter in which our text is found shows that the appointed time was close at hand. On the verge of his departure from this world as a man, Jesus counseled his disciples to let not their hearts be troubled over his going away. He assured them that he was going away to prepare a place for them and that he would come again and receive them unto himself, "that where I am, there ye may be also." We believe he had reference to going down into death, but he was assuring them in advance that he could not be holden of death, but would come forth and appear unto them in power and great glory. In the meantime he told them

that the Father would give them another Comforter, the Spirit of truth, even the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in his name and "he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The first chapter of Acts records that following his death and resurrection, after showing himself alive by many infallible proofs, he commanded his apostles not to depart from Jerusalem, "but wait for the promise of the Father." He gave them the blessed assurance of these things by declaring, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts. 1:8. John in the first chapter of Revelation gives us a wonderful description of our risen Lord. He was given to see in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, and the sight was so amazing that he says he "fell at his feet as dead," but our Lord laid his right hand upon him and said, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

We would like to quote at this point in connection with our text the eighteenth and nineteenth verses as follows: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also." How blessedly true it is we are not left comfortless! It is also true the world sees him no more, but his people see him by faith, and it is because he lives that they live also. This is beautifully typified in the next chapter where Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The branches cannot die as long

as they receive their life from the vine. Jesus also said to his disciples: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." What a sacred and blessed privilege it is to be accounted a branch of this vine, for Jesus has declared that he is alive forevermore, and as our life is hid with Christ in God, we are safe and secure, and none shall be able to pluck us out of his hand, for the Father which gave us to him is greater than all, and none is able to pluck us out of his hand. Paul was vitally connected with this true and living vine, for he said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." It was this same apostle who assured us that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." We are persuaded that those who are born of the Spirit have this life abiding in them, and we truly hope that they will take comfort in the fact that because Jesus, who declared himself to be the resurrection and the life of his people, lives, they shall live also. Jesus also said, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

R. L. D.

"WHOSOEVER WILL"

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whoso-

ever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

This portion of the inspired record is often cited as sustaining the doctrine of the freedom of the sinner to accept or reject the grace of God; which according to that system only offers conditions of salvation which are not effective without the consent of the sinner, who must at least accept the offered favor. If this theory is sustained by even one passage of that testimony which God has given, then it is true, and all opposing doctrines are overthrown. But if it is not thus supported, then no sophistry of men can make it true. It can be of no advantage to hold any false sentiment, for it will not become true by age; nor yet can skillful argument and devoted zeal remedy its falsehood. Therefore, let the text be considered in its connection as written by the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, and may the grace of God enable us and every reader to hear with submissive reverence what the Lord speaks; and in the discussion of this subject "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

It must not be forgotten that all this wonderful revelation which is written by John is the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy. See Rev. 1:1; 19:10. Then it has its proper application to the body of Christ, which is his church, redeemed out of every nation; and any interpretation of its figurative language must be erroneous if it is not consistent with the plain record of divine truth in the Bible. But it will only be necessary at present to candidly consider the immediate context to see the error of the application of the expression in the text as appealing to dead sinners to "come," either to the church or to any other place. Twice in the preceding portion

of this chapter the Lord announces (in verses seven and twelve) that he comes quickly. Then in verse sixteen he gives the seal of his own name, Jesus, to signify the genuineness of the message. To this the Spirit and the bride respond in the words of the text. There is always perfect harmony with the will of God in the prayer indited by the Spirit; therefore the Spirit says, "Come." There is nothing which can afford to the church (which is the bride in this text) such fullness of joy as the coming of her Lord. Hence, she always responds as here written, and repeated verse twenty, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." It is worthy of special observation that the Spirit and the bride speak with one voice in saying "Come." There is no discord, and no argument is necessary to convince the bride that his coming is desirable. In all the fervor of glowing love she responds to his word with the rapture of his holy Spirit, "Come." This is the language which peculiarly characterizes the bride, the Lamb's wife. See chapter 21:2, 9. "And let him that heareth say, Come." In this expression the Spirit and the bride agree. The liberty is freely accorded to every one that heareth, to unite in this effectual fervent prayer. Throughout this book a very special peculiarity of those addressed is stated in the fact that an ear to hear is given them, and only he that hath an ear is commanded to hear the message of the Spirit to the churches. As none can hear but such as are made alive by the quickening power of the Spirit of God, only they who are led by that Spirit are included in this expression. In a natural application this language would not include one but such as are alive, so the distinction is clearly marked in the spiritual application: none but such as hear are authorized or permitted to say, "Come." It is God

that worketh in every one that hath an ear, not only to will, but also to do of his good pleasure. Every one who hears the voice of the Son of God, in that hearing is made alive; for he is the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit; and the words which Jesus speaks are Spirit and they are life. Only such as are thus made alive have that eternal life which Jesus gives to his sheep; and they alone have the will to pray for the coming of the Lord. Hence, it is evident that the Spirit of Christ dwells in any one who really desires his coming. This is in harmony also with the assurance given in Hebrews 9:28, "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." It is enjoined upon him that heareth to say, Come; and every hearer feels that all his salvation and all his desire is embraced in that prayer for the manifest coming of the Lord, because "when Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:4. They who hear the life-giving word of God are all made thus to unite in the longing and urgent petition of the bride, the whole church of the redeemed, in praying the Lord to come. They have learned by sore experience that they cannot come to Jesus in their own strength or by their own will. Their only gleam of hope is that Jesus will come to them, as the Samaritan in the parable came to the half-dead sufferer. Luke 10:33. It would have been cruel mockery to exhort this poor man to come to a hospital which was at Jerusalem. He could not get there. But his benefactor "came where he was," and brought relief. So Jesus comes to the poor and needy and saves them when they "were yet without strength." Then when life and power have been given to the dead sinner, he has the will to unite in earnestly praying the Lord to

come in the fullness of sovereign grace and evermore abide in his heart. In this expression of the text there is not only liberty given to every hearer to say, Come, but it is enjoined as the duty of all such thus to pray. If that desire is in the heart of any one, it is because he hears the voice of Jesus; and all such have received life. John 5:25.

"And let him that is athirst come." Here, again, a specific character is expressly defined, and it is precisely the same whom Jesus called in the last day of the feast of tabernacles, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." John 7:37. The thirsting is certainly a living one, for the dead do not thirst. But this direction discriminates still more closely; for there are none even of the living included in its address but such as thirst. In a literal sense it would be manifest folly to claim that any one can control thirst by his own will. How gladly would the fainting wanderer in the burning desert refrain from thirsting if he could. And it is equally impossible for one to be thirsty when he has taken a full supply of water. Just so it is only the living one who can be subject to this thirst; and the fact that he feels thirst is positive proof that he is alive. His thirsting does not give life, but only makes it manifest. This hungering and thirsting character needs not the terrors of torment to drive him to the throne of divine grace; it is the longing desire of his heart that he might have liberty to come. That permission is included in this commandment of our Lord, and the assurance of its certain fulfillment is found in the word of Jesus, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. This is that fountain of which the Alpha and Omega says he will give

freely to him that is athirst. Rev. 21:6. It is in strict accordance with this promise that the thirsty are commanded to come; and they are brought by the almighty power of that word. While no others can even desire to come, all of his redeemed are made willing in the day of his power. They who are not athirst are not called to this fountain; but

"Poor, hungry, thirsty, fainting souls
Are freely welcome here;
Salvation like a river rolls
Abundant, free and clear.

Come, then, with all your wants and wounds,
Your every burden bring;
Here love, unchanging love, abounds,
A deep celestial spring."

"*And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*" It would seem needless to call attention to the particular character here described as authorized to take freely of the water of life; but many who boast of their intelligence insist that this language includes those who have not the "will" which is here specially presented as identifying those to whom the command applies. For such as have not the love of God in their hearts, there is no liberty here given to them to take of the water of life. Having only that carnal mind which is enmity against God and cannot be subject to his law, they are as destitute of will as they are of power to come and freely take of this living water. Our Lord Jesus says, "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." John 6:44. This one declaration settles the fact that the will of God is sovereign in the display of his amazing grace unto the salvation of sinners who were lost. Again he says to the unbelieving Jews, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40. The pos-

itive assertion of the enmity of the natural man against the sovereign grace of God not only proves the utter falsehood of every form of doctrine which presents the will of the sinner as the cause of his salvation but it establishes beyond the possibility of mistake the truth that every one who has the desire (or will) to take freely of the water of life is led by the Spirit of God; and all such are born of God as living children, and are joint heirs with Christ. They who have the seal of the holy Spirit of promise being the only one who have this will, it is certain that all who have this will are so sealed. If the tried and tempted child could rest in this assurance, it would lift him above the darkness of many hours of doubt; for however conscious unworthiness may involve him in fears, he cannot be deceived in his will to take freely of the water of life. Knowing his utter destitution of merit in himself, his only hope for salvation must be in that grace which is freely extended to the chief of sinners. The heart of man has never conceived of such a gracious salvation as that which is given in Christ Jesus. That conviction which causes the sinner to hunger and thirst after righteousness is the assurance that the divine blessing rests upon his broken and contrite heart; that trembling desire which longs for the water of life is the "will" by which every one is identified whose right it is to take of that water freely. All others wish to purchase their interest in that living water by their own righteousness. Only the destitute have the will to take of that water "freely." Hence there is strong consolation to the afflicted and poor people of God not only in the abundant supply of this living water, but also that in the "will" wrought in them by the grace of God they are accurately described in this text as the very people who are author-

ized to take of the water of life.

The illustration here used does not represent the offer of life to the dead, for they can have no will to authorize them to take. The figure implies that the willing character is already alive. None but the living can thirst. Then the very thirst by which the sinner is made to desire this water of life gives assurance of life already existing in the willing one. The dead have no thirst, and consequently they have not the will to take of the water of life freely. The efforts of carnal idolators to persuade or drive dead sinners to have this "will," are manifestly inconsistent with the literal figure. One who is not thirsty might say that he wants water, but that would not change the fact. So it is not true when those who trust in their own righteousness profess to thirst after this water of life. The psalmist sung of this wonderful water, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Psalm 46:4. These living streams are all found in the city of God and they flow nowhere else. Therefore none but "they that do his commandments," and "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life," have access to this water, since no others enter into the city. See Rev. 21:27, 22:14. To every one of them the water of life is freely given, not offered; and they are the only people that know the voice of Jesus as the joyful sound. These living subjects of the grace of God have need of the water of life to sustain them in the weary desert of this world of sorrow; and to every one of them it is freely given. It would be useless to offer it to those who do not feel the need of it. The awfully impressive testimony of Jesus which immediately follows this text must cause deep and heart-searching self-examination in every reader who fears the Lord. If the

Spirit of Christ dwells in any one, his desire is expressed in the text, both in regard to the coming of the Lord, and the welcoming of every thirsting and willing one to come to this fountain which is opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And every one is a subject of salvation who feels to respond to the announcement of the Lords' coming in the language of the Spirit and the bride, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

(Editorial from Signs of the Times June 1, 1885.)

ORDINATION

The regular union meeting was held with Pleasant Grove Church at Naches, Wash., Sept. 9, 10 and 11, 1949. All the members of the Big Spring Church of Elgin, Oregon were present, and there being a sufficient number of ministers of our faith and order present, it was decided to ordain our Pastor, Brother R. R. Wolfe to the full work of the gospel ministry.

The meeting was presided over by Elder A. D. Hughett, Pastor of Pleasant Grove Church. The Presbytery was called consisting of Elder Hughett, Moderator, Elders I. F. Coleman and B. O. Jeffrey, and Deacons Marion Colwell and D. C. Davis. The ordination proceeded in the usual order, laying on of hands and prayer by Elder Coleman, the most touching and forceful I have ever heard. It was a most solemn sight to see the gray heads bowed around the dark one, silently saying, "You must take over now son, we are most through."

The memories this sight brought to me were both sad and sweet. Over fifty years ago I witnessed the ordination of my husband, the late Elder C. W. Bond and Brother D. G. Johnson at the same time. I hope and pray that the ministry of Elder Wolfe will be as long and faithful as was Elder Bond's.

At the meeting of the Big Spring Church, the first Sunday in October, Brother Lloyd Spikes united with the church and was baptized by Elder Wolfe, his first baptism. This baptism took place at the bridge in the same place where Brother Spike's mother was baptized by Elder Bond years ago. Of the many members present at that baptism only Sister Spikes and I are left. (A lot of water has gone under that bridge since then).

Elder Wolfe came to Oregon by invitation from Elder Bond and arrived here three days after Elder Bond was buried. He was shocked and grieved that he was gone, but felt he was sent here by the Lord for a purpose not known to us, and

since our little church has been livened by his ministry, we feel our prayers are answered. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." "O man who art thou that repliest against God?" "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," etc. There are so many scriptures I could mention, but will say as my dear husband so often said, "Lord make us reconciled to thy will in all things."

(Mrs.) MARTHA H. BOND

MEMORIALS

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has removed from the scenes of mortal existence our beloved brother and friend, **ELDER HORACE H. LEFFERTS**, and

WHEREAS, our departed Brother Lefferts visited us for about fifty years, preaching Christ and him crucified to the enjoyment of all who were privileged to hear him, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to God's holy will, desiring to be reconciled and given grace to press onward, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we of the Salisbury Association extend assurance of our love and sympathy to his beloved wife, Ella A. Lefferts, and family, hoping the blessed Lord will give them all comfort and consolation, knowing that he doeth all things well, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be printed in the minutes of our Association; that a copy be sent to Mrs. Lefferts, and that a copy be published in the **Signs of the Times** and in the **Old Faith Contender**. Written by Handy B. Truitt, Snow Hill, Md.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Moderator
 MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk
 WILLIAM S. ADKINS, Asst. Clerk

WHEREAS, since the last session of this Delaware Association held with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., in 1947, and since there was no session of this body held in 1948, and since in the meantime it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from the scene of their labors in our midst, **ELDER DOUGLAS L. TOPPING** and **ELDER CHARLES W. VAUGHN**, and

WHEREAS, brother Topping served as pastor of the Rock Springs Church and brother Vaughn served as pastor of the Salem Church, both churches being in this the Delaware Association, and

WHEREAS, their death leaves a great and sorrowful vacancy in our midst which cannot be filled save by the Holy Spirit through whom these ministering gifts were given to our churches and

by whose qualifications their ministry was maintained among us, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we do hereby testify to the faithfulness of these brethren as ministers of the Word and as beloved pastors among us, serving not for filthy lucre's sake but of a ready mind and from the love they had for the truth, which love they evidenced in their walk and conversation; and that we do hereby testify to their soundness in the doctrine of God our Savior and to their steadfastly upholding the order and discipline of the house of God, therefore be it further

RESOLVED, that we hereby extend our heart felt sympathy to our sister church of Hopewell, N. J., and to the Ebenezer and Black Rock churches which churches were served by these brethren, as well as to the Rock Springs and Salem churches, for this loss is not theirs alone, nor this sorrow theirs only, but is shared by all of us in this Delaware Association as well as in our sister Associations of Baltimore and the Delaware River; and that we further assure our Sister Elizabeth Topping and our Sister Annie Vaughn, widows of our dear ministering brethren, of our sincere desire unto the Lord for their comfort and reconciliation to the divine will of Him who does all things well, all things being for his glory and for our good. It is further

RESOLVED, that this memorial be spread upon our associational minutes, and copies thereof sent to our Sisters Topping and Vaughn, and copies to the **Signs** and **Old Faith Contender**.

Done by unanimous voice of the Association May 4, 1949.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator
 CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk

Inasmuch, as it has pleased our heavenly Father, since our last session of the Delaware Association, to remove from his earthly labor, and to take unto himself, our dear brother, **ELDER T. W. WALKER**, who was a regular visitor among our churches and associaton for many years and who endeared himself to our hearts by his gentle and mild manner and his zeal for the honor and praise of our God; and since his passing we miss his visits with us in our homes and in our meetings, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we express our thankfulness unto God for his gift in the ministry and that we extend unto our sister association, The Lower Country Line, our deepest sympathy in their loss, and be it further

RESOLVED, that we add our expression of sympathy to those already given unto Elder Walker's family and that this memoriam be printed in our minutes and published in the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender**.

Done by the unanimous voice of the Association, May 14, 1949.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS, Moderator
CHAS. B. OSBORNE, Clerk

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from this life our beloved Brother in Christ, an able minister of the gospel, ELDER C. W. VAUGHN, of the Hopewell Church in the Delaware River Association, we, the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, feel our loss keenly, he having come among us for a number of years. Elder Vaughn was a splendid man and a faithful minister of the gospel of Christ. He preached salvation by grace and grace alone to the enjoyment of all who were privileged to hear him.

Resolved, that we extend to Sister Annie Pendleton Vaughn and her family our deepest sympathy and assure them he had kept the faith and was ready to be offered.

Resolved, that we are also mindful of the loss to the churches which he served as Pastor, and pray that God will sustain and comfort them in their period of sorrow.

Resolved, that a copy of this memorial be printed in our minutes, a copy sent to Sister Vaughn, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times*, a paper on which our departed brother ably served as Associate Editor for so many years.

Written by order of this Association convening with the Forest Grove Church, Oct. 19 and 20, 1949.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Moderator
MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk
WM. S. ADKINS, Ass't Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. ALWILDA RITTENHOUSE STRYKER came to the end of her earthly career Nov. 24, 1949. Having been born Feb. 9, 1874 she had passed her 75th birthday anniversary. She was the youngest child of William and Ida Brewer Rittenhouse. Sept. 30, 1902 she was married to Peter Quick Stryker who preceded her in death March 22, 1912, leaving her with four small children to rear. She is survived by three daughters, Mrs. Catharine S. Darby, Mrs. Ida S. Bodine and Mrs. Elizabeth S. Schenk all of Flemington, N. J. Elinor McConnell Stryker died Nov. 29, 1929. Other surviving relatives are one brother, Gabriel C. Rittenhouse, Paulsboro, N. J., seven grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Before her marriage Sister Stryker taught school in Somerville, N. J., and subsequent to the death of her husband she returned to her former profession, becoming principal of the Elementary School in Flemington, retiring in 1941. The following editorial from the Hunterdon County Democrat sets forth the high esteem in which she was held in her community.

MRS. ALWILDA R. STRYKER

Hundreds of citizens of our community who came under her influence as a teacher and administrator learned with keen regret of the death of Mrs. Alwilda R. Stryker, who for 28 years taught in and served as principal of the Flemington Elementary School.

Mrs. Stryker returned to teaching in 1913, after the death of her husband left her with four small children to raise and educate. She took into the classroom an enthusiasm which was shared by those fortunate enough to be her pupils. Mrs. Stryker loved especially to teach history and civil government and she was gifted with the ability to make those subjects live and to inculcate a profound faith in America and her destiny. As principal of the Junior High School, and after its discontinuance, as principal of the Elementary School, Mrs. Stryker further advanced the cause of education. She enjoyed the loyalty of all her co-workers.

Descendant of early Hunterdon settlers of the Old School Baptist faith, Mrs. Stryker continued actively to support the ancient church of her forefathers at Locktown. It was while attending a conference of Old School Baptists in Maryland that she was stricken with the illness that caused her death. Hers was indeed an extremely busy and useful life. She suffered more adversity than the average person but went cheerfully ahead, never complaining of her lot but sharing with each succeeding generation of young people her interests and her fine Christian influence. To the daughters who mourn her loss, the community which owes so much to Mrs. Stryker extends sincere sympathy.

* * *

Sister Stryker united with the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church at Locktown, N. J. and was baptized by Elder Balas Bundy, Oct. 21, 1894. She was a faithful and useful member for over fifty-five years. She was chosen clerk of the church June 11, 1933 which position she filled with distinction until her death. In late years the church letters written by her to the Delaware River Association were regarded as classics. She will be greatly missed, not only by her loved ones and friends, but the church has seemingly sustained an irreparable loss.

We cannot refrain from quoting the following excerpts from one of her daughters. "As a mother, her love, devotion and wise guidance, not only during the childhood days of her daughters but always, was such that her death brings a severe loss to her girls." Also "she enjoyed her correspondence with church friends and was very gifted in expressing her thoughts most beautifully. At times she was troubled by disturbing thoughts, but she was humble, unfaltering in her faith, and

gained much comfort in hearing the truth and reading her Bible." This is a great heritage to have left behind. She resided with her daughter, Catharine and family from 1938 until her death.

The writer assisted by Elder H. M. Bennett of Mardela Springs, Md. conducted the services in the meeting-house at Locktown, N. J. The attendance was large and the floral offerings beautiful. Interment in the Somerville Cemetery. May the God of all grace comfort and console, as only he can, those who mourn their loss is our humble prayer.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON

In memory of JOHN T. BREAZEALE, born May 1, 1878 and died Oct. 28, 1949. He leaves his second wife, and four children by his first wife, also nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. His first wife's name was Molly McKain who died several years ago, leaving her four children as follows: Mack Breazeale and Ernest Breazeale of Bastrop, La., and Hamburg, Ark. Mrs. Ellen Chapman, Bastrop, La. and Mrs. Ruth Gibbs, Monticello, Ark. His second wife's maiden name is not known to the writer, but her given name is Grace. I only met her at the hospital. The writer has known the deceased for a number of years. He was a merchant in Bastrop and probably at Hamburg also. He was a man of prominence in business and social life, well thought of and respected.

Mr. Breazeale was a very strong believer in the doctrine and order of the Old Baptist church. He was an ardent reader and student of the Bible. He could quote it and converse on the doctrine very pointedly and convincingly. He often came to the church at Concord, near the town of Bastrop where he lived. He gave great evidence by conversation and deportment of a sweet experience of grace. He was ably inclined to denounce the pharisaical works of their supposed ability to do something in order to be saved. I feel assured there is every reason to feel he is gone to that blessed reward and inheritance of God's humble saints.

The writer visited him while in the hospital suffering intensely, and he remarked to me in the presence of others that he did not want to be rebellious and was ready and willing to go when it pleased the Lord to take him. When in Old Baptist company he was speaking of God's power, his salvation, grace, mercy, kingdom, second coming, resurrection and the doctrine in general. He loved it and seemingly lived on it. I think truly as he lived in conversation, love of God and the doctrine and God's people I feel we are justified in believing that he was embraced in that part of Rev. 14:13 where it says, "Write, 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." If he was not alive in the Lord, and if he did not die corporally with his full trust and confidence in the Lord I am not a judge of such matters.

Dear bereaved ones, I think he is much better off than we who are still subject to disease, pain and death. He is beyond all suffering and trouble because the evidence shows that he lived and spoke of the Lord, and of his confidence in his mercy. So dear ones, may God bless you to live in and believe in that God that he honored, praised and spoke of while he was here.

The writer and a minister of the Missionary Baptist faith conducted the funeral service at a Funeral Chapel at Hamburg, Ark., in the presence of a large and attentive congregation of surviving family, relatives and friends. He was laid to rest in a most beautiful cemetery at Hamburg, Ark. to await that glorious resurrection, when all the saints of God shall rise in his ever blessed and glorious righteousness. Yours in hope through grace.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

ELDER WILLIAM NEWTON GREEN of Altus, Oklahoma passed this mortal existence by death Nov. 21, 1949 at his home in Altus. He was born Sept. 23, 1866 and married Aug. 27, 1893 to Miss Mary Adeline Tate. To this union were born three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Champeau, Norman, Okla., Mrs. Flora Davis, Littlefield, Texas, Mrs. Willie Foster, Oklahoma City, Okla., and one son, Clarence D. Green, Oklahoma City, Okla. All of them survive him and other surviving heirs of this marriage are eleven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. His first wife Mary Adeline Tate preceded him in death Aug. 13, 1911, leaving him with four children to rear and care for all of which shows that he must have suffered many heartaches and pains.

Elder Green was married to Mrs. Leah Kit Ella Hobbs who survives him together with two sons of her former marriage, Orvil Hobbs, Oklahoma City, Okla., and Claude Hobbs, Denver, Col. Elder Green, his children, his surviving wife and her children were very noticeably congenial and devoted one to another, unusually so in my observation. It was difficult to tell children and stepchildren apart at the home and funeral which was a very sad one to us all.

He united with the Old Baptist Church in Oct. 1913 with a very bright experience, and also with a great calling to the ministry. He was baptized and began preaching coming out of the water. The writer as well as other brethren has heard him speak of this several times. He was very deeply and enthusiastically led, and blessed of the Lord to the edification of the Lord's people. Indeed he

was blessed to be a shining light in the doctrine of a sovereign God, an all powerful Savior and Redeemer of his people. He was loved and admired throughout his personal acquaintance among the brothers, sisters and friends of the Old Baptists. He was also blessed to write a considerable number of doctrinal and experimental articles for publication in our periodicals which met with hearty approval and endorsement by our people throughout the United States.

Elder Green was blessed to travel in several states and his ministry was enjoyed, respected and appreciated wherever he went. He has visited with several Old Baptist Associations alternately for a long time. Among them our own Association, the South Ouachita, the South Arkansas, the Sulphur Fork of Texas and a number of others. If he was absent at these meetings it was usually because of sickness. He was one of our ablest and most extensively appreciated ministers in these parts.

His health has steadily failed for several years, but he was blessed to continue active and useful in the ministry until the last. He was very devoted to his wife, children, all the family and to the churches, a very vivid and noticeable quality which deserved and received universal respect by his fellowmen, his neighbors and the people in general. He was firm in his convictions and wonderfully blessed to be a very influential and convincing speaker and writer.

The very sad hour came Monday, Nov. 21 at about four o'clock which made his stay on earth 83 years, 1 month and 28 days. I feel he was wonderfully blessed not to have lived in vain, but useful, upright, honest and to the glory of God, and to the comfort and edification of his people. To his dear loved ones I would admonish scripturally that you weep not as those who have no true hope in Jesus Christ for he is not dead, but as our blessed Savior has said, sleepeth till that bright and glorious day of the Lord shall come when he the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with that holy shout, and the trump of God shall sound. Then he shall come from that doleful tomb with the blessed and glorified millions, not with a corruptible, natural, painful, weak, sick and distressed body, but with that incorruptible, spiritual, immortal, pure and strong body, like His glorious body, to sorrow no more, but to rejoice, praise and glorify God in that eternal and blessed abode in the presence of God and the Lamb. O what a glorious hope this is for poor, sinful, vile, worms of the dust to be in possession of. It is indeed wonderful and full of glory.

Dear Sister Green and family, and the churches, I hope God will lead and strengthen you all, and keep you and lead you forth on your sad and troublesome journey in that blessed faith that God

blessed him to be strong in and to preach so wonderfully and beautifully. Look to the Lord and pray to him who is able to do exceedingly and abundantly above all we think or ask. He will comfort you and provide for you. Dear Brother Green will be greatly missed, but God can and will replace him if according to his will.

The writer and Elder Clarence Turner conducted the funeral services at the funeral chapel in the city of Altus, Okla. in the presence of a very large and attentive congregation of mourning, sympathetic and devoted relatives and friends with a beautiful display of floral offerings. He was laid to rest in a most beautiful cemetery about six miles from Altus. Yours in a sweet and precious hope.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

ANNA M. REEVES was born Oct. 23, 1855, and passed from this life July 27, 1948 in her home at Southampton, Pa. at nearly the age of 93 years. Her husband, Deacon Caswell B. Reeves, died in 1928. She was the daughter of Elias and Sarah Allen. She was married to Caswell B. Reeves in 1876. They had three children, Allen, Mary and Harold. Mary was a member of the Southampton Church and died in 1919. The two sons and several grandchildren remain to mourn the loss of a mother and grandmother who loved them dearly.

She united with the Southampton Baptist Church in 1895 and remained a faithful member until her death. She entertained in her home many of our brethren and ministers during her long life until she became very feeble and was only able to have them call on her for short visits which she dearly enjoyed, but at last the Lord took her home to rest from all weariness and the cares of this life. Her Pastor, Elder Horace H. Lefferts, conducted her funeral services in her home and spoke words of comfort to the bereaved and her friends and brethren. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery only a few feet from the church building in which she worshiped for so many years.

CASPER G. FETTER

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., \$100; Mrs. P. I. Froude, Mich., \$2; B. Parrish, Ark., \$5; J. C. Beard, Tex., \$2; Mrs. E. D. Rose in memory of Mrs. A. R. Stryker, N. J., \$5; R. D. McGough, Ala., \$2; J. W. McAlister, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. L. Campbell, Tenn., \$1; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., \$1; Mrs. E. M. Werner, N. J., \$2; G. A. Paul, Ala., \$2; Mrs. K. Ragan, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. H. D. Hewitt, N. Y., \$5; W. L. Gossien, Ark., \$1; Mrs. S. L. Taylor, Pa., \$5; Mrs. E. H. West, N. Y., \$2.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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CORRESPONDENCE

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." 1 John 3:1

The Bible is a treatise upon love. It is far the most wonderful love story that history makes room for. So wonderful, so deep, so mysterious in its treating upon this all wonderful theme that those to whom it is addressed must first be wrought upon also in the same mysterious manner before such can be placed in company with this love of all loves. So great and so marvelous is this love that it can only be ascribed to that of God, and God is love. God is a spirit and seeketh such to worship him, therefore, it is a spiritual love. Behold what manner of love, (more loves than one) but this one particular love. This love is a gift and can only be given to those for whom it is prepared, to those given of his Spirit for in this love only can the Father be worshipped in spirit and in truth. This wonderful love is stronger than death, yea, it is beyond the comprehension of the natural mind. So deep in its fundamentals that it passes the love of woman. This love reigns in the Father, by it and in love he hath blessed and continues to bless his people. In and through it he also punishes his people. By, in and through it all things live, move and have their being. This is that love wherewith he loved us and saved us, that love in which there can be no separation therefrom for it is an everlasting love as old as God, and

God is love and righteous in all his ways. This love, when once bestowed or shed abroad in your heart, draws you away unto yourself and causes you to rejoice in God, the Rock of your salvation with as great rejoicing as though by the same love you had been drawn among thousands. It (this love) cuts you loose from the world and all of its ties, and sets you upon a higher plane which gives unto you a new mind of thinking, a new heart of understanding foreign to the world and its ways. God is love and by it he preserves his people to show forth his praise, and it causes them to become a willing people in the day of his power. It is the sole preserver for and unto all things. In the figure of the three Hebrew children it preserved the church from the fiery furnace and Daniel from the jaws of the lions. This is still that same wonderful love. By it his saints are made to sit together in heavenly places (the churches). At the same time they are led by the springs of still waters and it makes them lie down in green pastures, and cry, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." It is this love that leads them along the King's Highway (Jesus) up into his holy mount, his banqueting house, his banner over them love and sing:

"Dear name! the Rock on which I build;
My shield and hiding place;
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace."

Behold what manner of love, "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" (Jesus the way, the truth, and the life) which is that never ending love—life everlasting that reaches far above all principalities, powers, might, thrones and dominions. "Crowned in heaven the topmost stone, and well deserves the praise." "What manner of love." A fountain, a well of living water that flows there from the river of life that never runs dry; that comes forth not with salt nor bitter, but is of that fresh water that flows from his wounded side and when one is made to drink thereof such never thirst again. It is then such a one becomes awakened from nature to grace when you were inclosed, a spring shut up a fountain sealed. But when this peculiar manner of love shines in, it is then and there you are lifted from the valley of dry bones and highly elevated in the sweet fragrance of God's love, overlooking the landscape of mount Pisgah into the happy land Canaan, a figure of that eternal place of abode where all is well. So it is sure this wonderful love ties the whole house of Israel together as one ever united family in the Lord, their understanding one, their song one, seeing eye to eye, one and the same age, speaking one and the same thing. This is that love that came down from heaven, and was made manifest in the flesh to his people. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And the government shall be upon his shoulder, and he shall be clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and his name shall be called the Word of God. So this is that love, that manner of love that Paul is referring to in John 1:1. And it manifest itself

as true in the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and these bear record in heaven, and they agree in one. "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one," that this love is Christ the Lord in you the hope of glory, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." For "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And this is that life in which only this all wonderful love can be manifested from one to another; and this is only felt when each are given of His spirit, and as sure as this be true these two will commune in the association of this love in the bringing of themselves together in the order required, thereby enabling them to keep house for the Lord in order and in decency. For as our ever blessed Redeemer picked up his fan and thoroughly purged his floor, even so will this love that passeth all understanding lead us into all truth and righteousness. This marvelous, all wonderful love is without limit, metes or bounds. So high you cannot go above it, so low you cannot go under it, so deep you cannot pass through it, so large you cannot go around it. It fills all space. It is from nowhere, yet everywhere present. It reaches unto and in the heart of every little child of grace, and causes them to rejoice in things that the world cannot receive for it is foolishness unto them; and as all others stand against it in such vileness, hatred and enmity it does not return evil for evil but rather looks down upon them in pity and in mercy. "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!" And though it serves his saints as a great punishment to be shut off for a

little season from this ever merciful love, which becomes unto us trouble from every side, yet we are not distressed; though we be perplexed yet we are not left in despair; though we are persecuted still we are not forsaken; and though we be cast down still we are not destroyed. "But in all things approving ourselves*****in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and possessing all things." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

(Elder) W .A. LITTLE

1008 E. Allen St.,
Ft. Worth, Tex.

"We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Psalms 137:1-4

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST: This morning I picked up my Bible and went into the living room to find something to read. As I was turning the leaves it seems Babylon arrested my mind. I found the above quoted scripture. My first thought was that fifty-one years ago the stork brought us our first baby. I lived again this period of time gone

forever. As much as I believe in the absolute fixedness of all things yet I had a deep sense of regret that I had not been a better father and husband. I fell into a fit of weeping that took me about two or three hours to overcome. When this occurs I have to steal away and cry it out.

With a fast growing family and an afflicted wife from Feb. 1910 until her departure in April 1946 I had a hard financial fight. One night on my way from office when I was about one hundred yards from the house I stopped. I must have stood there thirty minutes. I gazed at the moon pretty well over in the South and seemed to be in a trance or some kind of feeling I do not know. This feeling overcame me, all that I have is slipping from under me and I am helpless as a baby to prevent it. I fought a hard fight.

I had two sons in the first world war. My oldest knew typing and shorthand, therefore, they kept him in the office. My second son was in Company H, Rainbow Division. Beloved, you who had sons over there can witness with me the awful heaviness of heart and soul. On a Saturday afternoon I went into Meridian, Miss., ate supper but could not stop in the lobby, I had to go to my room. For about ten days prior to this I was so heavy in heart and soul I could hardly drift along. I fell prostrate by my bedside and tried to pray. I cannot recall all I said but I do remember I said the following, "Oh! Lord I am not asking you to send my boy home, he is no better than any other man's son to die on the battle field; but oh Lord, if it is your holy will, give me a sign!" I rose to my feet as light as a feather, the burden all gone. I changed to my night clothes, eased into bed and sleep caught me so easy that I cannot find language to describe it. I dreamed I stood by the

water's edge in New England. My feet touched the water of the mighty Atlantic. In my dream I talked to my boy six thousand miles away. In the dream he heard my voice and I heard his as distinctly and as clearly as our voices have ever been heard in a real situation. I do not recall all we said, but I do remember he said this, "Papa, this cruel war will end some happy day, then I am coming home and again be with you, mamma, my sister and five brothers, and we will be happy again." I awoke and cannot tell you what condition I was in. I did not know where I was. I was about an hour getting myself together, then I knew I was in a hotel room in Meridian, Miss. As I lay there in bed I stretched my hands toward heaven with eyes closed, and thanked God he had given me a sign. I knew then my boy would come home. I never read another casualty list; I never looked again for a cablegram telling me the worst; I went on perfectly easy. My beloved brethren I do not know why I have been thrown into such a fit of weeping, but my hope is anchored that it is of the Lord.

If our mind will lead us along we will try to offer a few thoughts on the text. Israel was in captivity. Babylon means confusion. Rivers in the plural denotes trouble or troubles. When they remembered Zion they sat down and wept. Note, they sat down. Nothing they could do but sit and weep. The thought comes to my mind that when a poor fellow is away from home in confinement, as in war, he thinks of home, sweet home. All he can do is weep. I read of one fellow across the water saying he wished he could see Ma's old cat. When Jonah was completely closed in he prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him. "Take, I beseech thee, my life from me." The willow hangs its branches down; they hanged their

harps thereon. The harp is an instrument of music. In spiritual captivity there is no music in the soul; it is impossible to sing one of Zion's songs. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." When it is this captivity with the child of grace, it is God's time to teach him his nothingness; teach him he has reached the end of the earth; teach him his righteousness is as a robe of filthy rags; teach him he must wait God's time. "Not a single shaft can hit till the God of love sees fit."

One morning I walked out from the home of a brother where I spent the night and saw two little coons in a cage going round and round, and up and down. As I stood watching them I thought of their very unhappy confinement. I had a strong temptation to open the door and let them go to yonder forest, their home, sweet home. Israel could not sing the songs of Zion because they were in a strange land. Spiritual captivity is a strange land because we feel Jesus is gone forever. The comforting thought is that when we feel Jesus is the farthest away, and has left us in a strange land he is the nearest to us. I have heard it said the darkest of the night is just before the break of day. As natural night follows day, so spiritual night follows spiritual day; it is God's doings. The night, or captivity, is as necessary as day both natural and spiritual. We must be taught again and again that all our help is from on high. Moses said, "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." He stretched his rod toward heaven. The significance of this, to our mind, is that Moses knew there was no help but from on high. Once I was planning to go to a fifth Sunday meeting. I had been in spiritual darkness for a week or ten days. It was an awful state of spiritual captivity. I doubted and dis-

believed everything. I declared I would not go. On Saturday night I thought I was a little better. I tried to find some scriptural subject, but all was dark as midnight. I forgot I had been taught, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." When the introductory sermon was being preached God gave me a subject; he opened the prison door; the poor captive was released. It was an easy go, so easy. Then we say, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." Dear reader, finish reading the chapter. (Psalms 137)

Permit me to mention again that in my dream my boy said, "Papa this cruel war will end some happy day, and I am coming home." My life has been strange to me. I cannot understand it. I have had so many ups and downs, hithers and thithers, knocks and bumps, hills and valleys both natural and spiritual until I am getting tired and want to go home. There will be no more weeping by the rivers of Babylon. The poor fellows in the war had a longing for home, sweet home, a long time before they had orders to go. As much as I desire to go home I know I cannot go till a sovereign God gives orders. In our journey through this thorny maze, even though we are so frequently captivated, forced to sit by the rivers of Babylon, yet how blessed it is we can peep over the hills and behold mount Zion in her beauty, her glory, the blessed old church. This beauty, this glory, just a foretaste of the glory of glories in the realm of eternity.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

Elizabeth Hotel, Box 557,
Panama City, Fla.

DEAR ELDER DODSON AND READERS OF THE SIGNS, DEARLY BELOVED: I have composed many letters to you in my mind since the death of my husband

July 5, 1949, but could never get my thoughts on paper.

First I wish to state that the good Lord answered my prayers. My husband passed away peacefully. I was given strength to care for him to the end, and was sustained by the grace of God during the following days, even though I had no relatives with me. I was so thankful for God's mercy in taking him from his terrible sufferings, and from the evil to come, that I could not shed a tear for many days. For about three weeks after his passing I seemed to feel the Lord's presence with me, though alone I was not lonely as I went about trying to adjust my life to the changed conditions. Friends marveled that I kept up for they knew the severe strain I had been under for many months. I could but give God the praise for his goodness and kindness toward me as I was making the needed changes and improvements in my home, in taking over the smaller apartment so I could rent my former side of the house. Friends and relatives wanted me to have some one in the house with me so I kept working to that goal and now have the apartment rented to a nice young couple.

As time went on the Lord seemed to withdraw his constant presence from me, and I fully realized the terrible loss I had sustained. I was grief stricken, even though I knew it was for the best. I realized how deeply the heart was wounded. I missed his love and kindness, and his good advice in so many things for the husband is the head of his bride, even as Christ is the head of the church of the true and living God. But I had to go on and live to perform the tasks and fill the place that our God had foreordained that I should fill in this life. Often when my heart is bowed down with grief I go to the telephone and call a precious

sister in Christ. I always feel better after talking with her, for she too has drunk of the bitter cup and can understand.

As soon as I could after his departure, accompanied by friends, I visited his close relatives. They still regard me as a member of their family which I appreciate very deeply. It was lonely here and I did not stay home on Sundays for I knew the greatest comfort I could get was in the house of the Lord, listening to his ministers proclaim the power and mercies of a kind heavenly Father, and ascribe greatness to his holy name. For he works all things both in heaven and in earth after the council of his own will, and none can stay his hand or say, "What doest thou?" Jesus commanded his followers saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." I was so tired of the cares of the world by the end of the week that I left home and attended church somewhere nearly every week end. At first I went with our thoughtful minister of God and his good wife and sister-in-law, then later as my nerves grew stronger I drove my own car, not only to the nearer churches, but to those farther away following the minister's car. It was such a pleasure to me to be able to take with me my dear, precious mothers in Israel, that they, too, might enjoy these Union Meetings and Associations. I will never forget the love and kindness that was extended to me wherever I went. My heart was filled with love for God's dear children, and I drank freely from the waters of life as these gifted servants expounded the hidden mysteries and purposes of our God, rightly dividing the word of truth to the comfort and edification of his little ones who journeyed to these meetings, many coming long distances.

My poor heart was fed and I came home refreshed for the next week's work. From the fourth Friday in July to the present time in Nov. I have missed church very few Sundays. I was privileged to attend all of four Union Meetings, three Associations, and several other Saturday and Sunday church services. All my life I had longed for this sweet privilege, but when young the churches were so scattered and conveyance slow that I did not get to visit them as I wanted to do. After I married and was placed in the midst of so many churches I longed to visit them, "But she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband" so I only went when forced by the power above to leave my home and companion that I might receive the spiritual food so needed to sustain my spiritual life. I feel that if I could spend the rest of my days in singing God's praise, and in giving honor to his precious name for the wonderful kindness and mercy he has shown me all the days of my life it would be such a little offering. I have found by experience that the greater the troubles and sorrows we are called to pass through, the greater is the supply of love and grace given to us to bear them. He has said, "My grace is sufficient" then why do we ever doubt or ask for more than he sees fit to send us? It is but the weakness of the flesh.

When I first realized I would soon be left the last member of my own little family I felt I could not bear it, and I could not have done it alone. Even if my relatives had been near me they could not have borne it for me. Everyone was so kind to me and extended their sympathy which helped so much, but I had to bear my burden alone. When I cast my cares on my precious Savior all the day long he gave me strength and grace to bear them. He

caused my light to so shine that all who saw it gave God the praise. They knew it was beyond the power of man to carry on as I did. I know what he has done for me in the past, and feel as the poet did as he gazed at the lone waterfowl in the sky and said:

“He, who from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky
thy certain flight,
In the long way I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.”

I wish to acknowledge the recent letter from the *Signs*, and to thank you for your expression of sympathy for my loss. I knew you must have heard of it through my precious sister. Yes, I was thankful that my husband's attitude towards the Old School Baptists had changed during the last few years of his life. The minister whose regular, welcome visits were anticipated by him has told me since his death that he could tell a great change in my husband's attitude toward him even before he was confined to the home. My husband never had anything against the man, but had treated him with more or less indifference for many years because of the hard doctrine which he preached. I will never forget the kindness shown to us by this faithful servant of God. He not only ministered to his spiritual needs, but always brought him something he thought he might relish when he was able to take nourishment. I could but thank God while the minister knelt and prayed, “For this our brother.” I realized that brotherly love flowed freely from heart to heart as the tears flowed from the eyes of my loved one. The minister said his hand-clasp was always firm throughout the prayers. He knew that this preacher had promised me to assist the Missionary preacher in the funeral services, but a week before his death I heard

him ask this man to speak a few words at his funeral. He had asked the Missionary Baptist minister to speak at his funeral, and I feel that he wanted my preacher to know that he wanted him to help in the services. I heard him say, “I do not belong to your church, but I hope I belong to the “Big Church,” The minister replied, “Where members are as the sands of the seas.”

Concerning the sister who asked for my name I wish to say I still desire to withhold my identity from publication. I am not ashamed of it nor of the people with whom I associate, but at present I cannot carry on any more correspondence. I am away from all my relatives and many close friends and all complain that I do not write as often as I should. Friends sometimes call me by long distance if they do not hear from me when they think they should. I am very grateful to them for their interest in my welfare. Wherever I go my brethren and sisters express their appreciation of my writings and urge me to write oftener. When I am introduced as the little “Sister from Texas” to strangers it is a pleasure to see that they feel they already know me because of my writings. I wish to express my thanks through the *Signs* for every kind word that has been written about my writings. I feel so insignificant and humble that God has such a weak sinner as I know myself to be to try to praise his holy name, and to comfort his little ones on this journey here below. At times my heart swells with love for all of God's children, and I feel I must write some of it down, but the task is too great for me and I can only write a small part of what I feel and then my letter is too lengthy. If any care to write to me let them write their messages to the *Signs*, if they will, then all can enjoy them when they are

printed. No doubt I should send them back to the *Signs* to be published as I did the letter from "The sinner from Texas." I do not know her identity, but I feel that she has been taught of the Lord and is one of his precious little ones.

Last Saturday morning while enroute to a regular meeting with God's faithful servant and wife and sister-in-law he stopped at the home of a precious brother and sister as was their custom. Both had been sick and the brother's eyesight was greatly impaired since his illness. She told me they missed the church services so much and that all the preaching they got was through the dear old *Signs of the Times*. She looked forward to every issue and appreciated the many good articles contained therein. I felt thankful then that you had given me an opportunity to help comfort these and other shut-ins as they both had told me how much they had appreciated my writings.

You will find enclosed herein a money-order for a two year renewal subscription to the *Signs*. When I told this brother I would write to the *Signs* soon in response to your letter he asked me to send in his subscription. He had let the time pass by and the subscription was overdue, but he appreciated so much the fact that the paper was not stopped. He asked me to offer his apologies for this neglect. May God's richest blessings rest and abide with you and all of the household of faith is the prayer of your humble, Sister from Texas.

1725 E. Maryland St., Evansville, Ind.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE WHICH GOD, THAT CANNOT LIE, PROMISED BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN: Is that promise good? Is it sure? If not then can God lie? Oh no, brother that is one thing that is impossible for God to do.

That promise is as sure as there is a God. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." To whom was this promise given? Can we say to the elect, and answer this? Then who are they? The chosen in Christ before the world was. Then who are they? Can any man name them all? I think not, but those that are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and God only, knows them that are his. Have you ever met any of them? I believe I can name several of them. How do I judge them? The Book says, "By their fruits ye shall know them?" What difference is there in men, are they not all sinners? Did not God look down on all, and they had all gone out of the way? They had all gone astray, none good, no not one. All subject to do any thing under the sun but good. All vanity and vexation of spirit before the Lord.

Paul speaks of a warfare, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." It takes two factions or more to cause a war; and man in his original, natural state is deaf, dumb, blind and dead. The law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Christ Jesus came down into the world to redeem a people from under that law. Did he do it, or did he come to try? If he did, did it have any effect upon man? If so what? "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." To quicken is to make alive or change. I believe there is something that is made alive, or changed in some men and women I know. Do you ever meet those who are walking after the flesh? Also those that are walking after the Spirit? Do you meet those that show abundant proof that they love the Lord?

Why was that little flock out at church the other Saturday and Sunday? Was it for show? To show off their fine clothes or see the latest fashion? Was it for money or self gain? Why did the dear brother and sister take us home with them, show us every comfort, bring us back to the church and give us their money; why were tears of joy shed, and much love made manifest in the flesh? Why do they love one another? Thus you may know you have passed from death unto life, because you love the brethren. Dear brother, there is bound to be another man, a natural man and a spiritual man, one the reverse of the other. Here comes up the warfare Paul spoke of, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Was that which was good made death to you? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in you by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. You know the law is spiritual just and good, but you are carnal sold under sin. Then when you do that you would not you consent to the law it is good, so it is no more you that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in you.

Brother, is it your sins that bother you, that make you doubt and fear that you have never known the Lord? Are you ever made to thank God that you can step aside and see this old natural, sinful man? Are you ever made to thank God that you are a sinner? That sin is a blessing, that it keeps you humble, knowing you are not up to the standard of those you love, makes you esteem your brethren and love them? Paul, the apostle, was made to see those things and to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me

from the body of this death?" Paul could see his littleness and nothingness, but was made to rejoice in the law of God after the inward man, and to thank God that with the mind he served the law of God, with the flesh the law of sin. What is the great, grand and glorious answer to all this? What is the final conclusion? Here it is, and does it not make that poor hungry and thirsty soul cry out, Amen? "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." If the law of the Spirit of Christ has made you free are you not free indeed? Then why should you fear, in the words of the poet, "What more can he say, than to you he hath said, You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Dear brother, I see a little flock that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that was saved and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purposes and grace which was given them before the world was; and is told to fear not for it was the Father's good pleasure to bring them to the kingdom. Their sins and iniquities are remembered no more against them. They are no more under the law, but under grace. He has written his laws in their hearts, planted them in their minds. He will be unto them a God, and they shall be his people, making them see and believe in the sure mercies of David. God shall be their Father, and they shall be his sons. He will not withhold his mercy from them, but shall be merciful to their unrighteousness for they are washed in the blood of the Lamb, made whiter than snow, and Christ himself has gone to prepare a place for them that where

he is there they may be also. What a place that will be! We think we know what comfort is here, but what a surprise awaits them. No more sorrow; no more death; no more disappointment; no misunderstandings; no physical disabilities; no more good-byes. We shall all join round the throne of God and sing the songs of Moses, the servant of God and the Lamb. "When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun; We've no less days to sing his praise than when we first begun."

Dear brother, this is my hope my all. If I am wrong I feel I am lost, for if it is not all by the free grace and mercy of God I am out. What have I done that is worthy of that great love and devotion that I sometimes see that has been shed upon me; but thanks be to God that giveth us the victory, it is not by works of righteousness we have done, but according to his mercy he has saved us. It is sweet to see that that blessed God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin, and has quickened us together in him, and saved us by his grace. I realize my time is short here in this world; my past looks black to me, and if I am saved it is by the free grace and mercy of God. So when the doctor steps back and shakes his head that all earthly help is gone, I ask, dear Father, that I may be given grace to see those things as I see them tonight. When at a throne of grace pray for the poor, the afflicted, the sinner and you will pray for me. Your unworthy brother in a good hope. DAN L. CLARK

EXPERIENCE OF W. A. CHESTER

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ELDER J. M. PERKINS, DEAR BROTHER:
I have thought several times of writing

out my experience, but have never made the attempt until now, which by the help of the Lord, I will try to write in as brief a manner as I possibly can.

I was born Feb. 18, 1828, and reared by Baptist parents, and they tried to raise me to be an honest and truthful boy. I always tried to obey them. I thought that I was as good as any boy, but as I grew up to manhood, I had many serious thoughts about dying, and what would become of me. So I went on in this condition until I was in my 24th year. On the first Sunday in August some very strange feelings came on me, which I could not account for. I felt to be in a dark, gloomy frame of mind; everything seemed to have a different appearance, and I would resort to secret places to try to pray, but I could not say anything only Lord have mercy on me a poor sinner. I felt like I was ruined and lost, and without the mercy of an all wise God, was gone forever. So time passed on: sometimes my troubles were so great that I could hardly bear them, and then they would pass off to some extent. So I went on in this condition until the next June. One day I was plowing in my corn-field and there were such awful feelings come on me that I thought surely I was going to die, so I stopped my horse and looked around me, and everything seemed to have a different appearance. It looked like the leaves on the trees were draped in mourning for poor me. It seemed to me that my sins would sink me down, and that I could see a chance for everybody else to be saved but poor me. So time passed on, sometimes my troubles would be so great that I thought I would sink under them, and many times I would wet my pillow with tears. I would weep and mourn. My poor wife would ask me what was the matter with me, and I would tell her that I did not know,

I felt like I was going to die. So time passed on. Sometimes my troubles would wear off to some extent and return with more force than ever. So I continued in this condition until the 10th day of August, 1854. I thought I would get my Bible and see if I could get any comfort from reading that, but found none. So I read on the suffering and death of our blessed Savior and stopped reading, and thought what awful people they must have been to punish such a good person as he was, and I thought that if I had been there that I would have tried to relieve him, and it appeared to me that I was as guilty as they were, so it took such an effect on me that I felt that surely I would die. So I left the house and went out into the yard and fell on my face and tried to pray for the good Lord to have mercy on me, and it seemed that instead of my voice going up it would go downward and it seemed like my sins were rolling on me like mountains and were crushing me down into the very blackness of darkness, and in an instant all of my sins were taken off of me, and the loveliest light appeared to me that I ever saw, and I was made to rejoice in a Savior's love. And it appeared to me that I could see my blessed Savior sitting on his throne, surrounded by the prettiest company of people that I ever saw, all singing praises to his holy name. I felt like I never would see any more trouble, I felt like I could praise his holy name the balance of my days, but I did not remain in this frame of mind long. It was not long until doubts and fears began to rise, and that I was deceived, and I wanted my burden back. I thought that I could tell how it went and would be better satisfied about it and I would often try to pray to the Lord that if I was deceived to undeceive me.

So the thought of joining the church and being baptized soon came into my mind; I felt that I wanted to follow my Lord in all of the ordinances and commands, and I would make promises that I would go and discharge my duty, if it was my duty, but I would break them as often as I would make them, and I would try to pray to the Lord to lead and guide me and let me know what my duty was. So I went on in this way until the 10th of Aug. 1870, and I went to Old Soldier Creek church with my mother, thinking that I never would join the church for I had made promises so often and broke them that I would never try to join the church. So after services were over, the church went into conference and the invitation was given for membership, I rose from my seat and started, I thought to go out of the house, but instead of going out of the house, I was, I believe, made to go up and offer myself to the church; but it seemed like I could not tell anything when I got there, but I tried to tell what the Lord had done for me, and was received in full fellowship in the church, and was baptized the next day by our then beloved and esteemed brother, Elder T. F. Harrison, and when I came out of the water, I felt pleasant and happy. Those pleasant feelings soon passed off and I felt like I had deceived those good people. So I have passed through many sore trials and conflicts since that time. It does seem to me that if I am ever in the right way it is when I am crossing it. I feel to adopt the language of the poet, "Mixtures of joy and sorrow I daily do pass through." And also the language of the apostle, "When I would do good evil is present, so I cannot do the things that I would."

And now, inasmuch as I have given a short history of how the Lord has

brought me along up to this time, I will give a short sketch of what I believe. I believe that God is a sovereign and rules sovereignly and independently over all things, and is not dependent in any respect, for if he were dependent in the least, he could not be a sovereign. People may brag and boast of what great things they have done and are doing for the Lord, but I don't believe in any such doctrine for my Bible informs me that there is none that does good, no not one, and the apostle says that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saves us;" and with these Scriptures and many others, I cannot see how a child of God can believe like a great many are doing who are trying to wear the name of Primitive Baptists, unless it is fulfilling the Scriptures where it says, "That men of your own selves shall rise up speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them." I believe all of our acceptable service that we render to God is through a principle of love.

So in conclusion, I believe that all blessings that we receive here in time or eternity is for what Jesus has done for us. I believe that we are saved by grace from beginning to finish. And now may it be the will of the Lord to lead, guard and guide us through time and be with us in death, and save us in that upper and better world, there to bask in a Savior's love, there to see Jesus and be like him, and we will be satisfied, and God glorified. Amen. W. A. CHESTER

Riffe, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Our three day meeting last August was a good meeting in many ways. I enjoyed it very much. The preaching was sound as far as I know. When I saw the visitors seemed to enjoy it, I was reminded of

one of God's visiting sheep in 1948, who was so overcome that he could not talk to us.

On Thursday these wandering sheep began to gather into our home, filling it with gladness as each one spoke comfortably to the other. Preaching continued from Friday until Sunday forenoon. Our hearts are always glad to see the children of God assembled. The brothers, sisters and friends who are interested in these meetings are more than welcome here. We hope to see them all next year which will be the fifty-seventh consecutive yearly three day meeting at Bethel Church, Riffe, Wash. It always begins on Friday before the third Sunday in August. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

Rose and I would be so glad if any of you could visit us at some time. In gospel bonds.

(Elder) I. F. COLEMAN, Pastor

Redbush, Ky.

R. LESTER DODSON, OUR DEAR EDITOR, AND ALL THE ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES WHOM WE HIGHLY ESTEEM IN LOVE FOR THEIR WORKS SAKE: We are convinced, at the age of sixty-one, here is one of the best religious papers published in America, not only the oldest but contains more heart truth and confession than any other. We have been privileged to read prayerfully, and we hope unprejudicedly study, and we have read many in the last forty years. Our mortal brother once said, "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation." Psalms 119:99. Another says, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12. Who in our modern day of science and human invention can local-

ize and testify likewise? Echo answers, who? A few months ago while reading the Sunday School lesson in an arminian paper I ran across the following quotation, "Specific prayer is usually more effective" which was destitute of spiritual food for me at this time; but yet after all probably this phrase caused us to pray more earnestly, and seek God's face and infinite wisdom with more fervency, with a greater degree of persistence and zealousness. We are convinced beyond doubt that the specific and persistent prayer of faith and wisdom (good works in heart motive in God's sight) when accompanied with a broken heart and a contrite spirit from a "poor man" in the sight of God is always acceptable, and never at any time or place, regardless of human conditions or circumstances, whether favorable or otherwise, rejected by Almighty God the Father and Potter. Amen. Oh, my brethren we know this is so from a long time, prayerful study of the word, and the real experience.

Brother Dodson, the Spirit must have directed you to write the last clause of your letter to me nearly one year ago, Jan. 1949. Here it is. "I truly hope that our dear Lord will enable you to meditate profitably upon his precious word, and that he will guide you in the way you should go, and at last land you safe on Canaan's shore." He must have heard your cry, because He has enabled us to joyfully walk and talk with him the greater portion of the time since; because it was his will and time to cause our great human suffering to somewhat cease and enable us to glory in tribulation—boasting alone in the cross of Christ. Alleluiah.

In April 1941 the Father of lights came to us in a dream, or night vision, according to his written and preserved word while we were at a very low ebb both naturally and spiritually, (at our

wits end) and told us we had suffered more with his Son, Jesus, than any mortal then living on earth, His footstool. Three weeks ago the Father sent Elihu to me in same like manner, and spoke great, comforting words to us. Amen. Praise ye the Lord all ye people both small and great. Alleluiah. Read in Job, chapters 32 and 37.

In October 1912 it pleased the Lord to reveal our future profession to our grandma in this same way. This was before I had, or rather was given this divine urge to write and publish His eternal truth. (Mark 13:10.) This was two years before her last and greatest mortal promotion. She told me that the Lord had something good in future store for me. Whether naturally or spiritually, or both, he did not show her, but he made it plain to her that it meant me and no other; neither of her six sons and daughters, nor any of her other grandchildren. This warning from above, by this saintly mother in Israel at the age of sixty-five years here, has been a great comfort to us while at our many low ebbs during the last thirty-seven years. Now we are convinced that this dream meant both naturally and spiritually, for he has apparently doubled our portion as he did our afflicted brother of old, who probably suffered more or less. Who can tell? 2 Samuel 12:22. God alone and his divine only know. Now we have a little hope. (Job 42) Two mortal brothers who once despaired of their own life as we have often done in the past. O, my Lord! my Lord! For Thy great name and mercy help us to forget all this human cruelty and injustice displayed by our loved ones, and look to thee and put all our trust in thee. Amen.

Fully realizing at this age, sixty-one, and manifested divine saving grace, and justifying faith, that it cannot be

long until our prayers, apparently most earnest and numerous, which have so often been hindered here for some cause not fully made known unto us yet, will all be changed to praise, our hope which has often been dimmed by the cares and affairs of this life, will be converted into certainty, no more in pursuit and anticipation, but in the full realization and possession. Amen.

Our faith, which has some time flickered by the fiery darts and wiling arts of Satan, will be swallowed up into sight, no more to go in and out and to see and know in part, but to stay in the best of posture and to see him as he is, face to face, and to know as we are known. Alleluiah. Let all that hath breath praise God! Amen.

Our sufferings, which have been beyond human endurance for the last ten years a great portion of the time, save last year, praise God, will all be turned into glory and that forever and forever; and the cross which has been so heavy with us the greater portion of the time during our married life here of thirty-eight years save the last one, will be exchanged for the crown which will outshine the noonday sun.

Boasting alone in the cross the Lord's joy abounds in our heart tonight, apparently to the very human limit, and ever since our Father God sent Elihu to us, which is a true figure and type of Jesus Christ our all, three weeks ago with the eye and ear of faith, we can apparently see and hear the Lord's cargo coming heavily laden with all good things for us both naturally and spiritually, because we, like you and you my brother and sister, have learned obedience by the things which we have suffered. Also after so long a time we have learned to glory in tribulation because these two lessons are most vital and essential to a

well rounded successful Christian life here. Amen.

O, my sinner friends or brethren, all ye who fear God and are heavy laden have the invitation of Jesus to come unto him and rest in peace which far excels the peace of this world. May it please God to create that famine in our heart, as he did in the prodigal of old, enabling us to figure up the cost in dead earnest as he did and return back to our Father's house of plenty and to spare is our closing prayer. Let us all join in and sing the praise of God (not man) in the Spirit with his grace in our heart, making melody unto the Lord and not man. Surely, O surely we can sympathize with our sister Hannah tonight, whose prayer was heard and who lent her first son unto the Lord for all his life. To God be all honor, glory and praise for enabling us and constraining us to write these nine pages tonight as he has many thousand pages during the last thirty-five years here. Written, we now hope, in faith and wisdom we believe constrained by the Spirit, and we know in love and forgiveness. Good will to all our brethren world wide.

THOMAS HARRISON MCKENZIE

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are finding it very difficult to maintain our mailing list up to the point greatly to be desired. Our paper being over an hundred years old, we have to expect a heavy death rate among our subscribers, but we believe if our readers will be on the alert for NEW subscribers they can help us more than offset our losses.

We would again remind our Ministering brethren of our offer to pay them \$1. for each NEW subscription, for one year or more, they send us. We know many of them highly endorse the Signs of the Times, and if they will but make mention of the paper in their travels among their brethren and friends, a certain amount of new subscriptions will be obtained.

To other than Ministers we are offering FREE one copy of FRAGMENTS, a very excellent book containing a large selection of articles by the late

Elder Silas H. Durand, with 2 NEW subscriptions, or either one of the following books, JONES-RHODES debate, Elder Milford Hall's TWO WORLDS, or SHOWERS OF RAIN, containing the experience and many poems by our late Sister Flossie I. Faulkner with each single subscription for one year.

On the average it costs only twenty-five cents (one quarter) each month to have this excellent paper come into your home. From now until November many of you will be attending Associations, Union and other meetings, and you will be meeting many brethren and friends who should be taking the SIGNS. If you will tell them about the paper some of them will subscribe for it, and thus you will help to enlarge our circle of readers.

R. LESTER DODSON

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Western Primitive Baptist Association now in her 73rd annual session sends greetings to her sister Associations and to all orderly Primitive Baptists everywhere.

Dear brethren: We have been wonderfully blessed during another associational year in having the gospel preached to us in its purity, and being fed the precious heavenly manna, and may peace and unity abound in Zion until Jesus comes with all the heavenly host. May your ministers continue coming in demonstration of the spirit and love. May charity and forbearance ever be our guiding stars and each of us walk in the way that becometh orderly Primitive Baptists. Many improvements in our churches at Bethlehem, Hopeful, Ramah, New Hope, and within recent years new buildings constructed at Salem, Mt. Gilead, Wright's Creek, Old Friendship, Mt. Pleasant and now Ephesus for which we are thankful.

May each of us continue to look well to the welfare of our churches both naturally and spiritually. Pray for and visit us as often as you can, and especially in our next annual session at Wright's Creek in October 1950.

Adopted while in session Oct. 15, 1949.
(Elder) F. A. COLLINS, Moderator
(Elder) J. J. COLLINS, Clerk

A FEW WORDS OF THANKS

On January 17th we entered the hospital for what we understood at the time was to be more or less of a minor operation, but instead of one operation there were two, which were followed by some complications and several set backs. All in all, we had a very difficult time, so much so that at times our life was almost despaired of. After spending nearly six weeks in the hospital,

we were at home for three weeks, and then went to southern Florida for a rest and recuperation.

First and foremost of all, we desire to thank our kind and merciful heavenly Father for sparing our unprofitable life, for some purpose known to himself. We earnestly hope we may be enabled by his grace to show our deep gratitude by serving Him in sincerity and in truth.

Second, we wish to thank our many good brethren and friends, who were aware of our illness, for their prayers and many evidences of sympathy and love extended to us and our loved ones.

Last, but not least, we wish to express our most heartfelt thanks and sincere appreciation to our very able associate on the SIGNS' work for the very efficient manner in which he carried on the work alone. Aside from some correspondence requiring our personal attention, which was delayed because of our illness, we do not believe anything was neglected or suffered for attention. The fact that the paper was mailed out on the regular schedule in its usual good condition speaks volumes for his ability and faithfulness to the cause we all so much love. Again, we say, thanks.

R. LESTER DODSON

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

L. A. Perdue, Va., \$3; M. E. Welch, Tex., \$3; Mrs. L. M. Beebe, N. Y., \$25; Mrs. D. O. Yeisley, Ore., \$2; A friend, Ia., \$4; J. D. Hassell, Ala., \$1; Mrs. L. E. Ivey, Ga., \$2.75; E. & C. Redman, Ala., \$2; F. H. Richardson, Ia., \$17; Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala., \$4; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., \$2; Mrs. A. T. Jones, Mich., \$2.

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The Post Office Department will not forward second class mail. If there is the slightest change in the address the papers are returned to us and you may fail to receive your copy. If you anticipate a change of address please advise us as soon as possible and aid in getting your paper without delay.

ALSO

Please check the figures on the wrapper of your paper. They indicate the date your subscription expires. If it is in 1949 you will oblige us very much if you will renew your subscription now at \$3 for one year or \$5 for two years. We thank you in advance for your co-operation in these matters.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

MAY, 1950

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Rutherford, N. J.

"The devils also believe and tremble."

James 2:19

I have tried to write for many hours, weeks and months in vain. I have become so exhausted and nervous in the many attempts, that I am thoroughly convinced that I am just as dependent upon the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit to write as I am to preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God. I am making the attempt again with fear and trembling, trusting that God will be pleased to lead my mind into a fruitful field of thought, and give me the words to comfort, console and edify God's little children.

I am now reminded of a request made by P. L. Kenly of Roanoke, Va. to write upon James 2:19 especially the last part to wit: "The devils also believe and tremble." James did not say that the devils had faith. No place in the scriptures do we find any statement that would intimate that the devils trusted in God or were in possession of faith. We are forced to admit that the devils gave assent to the fact that there

is but one God, even to the acknowledging of Jesus—the Holy One of God—as we shall find when we consider certain scriptures. We would like to compare and contrast belief and faith to further clarify that expression of scripture.

Belief is the mental assent to a statement, proposition, or existing condition of things. Belief is simply an act of the understanding, but trust and faith are active moving principles of the mind. Belief does not extend beyond the assent of the mind, but trust and faith compel to action. Belief is speculative while faith and trust are operative. Belief is common to all religions, trust and faith are peculiar to those who believe in divine revelation and salvation by the grace of God. Theorists substitute belief for faith. I trust that the reader will be blessed to keep this in mind as we further meditate upon this expression of scripture.

Yes, the devils believe there is one God. They do not choose to believe this just because it is pleasing to them, but because that God exercises power over them. No man or devil can believe anything without evidence. God sets the bounds of the devil's maneuvers and they can go no farther. This is proven in the case of Job when the devil had to secure permission from God each time he chose to hurt Job. Each time the devil was told how far he could go and where he must stop. The devil was forced to believe that he was absolutely controlled by Almighty God. It could not be said of the devil that some people proclaim that he believes in God because their devil has free-will sailing and is so powerful that even though God is trying to save everybody, the devil will be victorious in getting the largest number. A devil with that kind of power could not believe in God. Remember that James says, "The devils

also believe and tremble.”

I want to call your attention to the eighth chapter of the gospel according to Matt. 29, “And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” The devils were forced to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. They cried out unto him, fully aware of his power over them. Let us consider their question, “What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God.” They had nothing indeed to do with him. They had no interest in his grace, blood or righteousness. He was no Savior and Redeemer for them. But contrary to this they realized that he had to do with them. They trembled at his presence and knew they would have to obey his all commanding voice, though terribly against their wills. They knew he had power to cast them out, “so the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.” Jesus bade them go and they went into the herd of swine. Even Jesus exercised power over the devils to the extent that his word returned not unto him void, but accomplished that which he pleased, and it prospered in the thing whereto he sent it. It was astonishing to the observers to see a character who exercised such power and authority that he could command the unclean spirits to come out of men and they would come out.

Let us now notice Acts 19:15, “And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?” Paul had been disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years. During this long time both Jews and Greeks were privileged to hear the word of the Lord. God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul in healing diseases and casting out evil spirits. This became so well known that even

exorcists attempted to imitate. Some vagabond Jews, who were exorcists, attempted to imitate Paul and Jesus in casting out evil spirits. They would say to the evil spirits, “We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.” These evil spirits recognized this false claim of power as evidenced in their statement and question. “Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?” They knew that Jesus had the power to cast them out because he had done so in many instances. It was an intimate knowledge because they had heard his command and had been forced to obey him. They had come in direct contact with him in the demonstration of his power over them. They had also come in direct contact with Paul and he had commanded them to depart from individuals and they were forced to obey his command. They knew Paul to be a servant of the Lord because he was given power over them. The question, “Who are Ye?” suggests that they did not believe that these vagabond Jews were given this power over them. The evil spirits proved that their surmise was true when they that were possessed of the evil spirits pounced upon these Jews, overcame them, and were victorious over them so that these exorcists had to flee wounded and naked. I am of the opinion that those who are possessed of these evil spirits to-day may and do fight among themselves, but they are made to tremble when they come into contact with the true servants of the all powerful God. The devil is as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8) He is made to know that some he cannot devour. Those who resist the devil are empowered to do so by Almighty God, and the consequence is that the devils flee from them. (James 4:7) It is indeed comforting and consoling to me to think that the devils are subject

to the power of God and can do no more than what my Father pleases. They must bow to him and tremble.

May we now consider the subject under discussion by James when he made this statement, "The devils also believe and tremble." He was treating upon the subject of the perfect faith. He was exposing the folly of those who boast of faith without works. He was insisting that true faith was made perfect by works. He makes the statement in James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Not only are works without faith dead works, but it is just as true also, that faith without works is a dead faith. The faith that is a gift of God is a living faith. It is not that works is the life of faith, but that good works is the second act necessarily flowing from the life of faith. It is not that we exercise faith by our works, but that faith exercises us unto the performing of good works. It is a vain boaster who boasts of his faith in God and by his works deny him. The faith that God gives is not dead, but produces good works. Faith is to works as cause is to effect.

James uses two characters to prove that works accompany faith. He cited the works of Abraham and of Rahab, the harlot; and asks if they were not justified by works. As you recall, Paul used these same two characters in his treatise on faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. He is contending that faith prompted them to do these things. Paul says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This substance and evidence comes only from God as a gift to his children. There are no contradictions in the writings of James and Paul concerning the subject of faith and works. We would like to examine Eph. 2 8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through

faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Salvation, both for time and in eternity, is the gift of God. Through his mercy, goodness and gifts we are saved here in time. This is proved by the tense of the verb used in the expression, "By grace *are* ye saved." We are saved *through faith*, and that not of ourselves. This faith is not to be obtained through our merits. It is not as a result of any good works of ours, but it is the gift of God. It is not an offer or proposition conditional upon any acts of man, but it is the gift of God. "Not of works lest any man should boast." Boasting is excluded. No man can rightly glory in himself nor boast of his goodness. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." God is the workman, we are his workmanship; God is the creator, we are the creatures. "Unto good works"—not by good works. It is not that good works beget faith, but faith begets good works. It is by the grace of God that we are enabled to walk godly in this present world. "Which God hath before *ordained* that we should walk in them." God said through one of his prophets, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." If this be true, surely, if he ordains something it will be just that way. We find the word "ordained" as being rendered "prepared" when we consult the marginal reference. I believe God prepares his people to walk in good works by working in them. He works in them "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The good works are just as certain as is the faith, and is as much the gift of God as is the faith. "Being confident of this very thing, that he

which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Your walk and conversation will be godly in this world. We conclude that James and Paul contended that faith and good works were characteristic of God's little children.

A child of God need not boast of his faith and love for these are made manifest in his deeds. He feels little, insignificant and unworthy, and much of the time wonders whether or not he be in possession of this faith and love. If you watch his walk and listen to his conversation, you will find him doing good deeds for his fellowman, and preferring others above himself. There is a change wrought upon one in which it has pleased God to implant this faith and love. It affects his actions and stimulates his conversation. His desires are to obey the commands of Jesus Christ, do the will of God and to praise him from whence all blessings come. Because of the infirmities of the flesh—the thorns that buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure—he is not able to do the things that he would. This forces him to be constantly in prayer to Almighty God to be merciful unto his unrighteousness and to forgive him of his sins. This character boasts not of his faith nor of his works. Paul exposed the vanity of those who boasted of their works. James called those who boasted of their faith "vain men." We see then that boasting either of faith or works would be erroneous, and do not characterize God's little children.

May God grant us this living faith and enable us by his grace to walk worthy in good works. May he bless us to give him the praise for it all. May we look forward and press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus when we shall be called from this low ground of sin and

sorrow up into that heavenly realm where and when we shall perfectly praise him in that endless eternity. May he add his blessings to this writing as edifying to the household of faith. Amen.

E. J. L.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13.

The following is a portion of the first paragraph of a letter from a sister in Texas: "Dear Brother Dodson—For some time it has been in my mind to write on the subject of Godly fear, or the fear of God so often referred to in the Bible. What is meant by the fear of God, what are the fruits of it, and who possesses it?"

Our sister writes at some length on this subject, quoting many scriptures pertaining to it, and we would like to publish her letter, but she says among her many fears is the one to have her letter appear in print. From the various scriptural references she has made we have chosen Ecclesiastes 12:13 as a basis for such comment as we may make.

Some of our English words have different meanings, and sometimes they mean just the opposite in one place to what they do in another. To illustrate what we mean we will quote the two following definitions of the word *fear*: (1) Fidelity to another; loyalty; faithfulness; (2) A painful emotion or passion excited by an expectation of evil, or the apprehension of danger." We would pause here to say that we do not believe that God's people serve him for fear of being sent to an everlasting hell, but rather they love him because he has delivered them from hell, or destruction. It will be readily agreed that there is a vast difference between the two foregoing definitions of the word

fear; therefore we must seek from the pages of Holy Writ to determine what is intended to be conveyed by the fear of God. There can certainly be no question but what the children of our heavenly King should show their fidelity, loyalty and faithfulness to him, and we will endeavor to make our answers to our sister's questions conform to the scriptures of eternal truth. She asks, "What is meant by it (the fear of God), what are the fruits of it, and who possesses it?" It would seem to us that the language of Solomon, quoted above, is pertinent and applicable to the subject. He says, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." He began the book of Ecclesiastes, consisting of twelve chapters, by stamping, "vanity of vanities; all is vanity" upon the whole of the natural creation, and especially the works of his own hands, the like of which no other human being could ever begin to equal. After having explored the realm of human endeavor, he again returns in the closing chapter of the book to his original appraisal, by way of emphasis, that "vanity of vanities*****all is vanity." Realizing as he did that vain is the help of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, he gives us the sum and substance of all that both he and others had written, or that might be written in the future, by saying: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." How all-embracing this is! There is nothing omitted or left out. Here the chapter and book comes to an end, and nothing can be added to it or taken from it. The words "Selah" or "finis" might well be written to seal the finality of the matter. "Fear God, and keep his commandments" embraces all of what might be called true religion:

all the graces and fruits of the Spirit are involved here. Therefore, if we have any real love or reverence for God; if we have any faith in him and his Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, or any hope of life eternal by and through him; if we know anything of humbling ourselves in an holy contrition of heart before him and repenting in dust and ashes; any longing for mercy which endureth forever; any desire for reconciliation to his holy and divine will, in our trials and tribulations, it is because God has wrought his work of grace in our hearts. It seems to us that herein is to be found, in part at least, what is meant by the fear of God, and the fruits of it, and surely none but the subjects of his grace can know anything about or possess it. One of the inspired Apostles declared, "For we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," which is one of the best possible evidences we could have of being one of that highly favored number, but even here we often question whether we love the brethren with a pure heart, fervently, or not. The words of the poet found in Hymn 1033, Beebe's Collection, often are presented to our mind, and we feel to quote them here for the benefit of our readers:

'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?

If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name.

Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I knew a Saviour's love?

When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Fill'd with unbelief and sin,

Can I deem myself a child?

If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mix'd with all I do:
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?

Yet I mourn my stubborn will,
Find my sin a grief and thrall:
Should I grieve for what I feel,
If I did not love at all?

Could I joy his saints to meet,
Choose the ways I once abhorr'd,
Find, at times, the promise sweet,
If I did not love the Lord?

Lord, decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art thy people's Sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun.

Let me love thee more and more,
If I love at all, I pray:
If I have not loved before,
Help me to begin to-day.

What a wonderful conclusion the man of wisdom (Solomon) had reached when he said, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man!" We cannot in truth know what our real duty to God is until he has illuminated our souls with the knowledge of his glory as it appears in the face, or person, of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Then, and not 'till then, do we feel to fall prostrate in the dust before him, desiring to know what he will have us do. We are then taught that the first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And Jesus said the second is like unto it. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." We are troubled like Paul, who said, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I

would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." We find, as he said, a law, that when we would do good, evil is present with us, nevertheless, we hope we can truly say that we delight in the law of God after the inward man. By faith, we hope we can glory in the cross of Christ, and that the law which is in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and which brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, is what makes us cry out. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" If we had no knowledge of our sinful condition, we would never thank God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is only in his light that we see light. John says, "In him was life: and the life was the light of men." This is that true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and we truly hope that it is because we have this light that we can bear witness with Solomon, when he spake concerning the things of this world, saying, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity," and he also declared in substance that all is vexation of spirit, and there is no profit under the sun. We have an experimental knowledge of these things when we are made to know that "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." God searches the hearts of his people and they realize that he is acquainted with all their ways, and that there is no searching of his understanding. David said, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest 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. Such

knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Wonderful, indeed, are God's ways. His footsteps are in the sea, His path we cannot trace, nor comprehend the mystery, of his unbounded grace.

We have given such as we trust has been given to us, and we hope it is all in the name of Jesus, desiring that his name alone shall have all the glory and the praise, both now and for-evermore. Amen.

R. L. D.

MEMORIALS

Little Flock Church was thrown into deep grief and mourning Nov. 21, 1949 when our beloved Pastor, Elder W. N. Green, peacefully passed away after a short illness at his home in Altus, Okla. Words are inadequate to express the sorrow caused by the passing of this saintly soldier of the cross. He was widely known and loved among the Primitive Baptists of the South, having traveled among them extensively, to whom the news of his death was sad indeed. Most of all he is missed by his home church at Altus (Little Flock Church) whom he had served so long, so faithfully and so well. At the time of his death he was serving three churches as Pastor. Amarillo, Texas, Mangum and Altus in Oklahoma. In Nov. he filled his appointment at Amarillo and Altus and was preparing to go to his appointment at Mangum when he became ill on Saturday and passed away the following Monday, very suddenly and peacefully with only his wife and daughter, Sister Willie Foster, at his bedside.

Elder Green was born Sept. 23, 1866 in Blunt Co., Ala. He was 83 years old. He is survived by his widow, one son, C. D. Green, Oklahoma City, three daughters, Mrs. Ethel Champeau, Norman, Okla., Mrs. L. B. Davis, Littlefield, Tex., and Mrs. M. R. Foster, Oklahoma City; also eleven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. His first marriage was to Miss Mary Adaline Tate, the mother of his children. After her death he

married Mrs. Kittie Hobbs who survives him.

He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Frederick, Okla., Aug. 24, 1912, and was baptized the next day by Elder J. A. Rutledge and began preaching the same day. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in Jan. 1915. The Presbytery consisting of Elders J. A. Campbell, J. D. Moody and L. E. Skinner, Deacons G. H. Tatum and S. H. Houk. He was a wonderful exponent of the gospel, rightly dividing the word of truth, and always preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified. He had a lovely personality and we loved to have him and his sweet and gracious wife visit us in our homes. Primitive Baptists loved to visit them in their home and always received a gracious welcome. They never seemed happier than when surrounded by their church members and friends where we were wont to go after meeting on Sundays. He was a good singer and always led the singing, never missing an appointment if physically able to go.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La., and Elder C. E. Turner, Amarillo, Tex. at the Tims Funeral Home after which his body was laid to rest in the Altus Cemetery.

RESOLVED, that this tribute to his memory be made a part of our church records, a copy be sent to his bereaved widow and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Also be it

RESOLVED, that Little Flock Church extend heartfelt sympathy to his sorrowing family. Done by order of Little Flock Church while in conference Dec. 11, 1949 at Altus, Okla.

(Elder) C. E. TURNER, Moderator
(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Church Clerk

SISTER MARY ANN SHEPHERD MARSHALL was born Feb. 27, 1862 in Pittsylvania Co., Va., and died Sept. 12, 1949, making her stay on earth 87 years. She was married to James H. Shelton, Dec. 17, 1878. To this union were born nine children, five girls and four boys. She was a member of Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church for fifty years or more. She was faithful in attendance as long as her health permitted and will be missed among us. Our sympathy goes out to her bereaved family. Her husband died in 1920.

She had been almost an invalid for several years. Her son Henry and wife, who lived with her, were faithful to care for her and give her every possible attention to make her comfortable. Be it

RESOLVED, first, that we bow in humble submission to Him who doeth his will. Second, be it

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, to *Zion's Landmark*,

and a copy to the family. Done by order of the church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in Jan. 1950.

DEACON ERNEST EVANS, Acting Mod,
ALBERT H. COX, Clerk

OBITUARIES

Our Sister in Christ, MINERVA JANE (PAGE) HAMMOND, wife of Elder J. C. Hammond, departed this life Nov. 5, 1949, aged 75 years, 6 months and 3 days. She was stricken with pneumonia fever and lived less than a week after being stricken. For several weeks prior to her death she had been at the home of a son (whose wife had recently died) waiting upon and caring for the grandchildren. The doctor in attendance thought she was doing well, but at an early hour on Saturday, Nov. 5 her spirit took its flight. Her passing was quiet and without a struggle. She was able to attend preaching services at Kelly's Creek community church in Kanawha Co., W. Va., near their old home on the fifth Sunday in Oct. The next Saturday morning she quietly fell asleep in Jesus. Her husband, Elder J. C. Hammond, fills an appointment at the church named above every fifth Sunday.

She leaves to mourn, her dear husband, four sons, Howard, Delbert, Zelan and Leonard; three daughters, Mrs. Dessa Wolfenbarger, Mrs. Bessie Sigmon and Miss Lizzie Hammond; two foster daughters, Mrs. Mary Maddox, and Mrs. Elma Halstead; thirty-two grandchildren, three great-grandchildren; four brothers, Cassolow, Solomon, Grover and Bushrod Page; two sisters, Ruanna Martin and Mrs. Lucy Lewis; and many near relatives and friends. I feel my weakness very much indeed in attempting to write this notice, I do not have complete statistics at hand. However, at the request of our dear brother and fellow laborer, Elder J. C. Hammond, we will do the very best we can if the Lord wills.

She was united in marriage to J. C. Hammond, Jan. 1, 1903. Their union was blessed of the Lord, and it can truly be said of Sister Hammond that she was a faithful helpmeet, a kind and tender mother, a neighbor and mother in the neighborhood. She had a quiet, unassuming personality and was never given to speak ill of any one. The character and graces of this dear, faithful sister was evidence that she had meekly learned of Jesus who is meek and lowly of heart. Sister Hammond and her husband were baptized the same day into the fellowship of the Hopewell Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Kanawha Co., W. Va. by the late Elder J. W. McClanahan, in Nov. 1916. Her experience and convictions were deep, and while she was not blessed to speak her convictions to so great an extent yet it was a

heart matter with her. Her delight was in the assembly of the saints, in the worship of her Redeemer God. She had been afflicted for years, her condition of health and living a considerable distance from the church hindered her from filling her seat, but she was always so glad when she could be present at the meetings. In the labor of the ministry Elder Hammond was away from home much of the time. She was faithful and uncompaining in attending the affairs of the home. Much more could be said about the service and virtues of our dear sister. The church, the neighborhood as well as the family has sustained a great loss, but we grieve not as those who have no hope. We believe that for her to die was gain.

The writer was called to conduct her funeral services in the Community church-house at Kelly's Creek, Nov. 8, reading from Job 2:10 and trying in weakness to preach salvation by grace to the sorrowing concourse of relatives, brethren and friends. The floral offerings spoke of the high esteem in which she was held. She was laid away in the family burying ground near the old home. May God comfort the bereaved family is our prayer for Jesus sake. Written by request.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

Our dear sister in Christ, MRS. ESTELLE HOLLOWAY HASTINGS, was born near Pittsville, Md. Sept. 11, 1866, and departed this life Nov. 11, 1949 at the age of 83 years and 2 months. She was the daughter of the late Daniel and Margaret Holloway. After completing her education she taught school near Delmar, Del., and later was married to Minus F. Hastings, Dec. 26, 1888 by Elder T. M. Poulson. She united with the Little Creek Church and was baptized in Sept. 1896 by Elder A. B. Francis. There were none more faithful to the church than she and she is greatly missed. All who knew her loved her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Her husband passed away in 1938.

She was living in Delmar at the time of her passing and left two sons, Francis of Ferndale, Wash., and James of Nashua, N. H.; five grandchildren; also one sister, Mrs. C. L. Dickerson, Snow Hill, Md. and one brother, John L. Holloway, Newark, Md.

During her last illness her neice, Miss Essie Bratten, took care of her in accordance with her request before she became ill. Her funeral was conducted by the writer in the home of one of her dear friends, Mrs. Elizabeth Culver, Delmar, Del., and her body interred by the side of her husband in the Little Creek burying ground.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

After an illness of several months duration of chronic myocarditis associated with complications, MRS. RUTH BEARD ADDIS, wife of H. Lester Addis of Glenside, Pa., died at their home in that place, Dec. 2, 1949. All that medical science could do, all that skillful nursing could accomplish, all that the faithful and tender ministrations of her husband and sister-in-law, Miss Martha Addis, could provide were of no permanent avail and she passed peacefully away. The immediate surviving relatives and friends are her husband and sister-in-law of Glenside, Pa.; one son, Laird C. Addis of Iowa City, Ia.; a brother-in-law, Walter Addis, Salisbury, Md., and a sister-in-law, Mrs. Fred Beard, Bath, N. Y.

Mrs. Addis was a daughter of James C. and Waitie Vail Beard of New York City and was born March 15, 1886. She received the greater part of her education in New York City. She was a lady of marked intellectual ability with high ideals, and possessed a beautiful character and pleasing personality. In 1912 she was united in marriage to H. Lester Addis of which union one son was born. She was an accomplished musician and her services were often in demand. Her ambition, accomplishments and conscientious devotion to her work appealed to all with whom she came in contact and won her many friends. For a time she was an associate editor of Romance Magazine, and later held a secretarial position in the employ of Mrs. William B. Meloney who was a noted contributor to magazines and at one time editor of the Sunday magazine section of the New York Herald Tribune. After leaving the services of Mrs. Meloney she served for a time in the editorial department of the Steuben Courier of Bath, N. Y. Her virtues and noble qualities are widely known and we believe that for her to depart this earthly life is to be present with the Lord.

The funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Southampton Old School Baptist meeting-house Dec. 5. Interment in the cemetery at that place.

ALSO

On Thursday, Jan. 5, 1950 BROTHER GEORGE ROBBERTS of Halcott, N. Y. passed away at his home there after a lingering illness. He had received hospitalization at Margaretville Hospital, but all that medical science or skillful nursing could accomplish could not check the disease that terminated in his death. He was 81 years old and had been a member of the Old School Baptist church 63 years, having united in England. He is survived by his wife; two sons, Harold of New Kingston, N. Y., and Allen of Halcott; one daughter, Mrs. Leslie Sanford, Davenport Center, N. Y.

Brother Robberts and his wife came to America in 1907 and purchased a farm in the Township of Halcott in Greene Co., N. Y. He was an in-

dustrious man, noted for his honesty, upright living and neighborly qualities. A noble husband, kind father and a useful citizen were combined in his exemplary life. He awaited his end with unshaken faith in the saving grace of his Lord.

The funeral services were held at Halcott, Jan. 8, 1950, the writer officiating. Interment in the Halcott Cemetery.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

SPECIAL MEETING

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, May 31 and June 1, 1950. Services will commence at 10:30 D. S. time on Wednesday. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order and all interested friends are cordially invited. All arriving Tuesday should come first to the home of Mrs. Thomas Darby, 192 Main Street, Flemington, N. J. Since we shall make every effort to provide for your comfort while with us, we will appreciate it, where possible, if you will advise the writer in advance the time of your expected arrival. Information, if desired, will be given you concerning the best transportation facilities for reaching Flemington.

47½ Park Avenue GERTRUDE PYATT
Flemington, New Jersey. Acting Church Clerk

Meetings are scheduled to be held on the fourth Sundays in each month, beginning with April and through November, with the Warwick Church, Warwick, N. Y. at 10:30 a.m., and in Middletown, N. Y., in the meeting-house, corner Roberts and Cottage Sts., at 2:00 in the afternoon. Those interested will be welcomed. R. LESTER DODSON.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the **Signs of the Times** at the following prices: 1 copy 25 cents; 3 copies 75 cents; 6 copies \$1.50; 12 copies \$3.00. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118

RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1950

No. 6

CORRESPONDENCE

Denton, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I would like to give my ideas on the resurrection of the dead if it be the good Lord's will to bless me with words to express my thoughts on this most important subject. I do not have any thought of destroying the ideas of any who may disagree with me, neither do I expect to convert any one to my way of thinking. My only object is to leave on record just how I stand on this subject so my brethren and friends and my children may know what I believe in regard to the subject when I am gone. I sincerely hope that all the brethren who may disagree with me will not cease to have fellowship for me. I do not desire to impose my ideas on any one who has different views as I may be wrong, and if so I earnestly pray that God will show me and set me right. I am only human and subject to error and know I do err in many things.

As a starting point I will quote Job 14:14, "If a man die, shall he live again?" This is one of the most important subjects that ever occupied the mind of mankind from his formation since he entered into form on the earth—shall he live again after he has returned to the dust? We will, if the Lord wills, consider first some things Job says, and Job is talking about the man that is born of a woman, not about a spirit or soul or some mystical part of man, but about the man that was

formed of the dust of the ground. He begins this 14th chapter by saying, "Man that is born of a woman, is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me unto judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; Turn from him, that he may rest, till he accomplish, as an hireling his day." Then Job comes to the resurrection and says, "For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!" Job 14: 1-13. Then he says, "If a man die, he shall live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my

change come." Not exchange, if it is not this man that is born of a woman that is raised then it would be an exchange instead of a change. So Job goes on and says, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:25-27. Notice this, Job himself not something about him, but he himself should see with his own eyes. I am impressed to believe that Job arose when our blessed Lord arose from Joseph's new tomb, and saw Christ on the earth. Our blessed Savior, in speaking through Isaiah, the prophet, says, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26:19. If we will turn to Matt. 27:52 there we will find this prophecy fulfilled. It says, "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." How could language be plainer? It seems to me that this scripture should be enough, even if there was nothing more said about the raising of the body of the saints in the whole Bible, for the words were spoken by the inspiration of God and I believe they mean just what they say. If language has nothing to do with the Scriptures how would we know just what any of them mean, and if any portion of holy writ is not true would the whole of them be any better? Nevertheless we will continue to consider some more of them for there is an abundance of scripture that treats on this subject. I believe

the bodies of those saints came up in that resurrection as much as I believe Christ's body arose from the tomb. We would have as much reason to doubt one as the other, but we do not believe they came up a natural body as they went down, neither do we believe Christ's body was a natural body when he arose from the tomb. There seemed to be such a change in it that his apostles, who had been with him before his resurrection, did not know him when he appeared. He arose with a spiritual body which could appear among them, even into the room with the doors being shut. He appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, and demonstrated to them the resurrection of his body. "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it and did eat before them." Luke 24:36-43.

He told them to handle him and see that it is I myself, so I firmly believe that it is I myself that will be raised from the dust, not just something about me. It was Adam, the man, that was formed of the dust of the ground that was placed in the garden of Eden; it was he that God talked with there and not a spirit; it was he that God gave the law to; it was he that violated the law; it was he that was driven out of

the garden; it was he that was alienated from God by transgression; it was he and not a spirit that the sentence of death was passed on saying, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." So he is the one that dies and not a spirit. If there is any scriptural evidence anywhere in the holy Bible that anything dies and goes into the grave but the body I have no knowledge of it. So if it is not the body that is to be raised from the grave I do not know how there would be any resurrection. What else is there to be raised? It was the man that was sentenced to return to the dust, and not just a spirit or something about him. The spirit returns to God who gave it. As the preacher says in Eccl. 12:5-7, "And desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." We see from this scripture that nothing returns to the dust, or earth, but that which was taken from the earth. That spirit or soul that breathed into man's nostrils did not come from the earth or dust, neither does it return to the dust, but to God who gave it, so then there is nothing to be brought up from the dust but the man. Remember that God called him a man after he had formed him, even before he had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and this is the same man that Job had under consideration and says if he die shall he live again. We will answer Job by the words of the prophet which we have already quoted above, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for

thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Daniel says, "Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12:1-2. A resurrection means a raising up or a revival of that which has visibly perished or died, and if there is anything else but the man or body that dies I do not know what it is. The Scriptures teach throughout that it is the dead that are to be raised. It seems that in the days of the apostle Paul there were some in the church that did not believe in the resurrection of the body; they seemed to think it was a soul or spirit, or some germ of life that was resurrected, so Paul begins by saying, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. (Is this not true indeed.) But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits;

afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." 1 Cor. 15:12-23. Notice he says that every man shall be made alive in his own order, if he fall the servant or seed of Satan he will be made alive in that same order, or if he falls clothed with the righteousness of Christ he will be made alive in that order as the preacher says, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Eccl. 11:3.

We notice that the tree has two directions to fall, one is upward, the other is downward, in opposite directions. In the place in which it falls, whether in the place of the wicked or in the place of the righteous, in that same order it will be raised up. Paul continues in this 15th chapter of 1 Cor. saying, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." The grain of wheat or corn which we plant in the earth does not come back the same grain that was planted, but comes up the same one changed in form or in body. So is the resurrection, it goes down a natural body, it comes up a spiritual body. It is the same natural body that went down that is made spiritual. It is like the water which Christ made wine. It does not say that he made wine out of the water, but he made the water wine; and the rib which God took from Adam made he a woman, that is he made the rib a woman, not a woman out of the rib. So as I understand it the natural body is made spiritual in the resurrection, made like Christ's glorious body. Paul says, "For

our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:20-21. Notice how he says this, who shall change our vile body (not exchange it for the body of Christ as some may think) that it (notice the it meaning the vile body which he is talking about) may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." We would like to notice the "his" here. As we understand it the "his" does not mean that he will give every seed Christ's body, as some also may think, because to take it that way would conflict with many other scriptures, even the several passages we have used above. We would not want to say that he gave the seed of Satan his body. We will consider some other scripture which is used under similar terms. In Matt. 12:33 we find, in speaking of the fruit of the tree, it reads, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." You would not want to say that Christ's fruit was corrupt would you? So if this *his* here means the tree, the above *his* means the seed because it is used under the same terms. We will pass on to 1 Cor. 15:49, "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." An image is a likeness of a thing. We are bearing the likeness of Adam's body here, but not Adam's individual body for it passed on thousands of years ago, but when we are raised from the dead we will be raised or made in the image of the heavenly like the body of our blessed

Savior. As Paul says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What more could we desire? Is that not enough? It is we ourselves that shall be made like him, not just something about us. So Paul continues by saying, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." No, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom because this kingdom is spiritual, and nature will not go beyond the grave; nature and all things that pertain to nature will cease at the grave. We will be made spiritual in the resurrection, and our body adopted by the spirit of adoption. As the apostle says, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:21-23. He continues in 1 Cor. 15:51-55, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy vic-

tory." At this time all nature ceases, all our natural affections and knowledge will be no more. We love our children here, our father, mother, brothers, sisters and friends. Nature would love to think that they would meet them again in the heaven beyond and know them there as they know them here, but no, all natural relations cease at death. They will not be our children there, neither our father nor mother but will be all one in Christ. The question was asked of Christ regarding the seven brothers who married the same woman, whose wife would she be in the resurrection? "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." So do we err when we think we will know our natural friends there as we know them here. Christ continues by saying, "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Matt. 22:29-30. So we will all be alike there, there will be no infants, neither aged ones, no crippled ones, no deformed ones, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (Luke 20:35-36) We will know only the one Father there who is the spiritual Father of us all. We will all be his spiritual children being neither male nor female, but all one in our blessed Savior. I once saw in a dream or vision the blessed Savior come in his glory. I heard the cry, the Savior cometh and the saints taken up in the cloud of his glory, and heard the angry cries of the wicked as we were taken up from the earth. It seemed that we sailed around the throne of God in

space, and all sang praises to his great name. We could only see the foundation of the throne which he sat on. We could not look upon his person because of his greatness. It was joy unspeakable. I am not able to describe the glory that I saw I am too weak. I cannot speak more. I hope I have not written anything that will be offensive to any one. It seems that my heart will melt, and my eyes wash away in tears. May God bless you all . H. L. ROGERS

353 Dufferin Ave., London, Ont., Canada

DEAR ELDER DODSON: For some time I seem to have had an urge to write you. I trust it is of the Lord that he may give me words to praise his holy name. I especially enjoyed your editorial on "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." There was much sweetness in it for me. Yes Paul wrote, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.*****He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." How true after years of experience we are made to know in our flesh dwells no good thing, and that all we are and can hope to be is by grace and grace alone.

"If I must sing, I'll sing of grace
Which raised me from the fall,
And led me to a hiding place,
Jesus, my Lord, my all."

I was reading in some old *Signs* and read some articles written by Sister

Bonnie Chick and Sister Ruth Keene Spitler. They were brought into the church about the time I was. I trust they have ever felt the nearness of their Lord and Savior. If once his child always his child. He will never leave or forsake us. Sometimes he hides his smiling face, but he always tenderly cares for and keeps his little children. Oh, to be kept by the power of God unto salvation.

A few months ago I was feeling depressed and forsaken, and as the sorrow alone upon the housetop, when the words came to me with power and sweetness, "A child of the King." I was made to rest and rejoice that the promise was to me. So it has been through all this wilderness journey. We get a little here and a little there, a sweet foretaste of heaven. We have no continuing city here, but we seek one to come whose builder and maker is God. As the years pass swiftly by we will soon reach our desired haven. To be with Jesus and be like him has been my hope for over forty years.

I am still a little child leaning upon my Beloved. Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to his cross I cling, and oh, so weak, I need him every hour. Keep my lips from speaking guile for I know I am as prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. We are told to pray without ceasing, but I find I do not know what to pray for. He knows my every need. I want charity. There seems to be a crying need within but is it of the Lord?

When I was a young member I wanted patience, not 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. Let us rejoice and be glad that we have such a wonderful

Savior. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." When he gives us peace we shall have it, and his banner over us is love. "Father, we'll rest in thy love." Humbly before thy face I fall, Jesus, my Lord, my life, my all.

Dear Elder Dodson, may the Lord's richest blessings abound toward you and keep you, and may you feel that underneath are his everlasting arms. Yours in a precious hope.

(Miss) LOLLIE MAY CAMPBELL

Redwood, Va.

RUFUS BROWN, DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER BROWN IN A PRECIOUS HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL BEYOND THE GRAVE: I desire to write you both a few thoughts pertaining to eternal things if the Lord wills it so, if not I cannot. I am still somewhat encouraged about the baptizing and good meeting at Cross Roads. I feel those things are a God sent blessing to us. What a sweet consolation it is to see, meet and greet those dear little lambs that God is leading out of the lonely wilderness into his true shepherd fold, where they shall not want. He leadeth them beside the still water: he maketh them to lie down in green pastures, he restoreth their souls: surely goodness and mercy has followed them all the days of their life, and they shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Christ is our surety and security, mediator and intercessor for all things if we be not deceived. We are truly in the embrace of God's everlasting covenant of grace, love and mercy. All things are ours, all things work together for our good who are the called according to God's purpose.

Dear kindred in the Lord, I hope I have a little experience in these sacred things. If so, when his dear little children are regenerated, born again, then

they have been brought out of darkness (a strange land, the Egyptian bondage—in short the bottomless pits of hell) into Christ's marvelous light. In a feeling sense we have been turned right around and set in opposite directions. Christ took away their hard and stony heart and gave them a heart of flesh. His operation in their heart has made them a new creature; old things have passed away and all things have become new; he puts his laws in their heart and in their mind he will write them, which are things we hope we have felt, tasted and handled with our own hands. Things that are gracious to our soul; things that are alive forevermore which is a true and living testimony indelibly wrought or written in the heart (not the head) of Christ's little children, chosen elect bride, which was chosen in his eternal covenant of grace before the foundation of the world. His bride in a spiritual sense stands holy and without blame before God in love. To him there is perfection and beauty in her. He calls her my love, my dove. She is the choicest one of her mother; she is the only one of her that bear her. I believe this little bride is that innumerable company that John saw coming up out of great tribulation, whose robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and made pure, white and clean. I believe by revelation, the revealed knowledge of God, that John saw the entire church of God in her glorified state, pure and undefiled as though she was adorned ready to meet the Lord in the air, when I believe Christ will say to her, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." These promises are to God's faithful ones.

Dear brother and sister, I do not doubt the Lord's predestinated pur-

poses in all things in both heaven and earth; his electing love and distinguishing grace. His covenant bride is rich in mercy and saving grace. He has prepared a rich hidden treasure for his lovely bride, it is too pure for any unclean thing to enter there; it is ordered in all things and sure. Dear kindred, to doubt the doctrine the Primitive Baptists stand for it seems would be to doubt all things. There is no question about this doctrine being that which the apostles taught. It is the true doctrine beyond all doubt; it has stood a true righteous test from the ancients of eternity; it will live and last forever; it has penetrated the heart of all true believers from righteous Abel on down through all ages of time for it is the doctrine of God our Savior. I am well persuaded that this vital theme never has, can or will be assailed. All of the opposing powers of hell can never frustrate God's plans, purpose or power. The powers that be are ordained of God. Dear ones, I truly believe that God in his sovereign and eternal decrees, rules and looks upon all things as though they were complete from the beginning of time. In his mind and purpose they were complete in him, fixed and finished. He is Lord of lords and King of kings. I believe God fixed and set the bounds of our habitation both by nature and by grace as the case may be, and it is final and no changes are to be made. By him all things consist so what is there that God cannot do, (lying and sin excepted) and what is there that we can do? We poor, little, weak, vile, sinful, corruptible, finite creatures of ourselves can do nothing. We try to do many things, but we find ourselves full of mistakes and failures. We are nothing, yea, less than nothing. We are no more than filthy rags. Man in his best estate is nothing but vanity. "It is not

in man that walketh to direct his steps." By God's purpose and command we were born into the world to live all of our appointed days, and then go hence and be no more. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." We cannot find where any good thing has ever dwelled in man since the fall of man. They are evil continually; they are as prone to evil as the sparks are to ascend upward. So it is by the power and purpose of God that we have our carnal and earthly existence, and if we have spiritual relation with God and Christ it is by his regenerating power, saving grace, love and mercy that we exist in him and are what we are. He says, "Without me ye can do nothing." If not deceived I hope I have witnessed, felt and truly experienced these things. I know I have a great experience in sin, and I truly hope, and sometimes believe, that I have an humble experience of grace which yet keeps me living in doubts, fears and hope. Many times in sadness and fear I wonder if there is a true and living God. If so why am I so barren as to feel that surely I have been deceived in all of these precious blessings that I have long hoped for. Once in a while there seems to spring up a little ray of light that causes a flaming expansion of love in my breast, that causes my heart to swell and leap for joy with unbounded praises of love, peace, joy and sweet adoration for, and to, my dear Redeemer God. Then if not deceived I truly know the joys of the Lord. Then we can say surely thou art the true and living God, and besides thee there is no other. His pardoning love, grace and mercy are my continual longings which cause me many anxious thoughts. These sacred and precious things that I have hinted at are precious truths to me. I hope you, too, believe these things are our daily meat

and drink, and our daily meditations which many times cause us to groan and sigh within ourselves, feelings that cannot be uttered. It seems to me my greatest concern is whether or not my name is written in God's eternal book of life which is the greatest of all books. All whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, shall wonder after the beast, and I truly believe that old beast is a representation of Satan, the old devil, who is a liar and the father of lies. That old living fiend has his existence here by the plastic hand of God. His mission is to deceive, he is full of deception. I believe the old devil is the crooked serpent that God in his all wise purpose and decree did make, create or form for, or to be, the author of all confusion. I believe all manner of crookedness comes under the head of confusion. Therefore our God is so pure, holy and righteous, his jurisdiction is over all worlds, powers, principalities and dominions. He is from the highest in authority unto the lowest in subjection. Our God cannot be charged with anything less pure than righteousness. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." God who rules the time and seasons, doubtless for the best of reasons.

My dear kindred, it seems I find no end to this glorious theme. Its existence is from eternity, a flowing fountain of love that never runs dry. Here in this weak, mortal frame we cannot conceive of the magnificent beauty, love and grandeur that our dear Lord has treasured up in his bountiful storehouse in eternal glory for his little, redeemed elect bride, the ones that truly love him and have suffered for Christ's dear name sake. In conclusion I cannot express the wondrous beauties just like

my brethren can, but I truly hope that I sincerely believe in line with them. I love them and cannot help it, and I do not want to help it. May the Lord bless Zion's little ones is my prayer. A brother I hope. J. A. PERDUE

Route 5, Box 858, Visalia, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending M.O. for the dear old *Signs* another year. It sets forth what I believe if not deceived. I get much comfort reading the many able sermons and other articles it contains. I do not want to miss a number while I live. It was sad to hear of dear Elder Lefferts passing. I have read so many of his comforting sermons in the dear old Baptist papers. Mrs. Lefferts and family have my sympathy. I know what it is to part with our loved ones. The dear Lord knows best in all things. Our days are numbered and the bounds thereof we cannot pass. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." So many of our dear, precious loved ones have been taken from our midst, but what comfort that they yet speak to comfort and feed our hungry souls. They are not dead but sweetly sleeping in Jesus. They fought a good fight, they finished their course, and the death angel came back and took them home to their long eternal rest in blessed eternity.

I would like to have your views, or those of any one else if they are given a mind on the subject, "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." It is a great joy to my soul to read of the great and wonderful mysteries and the goodness and mercy of an all powerful God. I try to pray and beg for mercy that the dear Lord will give me a heart to understand his blessed words to his little

chosen few for whom he shed his precious blood on the rugged cross, and whose names were all written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. I hope I am one of that number. A hope is all I have and sometimes it is so small I almost lay it by, and sometimes it seems sufficient. If I were called to die it would be sweeter to me than a thousand worlds like this. This world is not my home, I long to go and be at rest I hope. I would be happy if I could write to the dear household of faith as the saints do to me. They tell what I believe and my travel better than I can, and I do not feel worthy of such sweet and wonderful blessings. I do not have much opportunity to be with the dear Old Baptists since my dear companion passed away. I read the *Signs* and other Baptist papers and shed tears of joy the world knows nothing about. I have read the *Signs* for fifty-five years, seeing it first when I met my dear husband. "Grace! 'tis a charming sound!" is a song most dear Old Baptists are familiar with. It is sweet and precious to my weary, hungry soul. When you sing it think of this lonely sinner that is saved by grace if saved at all.

Dear Elder and Associate Editors in a precious hope beyond this vale of tears, I will close these rambling thoughts. Hope you can overlook my weaknesses and many mistakes. I wish you God's richest blessings for the New Year and many more in your labor and work to keep the dear family paper coming laden with the good news. The least of all if one at all in hope of the resurrection beyond this vale of tears.

Mrs. W. L. SLUSHER

Cones Road, Route 3, Hot Springs, Ark.
ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I would like very much to put some thoughts on paper if the

Master directs my mind and gives me guidance.

Brother Dodson, I get so much enjoyment from reading the *Signs*. When I took the mail from the box to-day I was overjoyed to find my paper had arrived. I straightway turned to your message bearing the heading, Matt. 7:20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." My dearly beloved brother in hope, it seems you must have been writing directly to me for I was given a great feast, and these tears which have dimmed my eyes are of joy. Your message has answered so many questions that I have been pondering over for some time. At times I am left in doubt, and fear the fruit which I bear is a corrupt fruit. I fear you precious children in Christ see me as a corrupt tree, or a dead branch, which is to be plucked from the vine, or tree of life, and cast into the fire to burn for an everlasting eternity. I am not gifted to speak on the Scriptures as I do so much desire, neither am I gifted in writing letters of comfort, but to read the precious letters that appear in the *Signs* is a great comfort and consolation to my hungry and weary soul.

"As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Was not that messenger John the Baptist? He said he was "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." "And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

He was speaking of that all mighty and all wise God who spoke and it was done and commanded and it stood fast. John was given the power to preach and baptize, but his power to baptize could not exceed the baptism of water, but he of whom John was speaking could and did baptize with the Holy Ghost. "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Gallilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan, And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness." Why after receiving the Spirit was he driven into the wilderness? Because it was pleasing to the most high Master, God the Father, that he be tempted by or of Satan for a period of forty days. "After that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

The gospel that they, Jesus and his disciples or apostles, taught in those days was the living word of God, the almighty Father, and that same word is just as much alive to-day as it was in those days. So you see, Brother Dodson, that almighty divine Spirit, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is my only hope of salvation. May it be pleasing to you and all other saints of God to remember me in your prayers, a poor weak worm of the dust, that I ever be kept humble and submissive to the will of the great God, and that he will give me strength and increase my courage to confess him before the sons of men, and that I may not be a stumbling block, but a live tree which bringeth

forth good fruit to the harvester. In myself, it is made plain to me, I am less than nothing, and the best that I can do is as filthy rags in the sight of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I wish the best of blessings for you and all the elect family. Your little brother in hope. DAVID B. LAWSON

Route 1, Farmington, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I feel my weakness very much indeed in attempting to write you. It is by request of a very dear brother and Elder that I endeavor to give you an account of an assembling together of a few Old Baptists in the home of Brother and Sister Croft in Fulton, Ky., the fifth Sunday, in January.

Elder and Mrs. O. W. Perkins, my husband and I went to Cane Creek the fourth Sunday that being their regular preaching day. Elders Perkins, Harrison and Kerley from Memphis filled the stand that day, preaching Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life, and proclaiming the sovereignty of God. We enjoyed the preaching and meeting together with the Old Baptists there in the home of Brother and Sister Wiley Barnes this Sunday. In the afternoon as we came home it was suggested that we spend the next Sunday with Sister Flora Croft and Brother Croft. We wrote them on Monday we were coming the next Sunday morning. On arriving we learned the news had spread around among the Old Baptists that Elder Perkins would be there. Elders Harrison and Lowery were there also. There were brethren from most all the churches both in Bethel and Soldier's Creek Associations. About seventy or seventy-five gathered there in their home and it was a day enjoyed by all. Elders Lowery, Perkins and Harrison spoke so beautifully of the unsearchable riches of God and of

God's sovereignty. We must have heard the gospel in its purity which was enjoyed so much by this little band of people whose voices were mingled together singing hymns of praise. This was a wonderful day, all in one accord and speaking the same language.

If I am not deceived, I see a love and friendship manifest among this people, when they are assembled, that is not found among any other people. The love which comes down from above; the love with which Christ commanded his people to love one another; the love which is shed abroad in the hearts of his people; the love which is a manifestation of his work. Since he commanded his people to love one another as he has loved them, we do not marvel at this love among them or wonder why this love and friendship is manifest among them, do we? "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." This manifestation of love I see among Old Baptists is evidence to me that they are the ones he had in mind when he said, love ye one another. I cannot find any place in the testament where Christ's commands were not always obeyed, and I believe this will hold good unto the end of the world. If I understand his language, his commands were always to his people and not to the world who knoweth not the Father.

Brother Dodson, I believe this love was freely bestowed upon these people who were assembled together on this day in this home. He has said, "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." This is a wonderful work he has wrought among his people; a perfect and beautiful thing indeed; perfect because he has left no

part for man to perform; a work that is finished according to his will, and his own good pleasure. I wish I could tell you that I was one of these people or belonged to this precious flock that was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, later redeemed by the precious blood our Savior shed when he went to the cross, but I cannot speak of these things with any assurance. I hope (only hope) I have evidence of this great love. If I have it has been by the tender mercies of God, the wonderful gift, bestowed upon an unworthy creature, not by my will and work, but by the will, purpose and power of him. It is a treasure I would not change for all the world with the wealth and beauty therein. I hope I have partaken of a part of the sorrows and joys that only his people know as they journey here. I do feel to have travelled a very rugged road a part of the way for the past few years, and given a hope; a love shed abroad in my heart for these people, the Primitive Baptists, and a desire to go to them and relate a few of these precious trials, tribulations, joys and times of rejoicing. There have been times I have hoped I could just fall at their feet, but I could not perform even this much. I had to wait until I was humbled down just this low (oh how sweet is this humbling) until at last the day that was appointed unto me to make this offering came. (The offering which I hope was prepared of him.) I had no work of my own to offer, nothing to boast of but give all the praise, honor and glory to my Redeemer.

This was a glorious day when he saw fit to bring me into his fold. The church has been a haven of rest to me, yet I feel so unfit and so unworthy to be assembled in this church with this people, the precious flock, for which he has called and qualified his servants

to feed. This is the church of which I believe Christ was speaking when he said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." What was this Rock? All the arminian world claims their church is builded on this Rock. Who has the evidence? To me the Primitive Baptists are the only ones who have the evidence of this. Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, his people being redeemed by his blood (not by creature works and you can if you will accept him) no not to my understanding, (if I have any) but by the blood and the spirit bearing witness by divine revelation. This brings to mind a portion of scripture I have meditated on many times. "And there are three that bear witness in the earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." 1 John 5:8. This is what it means to me: without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. These people for whom he shed his blood are redeemed. They will every one come into his kingdom without the aid of any man, God himself teaching them, putting his laws into their hearts and minds. He teaches in a way every one will understand. Then he said I go away that I may send the comforter. This comforter being the spirit of Christ born in them as a witness. These are the ones added daily to his church such as should be saved. To me the water that beareth witness is the (water) baptism that brings these children into the visible church in sweet fellowship one with another. His baptism (to fulfil all righteousness) was (to me) a pattern for his children to follow. They are the only ones he commanded to be baptized—those who believe, this being a work of God also.

If I have been redeemed by this blood, and if I have received this com-

forter, (the spirit of Christ being born in me) as I have stated before, I was given a desire at this time to go with the Old Baptists, to follow my Savior in baptism. Not a night's rest, not one hour's peace could I find until I could tell them these wonderful things and come into the church with them by baptism. The church is a peaceful, resting place for us here in this world. This is the water spirit and blood bearing witness. I would like very much to have the views of some one else on this scripture. I may not have the right interpretation. I have many doubts and fears all along this journey that cast many heavy shadows along my pathway, and I fear sometimes I am deceived in this hope, and fear that my friends have been deceived in me, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

At the end of the service on this fifth Sunday in the home of Brother and Sister Croft, Elder Perkins asked me if I would write an account of the day and you see I have made a failure in doing that much. When I started to write I wondered why he had asked me when there are so many others and any could have written so much better than I. I being the very least one, the weakest one and the most unworthy one assembled in that home that day. Feeling my weakness as I do I fear I should never have had the courage to have written you as I have. As I have written this a portion of scripture has come to my mind where "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." So a very weak member has attempted to bear tidings of a day that was a great day to us all.

Before closing I would like to say we have the blessed privilege of hearing Elder Perkins on the first Sunday and

Saturday before at Zion in Mayfield; on second Sunday at North Mt. Zion; and on fourth Sunday at Harmony, this being our home church. Here we have a *little flock* but one I hope contending for the faith once delivered to the saints; contending for and loving the doctrine Jesus Christ taught while he was here on earth; and we do feel to be very wonderfully blessed to have been sent a man called and qualified by the Most High and Supreme God, and endued with power from on high to speak of God's sovereignty and preach the gospel in its purity. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) H. C. ADAMS

327 S. Jackson, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find \$5 for two years renewal to the dear old *Signs of the Times*. I hope I can continue taking it as long as I live. No one knows the comfort I get reading the good articles it contains. May the Lord bless you and others to continue writing and proclaiming this doctrine of God our Savior. May the Lord bless the readers to read, as well as the writers to write for we all need the blessing from him to read or to write the unsearchable riches of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is of, through and by the grace of God we live, move and have our being, and are what we are. Satan has such a wonderful pleasure in me that he leads and has charge of me much of the time to the extent that I am not enabled to utter one word of praise to God's grand and glorious name.

Please excuse my manner of expression, but I hope these few thoughts are from deep down in the heart of this poor, unworthy sinner. Saved by the

grace of God if saved at all. Yours in hope of eternal glory. J. J. DAVIS

Box 185, Weslaco, Tex.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Received my Jan. issue of the *Signs* and notice my subscription expired with the Dec. issue. Enclosed find \$5 for a two year's renewal. I have enjoyed the articles of love, mercy and grace. Yes, love comes first. The Old Baptist church is built on love, and when brethren cease to love each other it soon goes to pieces. Love is the binding cord, and that love must be given from above. Man in his natural state cannot reach up and bring down that love that makes peace here on earth, or in these earthen vessels of ours. But O what effect it does have when God sees fit to give it to his little ones. It humbles them and makes them as little children, and what a difference there is when love reigns supreme. We only get a little foretaste of it here in this life which carries us over the rugged road that we have to travel on earth. We get so low in spirit and feel like our unprofitable life has not amounted to anything, and it is good for us that we get in these conditions for we have not suffered anything to compare with what our blessed Jesus suffered for his little ones. We were guilty and he was innocent. I wonder what the latter half of the century we are now entering into will bring? The Lord only knows, but when it comes to pass it will be just like he foresaw it before the earth was ever formed. Nothing new with God, but one eternal now with him.

(Elder) E. B. AULT

Route 1, Richlands, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have desired to write to the dear old *Signs of the Times*, but a feeling of unworthiness and lack of something worth while has prevented. Still feel the same way but know if it is God's will he will direct my mind and cause me to tell of something he has worked in poor me. I am almost a shut-in as I seldom have a chance to go out especially to meet with the dear Old Baptists where I long so much to go. Waiting and hoping that the all wise God will make a way for me to go more often, it is in fear that I write this because he knows what is best for me. My husband does not belong to a church and does not care to go, but I long to go for I believe it is the church of Christ. I have one little one in the hospital now so you see I am in trouble and have seen much. there are times when I seem lifted up, when he (Christ) comes there is rejoicing in my poor soul. I am so unworthy and unfit to even speak of Him; but hope he will never leave me in despair.

Dear children of God I desire your prayers. A poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) L. E. WATKINS

R.F.D. 1, Box A-107, Henry, Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD: Enclosed find remittance to renew my subscription for two years. I enjoy the paper a lot. The article in the Dec. 1949 issue on the new birth by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe is worth the price of the paper. Brother Dodson, I have a mind to write some for the *Signs* but I know within myself I can do nothing that would be accepted by the Lord or the household of faith, but if I should write anything that is any good it must come down from above by the guidance of the Holy

Spirit.

"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves." Matt. 21:12. How many of us have gone to church hoping for a crumb from the Master's table, and some of the brethren would come in and sit near us and start talking about the things of the world; some will tell about the good crops they have, some about their jobs in the factory, some one thing and some another until it seems like we will just have to get up and move before we can hear what the preacher is saying, but then a calm comes over everything and we can hear and feast on the manna from on high. I feel like that is when Jesus comes in this temple and drives out the thoughts of this world and prepares each one to worship Him in Spirit and in truth. I am not writing this to throw stones at any one for I am just as guilty as they for I cannot come to Jesus myself. He must come to me if I ever receive a blessing. It looks to me that we should respect the house of the Lord more than we do, it is a sacred place. May the Lord bless Zion everywhere is my prayer. Yours in hope of eternal life.

CHARLES R. BALL

Cozad, Col.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please excuse my neglect. I am getting old, nearing eighty, but still would hate to miss the *Signs*. I have read it sixty years or more so would surely miss it, but do not expect to be here very long. I can read but am almost too shaky to write. I am enclosing check for renewal.

(Mrs.) G. C. ARMSTRONG

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Mrs. M. E. Kuns, Cal., \$2; F. Phillips, Ark., \$1; B. F. Preston, Ore., \$2; W. B. McGregor, Ky., \$2; R. L. Davis, Kans., \$3.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

JUNE, 1950

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THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

This word cannot be strictly said of anyone or anything else. In the human economy, we have a sovereign king or a sovereign state, but these are subservient to the Maker, Keeper and Disposer of all things. That the sovereignty of God has always been denied by some that profess to be followers of him, we cannot, with the written history of mankind before us, consistently deny. That it will, by the same gainsayers, be denied until the end of time, is not doubted. In fact, they have been spoken of and warned against by many sacred writers.

The Bible was written by inspiration, (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.) If it is ever understood, it must be by revelation. It cannot be reasoned out by human intelligence. Its wonderful truths cannot be gotten hold of by listening to the explanation of smart men. The commentaries of men of letters will not unlock the hidden mysteries of that precious volume. However, in speaking of the Book, I would not have you think that it does not mean what it

says. It might be alright for a Mormon or a Campbellite to claim a new knowledge gained by digging some plates from the ground, but never for a child of God to lay any such claims. If we know anything of ANYTHING about God it has not come from the earth, but as a divine revelation from above. There has not been any discrepancy in what God inspired men to write, and what he reveals to them. The Book is in perfect harmony with the experience of God's people.

Preaching, for it to be worth anything to me, must be in corroboration with my experience. But I do not have the least desire to set up my experience as a standard for the Old Baptists to follow. If we are honest with ourselves and one another, we must readily admit that we have heard two or more brethren outspoken about every tenet of our faith. In the most of cases they always rely upon their experiences and their version of the Scriptures. Yet, we have many different ideas about these same tenets of faith. Are they all from the Lord? Does the Spirit teach one man that God has absolutely predestinated all that comes to pass, and another that he only predestinated the good, and still another that nothing is fixed, but that God acts according to the way his creatures do? This I do not believe a word of at all. Thus, what people tell me is their experience, is not a true criterion for Bible doctrine. I hope to have been made able to know the frailty of my being, and to realize that if I know anything at all, that it is just a little, and that this being true, I must not expect my brethren to take a thing just because I claim to have experienced it.

If I know anything of a grace experience, it is that God is a sovereign. I do not claim that there is more than one sovereign, anymore than I claim

that there is more than one God. My feelings and my understanding from what I hope he has taught me in experience, is that he does his will in heaven and earth. But I know that others say, whose honesty and sincerity I do not question, that God has not taught them that. This contradiction among the children of God causes me to desire to appeal to something more than their experience. At the same time, I am fully aware that it will be worth nothing, except it coincide with what my readers have seen and felt of God.

I am aware of the difficulties that present themselves to the natural mind in taking the view that God is a sovereign. I have not set myself the gigantic and impossible task of removing those difficulties from the mind of my readers. I cannot any more reconcile myself to God's way of doing things than I can make a world like this. There is not any way that this natural mind can tell how low it will go in trying to measure God by itself. In some cases it will judge him by its helplessness; in some it will judge him by its depravity; in still others it will judge him by its ignorance. In the first case, this would say that because man is a limited creature and cannot do anything, that the eternal God is likewise limited by his surroundings; in the second case, it would say that the creature man is not guilty of any sin, that he is only acted upon in sin by the God that made him, that he does have the right to say, "Why doth he yet find fault?" or, "Why hast thou made me thus?" (see Rom. 9:19-20.) This same depraved nature would, in its limited vision, behold the God that rules in heaven and earth and say, Let us do evil that good may come. In the third case, it will lay things to this sovereign Maker that he has emphatically denied

doing. Only one instance will suffice to show what I am after in regard to that. Some have said that God is the author of sin, but we are told that God is not tempted. Wonderful language to a poor sinner. Nothing has ever come upon our God to cause him to change from what he eternally determined to do. He is in one mind concerning his children (and I certainly want to be understood as saying that in some way all things concern them); that whatsoever his soul desires that he does just that. The reason that God is not tempted is deeply hid in the sovereignty of God. There is not any that can tempt him to do wrong. But the same writer that said God was not tempted, also said neither tempted he any man. If both statements are true (and they are) then God is not tempted, and God does not tempt any man. Thus, the sovereignty of God is not an excuse for saying that God is the author of sin.

We, as a people claiming to be the church of Jesus Christ, sometimes find it hard to keep from reading into the Bible some of our think so ideas. If we could read about Nebuchadnezzar and see just what is declared there to him, it would remove our difficulties about the sovereign will of God. We cannot do this by the volition of our will, for all truth comes (not by searching, but) by revelation. Nevertheless, it will, under the blessing of God, be profitable to those exercised by the grace and spirit of God, to look at it again. The king had a dream. There is not a scientist, psychologist, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, nor Arminian, that can prove that the king could have kept from having the dream. Moreover, he could not have dreamed it anymore clearly than he did. Furthermore, there is not a reader of these lines that can keep from dreaming what they dream.

And how often do we wake up and wish that we could put our dream together, but find that it is gone from us, as was the king's. The king dreamed and it was interpreted to him. It came to pass, even to his hairs growing like unto eagle feathers, and his nails like unto claws. At the end of the days of his dream, understanding returned to the king. Human reasoning may say that he could have gotten it back before the culmination of those days, but the sovereignty of our God utterly forbids any such speculation. The king praised Him whose dominion is an everlasting dominion. That word 'dominion' means in the original to rule or to have dominion. It means that in both the Old and New Testaments. It means that today in our everyday language. That was what the ancient Jewish church relied on as she traveled under the law. The apostolic church had the same assurance to console her in the days of her infancy under grace (and that is not to be construed that the church has weak and strong periods in herself considered) and she has ever traveled, and will continue to travel, under the banner of the Sovereign King Immanuel. Moreover, the king declared that his kingdom is from generation to generation. It has been true that we have had men, and even good and spiritual minded brethren, that have intimated that there has been times when this has failed to be so, but that has not been any hindrance whatsoever that the sovereign will of God has not been done, but rather it establishes the fact that no man is master of his own destiny in preaching the truth. In the fulfillment of this dream and his coming to the acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God, he sets forth the same doctrine that many other sacred writers so wonderfully set forth. All of the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as noth-

ing. Sad picture this would be, if a poor sinner could see this, but God has hid this from the wise and prudent. It is his good pleasure to reveal it to the babes. For all the inhabitants of the earth to have this bad reputation, is, to say the least, a bad setback to any that think they are something.

Does God do as he pleases? The king said that he did according to his will in the army of heaven. We have not had any trouble about that. We are all perfectly willing to subscribe to God doing whatever seems right to him in heaven. Isn't it strange that we have him circumscribed with our narrow human limitations and declare our brethren to be fatalists, absoluters, and that they are fixing to do some low-down meanness if they say that God's will is done at all times? From the sense of right and wrong, it is a shame for brethren to fall out about a thing that is as plain one way as another. The king declared that God did His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. I think that there is a difference in the 'in' and 'among', but it is not in the sense that his will is not fully and completely carried out in both places, and that "none (in either place) can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" See Dan. 4.

"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?" Does that measurement stand? If so, then the eternal sovereignty of God stands. Does the meting out of the heavens still stand? If so, then the sovereignty of God still stands. Has the gigantic volcanoes, storms, and all man-made disturbances, made enough dust that the comprehension of it all in a mea-

sure, failed in any sense? If so, then the sovereignty of God does not stand. Has the weighing in of the hills and mountains stood? If so, then the sovereignty of God stands. The nations are all counted as a drop of a bucket. Is that count or reckoning still in force? If so, then God is still ruler. All nations before him are as nothing. Have they all ways, and always, been before him as nothing? Has one of them, or better still, has one individual of one of them, ever been anything before him? If so, not only has the God of Israel lied, but he has forever lost his sovereignty, for if he has ever surrendered it, to whatever it was, it then and there became sovereign. (Isa. 40).

It is a precious doctrine that God does not change. How often, how often, have we been in the valley and not a ray of comfort could we see, save that promise that he does not change. He is, and always has been, and always will be, the only constant One. Jesus, the dear Lamb of God, is spoken of as being the same yesterday, today and forever. The one-mindedness of God comforted Job in his day, and every day since that day, praises have ascended on high to the One

“Who sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be,”

but is doing his will in heaven and earth and if there are any other places in all the creation of God, there also. No new, unlooked for, or unknown thing has ever arisen to cause our God to change. The situation at all times has been in hand to where it has not been necessary to change his way of doing things. If such necessity has ever arisen, the gospel ceases to be of any comfort to a poor trembling child of God. In fact, if such has ever been the case there is not any gospel for there is not any God. Now I want to look at

Joseph in Egypt. God sent him down there. No less was his going into Egypt the work of God than was the coming into the world of Jesus. Both Joseph and Jesus was appointed to make each advent. In both cases the sending was of God. In each event God was sovereignly doing his will. In each event God was glorified. That the scheming, cruel treatment of his brethren was evil we all must admit. They were not doing what they did for the glory of God, nor for Joseph's good, nor for their own. The only object they had in view was the thwarting of their dreams in having to pay obeisance to Joseph. “Ye meant it for evil” tells all that they were. That ‘evil’ is the same evil spoken of hundreds of times in both Testaments. It does not signify anything other than sin—the same kind that all of Adam's posterity is afflicted with. The position of the church has ever been that men have nothing in mind but sin, that what is done apart and separate from the Spirit of God is sin. At no time did the God of Israel play second best to any of the powers that be that was involved in the going into and coming out of Joseph and his brethren. Had the brethren been sovereign, as they thought, the purpose of God would have been thwarted, but he was God before the thought ever entered their mind to destroy or harm Joseph; He remained God through the whole travel, coming out victorious and bringing his people out victor over everything that Egypt signifies, and even taking the evil intentions of his people, which evil he hates, and making it redound to his name being declared throughout the earth.

In connection with this sending of Joseph into Egypt I want to leave these thoughts. I have before stated that there are difficulties involved in this grand sovereignty of God. But I do not want

to be understood as saying that God has made it difficult in the written word. It is difficult even there, as is all the work of Israel's God, to the natural man. It is difficult to harmonize the sovereignty of God and him not to be the immediate cause of sin. My natural mind cannot attain to that degree of knowledge that can keep the two thoughts separated. Yet, I feel to emphatically say that the Bible teaches from Genesis to Revelation the *absolute and unconditional sovereignty* of Jehovah God. Not only that, but I as strongly believe that every sinner that is born again has the essence of that truth deeply impregnated in his being in such a way that all the demons in hell will never be able to erase that truth from him. But I do not want to say that God made the devil and then stooped down in sin and took his work away from him. The sovereignty of God teaches me that he made all things that are made; that they were made by him; that he was not making them for anyone save himself; that they are all from the least crawling insect or microbe to the greatest monster that is now, or has ever been on the face of the earth, serving that purpose that he made them to serve. And I want to be understood that that includes man with all that he has ever done, said or thought about; that there was not a scintilla of chance in the garden of Eden; that in all the scenes and events and times of men since then that our God has come off victor and that he has delivered his people through every trial and affliction that ever came their way (and that the trials and afflictions were as much appointed as was the deliverance); that the devil is not self-existent, but that he is a creature of God (herein alone is God's sovereignty unimpeachable), having no power of his own, but that

all of it is a delegated power to him and all his followers or children; furthermore, I want to say that he uses that power delegated to him in the nth degree, but that never, no never has he ever exceeded it by a hair's breadth, for if so, that hair's breadth, was that much breaking of the sovereign will of my heavenly Father, and thus the preaching that I trust he has enabled me to do, has all been a farce and myth and lie.

In summing up this high and lofty subject, it is not my intention to have intimated that God is the author of sin. I do not have at this time any desire to lay my crimes at the feet of Jesus, nor charge them to the work of God's Spirit. I am a sinner by nature and practice. My foreparents transgressed God's law in the garden. Sin is the transgression of the law. Thus, by their transgression, sin entered into the world, and death by sin. It is stretching the imagination and adding to the Scriptures (nominally) to say that death had passed on man before he transgressed, for we have it in no uncertain terms that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned. This 'passing of death' on all men is universal. There has never been an exception. In this dead state man is a sinner. He cannot any more refrain from sinning than the Ethiopian can change his skin. He does not, in that state, know anything else. If he ever does anything else, it will be when he is born again. That birth is the sovereign work of God. It is after this birth, and by the impelling action of the Spirit of God, that this sinner ever quits sinning. Unless kept by the grace of God, he will not do anything but sin.

In conclusion, God teaches, sovereign-

ly, irresistibly, and in all cases effectually, his children that he is God. Every minister that God calls, preaches the grace of God, when he preaches that calling. He will, when traveling in his own strength, preach other things, but he will soon be put in harness again, for a man that God calls, cannot live on such trashy preaching as the kind that gives man any glory or credit. God does not have to make a man seek his own glory—we see that clearly manifested in the cases of Jonah, Jeremiah, Peter and Paul. Jonah thought he wouldn't go, but he did; Jeremiah thought he would quit, but he didn't; Paul thought he would go to Damascus to persecute, but he went to find out what great things he had to suffer for Christ's sake; Peter thought he could be good and obedient and follow unto death, but he found out that he was not able to do anything without grace. Thus, we will, when left to ourselves, seek the weak and beggarly elements of self and vain glory, but through the given grace of God, we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

W. D. G.

*****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 19:12-13.

A sister in Alabama, who is a good writer in her own right, has asked that we give our views on the parable of "A certain nobleman," which is recorded in Luke 19:12-28. We have quoted only the two verses above, and would suggest that our readers review the account as recorded in Holy Writ.

This parable, it seems to us, is almost if not identical in meaning to the one on the Talents (Mat. 25:14-30), about which there appears to be a considerable difference of opinion among

our brethren. We would, therefore, like it understood that the views we present are only our own and are given with no desire for arousing controversy. If, indeed, we have any gift for interpreting the Scriptures, we most certainly wish it to be employed by way of comforting, instructing and edifying the body of Christ, which is his church, rather than leading them into strife and confusion.

The language in the eleventh verse of this chapter would indicate that what had preceded, or gone before, was the reason for the presentation by Jesus of this parable, and to that extent it may serve as a key to the explanation, at least in part, of the parable itself. The chapter opens by stating that "Jesus entered and passed through Jericho." His purpose in so doing is made known by the work of grace wrought in the heart of Zacchaeus, who, though rich in this world's goods, and was a chief among the publicans, nevertheless, had a sincere desire to see Jesus. Being small of physical stature and knowing he would be under a handicap among the crowds which would gather when Jesus would pass by, he manifested his desire to see Jesus by climbing up into a sycamore tree, which would enable him to get a good view of Jesus when he came that way. We like that faith which moves one to act. How astonished Zacchaeus must have been when Jesus came along that he should look and see him, and then say unto him, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." It is the "little ones" who are sought out by Jesus and to whom he says, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Those who heard Jesus say these things to Zacchaeus were looking for Jesus to come and reestablish the literal throne of David, and now that

he was nigh to Jerusalem they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. By way of instructing them more perfectly concerning his kingdom, which was not of this world, he spake this parable to them. He spake concerning his church here in gospel times, which would not appear in pomp and worldly glory, nevertheless his servants would zealously labor to serve him, in humbleness of mind, to the honor and glory of his great name. Therefore he said, "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." Undoubtedly, this certain nobleman, typified Jesus Christ himself. He who forsook the climes of eternal glory, and came down into these low grounds of sorrow to suffer and redeem those chosen in him before the foundation of the world, having finished the work on earth given him by the Father, now is to return from whence he came, to be with the Father and to share the glory he had with him before ever the world was. He came in the flesh to set up his heavenly kingdom here on earth, which he was to do before returning to his Father. In order to set up this heavenly kingdom, he called certain apostles and others to work in his vineyard, supplying them with the necessary gifts for the perfecting of the saints and the edification of his church. In the parable before us, it is said "He called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." He had a specific and complete number of servants, and their gifts being indicated in pounds showed they were all valuable and precious. His command was alike to all, "Occupy till I come." Alas, they did not all serve him with the same faithful-

ness and zeal, and neither do his ministers in this gospel dispensation. It appears that there has to be exceptions, as was the case when he chose the original twelve; there was a Judas Iscariot to do the work of a devil, for in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver and precious metal, but there are also vessels of earth and of wood, and hay and stubble. In the church there is not only the wheat, but there are also tares. There are some vessels to honor and some to dishonor.

How truly does the fourteenth verse portray what the attitude of the Jews, especially, was when our Lord appeared here on the earth: "His citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." The prophet had already declared that he would come unto his own (the Jews) but they would not receive him as their true Messiah, that he would be as a root out of dry ground to them, and that there would be no beauty or comeliness in him, that they should desire him. The Gentiles, according to nature, are no better than the Jews, for the natural man, whether Jew or Gentile, cannot receive him. But God's gifts to men are without repentance, for he who is the giver of every good and every perfect gift, is without variableness or shadow of a turn. Therefore he will hold his servants accountable, and when he comes to reckon with them they shall know among other things that God is as a consuming fire, who will gather his wheat into the garner, but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire, and none shall escape. The parable sets forth that his servants were called unto him, "that he might know how much every man had gained by trading," and the record is that the first came, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." He

was commended for his faithfulness and was given authority over ten cities. Then came the second servant, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds, And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities." Let us note in passing that neither of these two servants took credit to themselves for any gain, but each said, "thy pound hath gained." When the third servant came, however, he spoke a different kind of language: he said, "Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man; thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow." He accused his Lord falsely of being cruel, unjust and hard to please. These charges, of course, showed the spirit which was actuating this servant, and his Lord said, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds*****For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him." The late Elder John McConnell of New York City used to say that unless faith and other gifts were exercised, instead of growing and becoming enlarged, they would shrink. He would illustrate it by saying if a man's right arm was tied rigidly to his side and not used for a long time, the man would eventually lose the complete use of the arm. There is a proverb which says, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth

to poverty." We hope we are not given to over-emphasizing the literalness of spiritual things, therefore we would not say that the minister who pastors and serves faithfully over one church will be made the overseer or undershepherd of ten churches, for we do not believe that this is the way he is to be compensated, but rather would we say that any evidence he may have of the approbation of his Lord and Master will be reflected, some thirty, sixty or an hundred fold, by the joy and gratitude he will experience in his own heart towards his God for his manifold mercies and blessings, and those whom he serves from time to time may be given to feel and to say concerning such an undershepherd, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" The branch, or gift, that bears no fruit will sooner or later die so far as its usefulness to the church is concerned.

This parable is closed with the following quotation: "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me. And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem." This no doubt has some special reference to the Jews of that day, who were destroyed and their house was left unto them desolate. But, according to the Scriptures, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in, he will turn his hand upon his little ones among the Jews, and they shall hear his voice and shall come forth to serve him in spirit and in truth. They shall know the power of his resurrection, shall acknowledge him as their King and their Lord, and he shall in deed and in truth reign over them, and they shall be his spiritual people. Ere long when he shall have done his will in the earth as it is in heaven, the

kingdoms of this world shall be consummated and the kingdom of our God will be supreme and he shall reign for ever and ever. In that glorious celestial city, there will be no need of the sun and moon and stars to give light, for there shall be no night there. John in Revelation says, "they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." "There shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." Therefore, it behooves us to serve Him with all our heart, mind and soul, as best we can here in this vain world. We may rest assured that of necessity we shall be made to continually call upon Him for strength as our day, or need, shall be, and we hope by and through the riches of his grace as it is in Christ Jesus that we shall be found to be among those who have fought a good fight, kept the faith, and finished our course in an acceptable manner to him and be ready to receive that crown of righteousness which he has laid up for those for whom it is prepared in the day of His coming. And now may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

R. L. D.

132 North Main St., Asheboro, N. C.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITORS: My mother, Mrs. Thomas Lambert, passed away about sixteen years ago, May 1934. For several years I continued her subscription to the *Signs of the Times* as a sort of memorial to my beloved mother, who with my father, had read and loved the paper as long ago as I could remember. At the time I cared little for reading the paper and rather expected to discontinue it some time in the future. However, as the years have gone by I have been taught, I hope, to love the doctrine set forth in the pages of the *Signs* and would surely miss its visits if it were stopped. If not deceived I have a faint idea of what this publication meant to my dear parents in their lifetime. I hope you may continue to publish it for many years to come. Sincerely,

MASSA E. LAMBERT

SPECIAL MEETING

The Delaware Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa. directly on Route 222, Conowingo, Md. to Lancaster, Pa., about one eighth mile north of Md.-Pa. state line, Saturday and Sunday, July 29 and 30, 1950, commencing Saturday at 10 a. m. (It is expected Daylight Time will be in effect). Ministers and brethren of our correspondence are invited to meet with us, also ministers and brethren of our faith and order not in direct correspondence with us, as well as all other believers and lovers of truth. Any who may arrive on Friday should go to Osbornia Farm on Route 222, about seven miles north of the meeting-house, and about the same distance south of Quarryville, Pa. Any planning to come by bus should write the undersigned in ample time to be met, however, there is limited service by Trailways Bus passing over Route 222 daily. We have no train service reasonably near, but any from a distance desiring to come by train may change to bus in Baltimore, Philadelphia or Lancaster, Pa. for last part of their trip.

CHARLES B. OSBORNE, Clerk
Quarryville, Pa.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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No. 7

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

I, James B. Reid, the subject of this sketch, began my career July 24, 1871. I was born in Miss. and was nine years old when my father moved to Texas in 1880. As a small boy in Miss. mother would take us to meeting, the Primitive Baptist, she being a member of the Primitive Baptist before I can remember. Father never united with the church or any order, but was a strong believer in salvation by grace. They never taught their children any kind of religion, but did try to teach us good morals. Father being a poor man we labored hard for our sustenance.

At the age of thirteen or fourteen I began to have serious doubts about my hereafter. I had never heard a Primitive Baptist preach, in spirit of course. There were Old Baptist ministers in the country, but nothing for me. I being the oldest of seventeen children very soon father looked to me as leader. We would go to Sunday School I suppose more to be with young folks than anything else, and in my boyhood days I could see nothing good in it. Father and mother did not object to our going, neither did they compel us to go. I began to have serious thoughts concerning my future condition and I really thought, as others, that I could do something pertaining to a better life, but it seemed the more I tried the worse I got. I would go to what they called the mourner's bench. I heard others say they had gotten religion, and now, as I look

back over the scene, with the most of them it seemed to last only through the summer time. The preacher would say, "give your heart to Jesus," but even in my youth I did not believe that God needed anything I could give him. I believed he was the giver and not I. I could see my doom and it was sealed and I thought it just and right. I thought how could he be so good as to save one like me; I was mourning and I did not know what to do, having made every effort possible but all in vain. Once in a while I would try to read the Bible, but I did not want any one to see me reading it. Down into the pit of sin and condemnation it seemed I had gone. I did not know how to pray, but would say, Lord be merciful to me, a vile sinner, save or I perish. I hope in July 1885 the dark clouds of gloom rolled away, and O what a dear Savior had found me in that wilderness of woe and shame. Then shone all about me the brightest light that I had ever seen. It being night and I away from home my first thought was I will go home and tell mother for I did confide in her, but before I got home something within me said, hold on now you are going to deceive your dear old mother so I did not tell her. Looking back on it it seemed mother knew there had been a change in me. I went on in this condition until I was nearly twenty-two years of age.

I married one of the fair girls of the South and we raised seven children. She was taken from me in Oct. 1918.

The Lord directed me to another dear companion. I united with the Primitive Baptists fifty-five years ago. On what little I told them they took me in, and it seemed when I came up out of the water I left something behind. I felt to be the happiest mortal in the world, I said, "now my trials are all over." Dear friends, it was then I wanted to be as good as I saw my brethren, and I had not been a member very long until something else came my way, yes, worse than the first, and that was to try and tell what great things the dear Lord had done for me and all the blessed people of God. Yes, I thought then if I could just tell it like they did I would never quit. I was so wearied I could hardly sleep at night and even lost my appetite. Could not eat and my wife would ask me what was the matter and I would tell her a falsehood, saying there was nothing wrong with me. I was then twenty-eight years old and I said, "Lord I will never preach, I said Lord I know you can kill me but you cannot make me preach." I read in the Bible where he made the dumb beast speak with man's voice and forbade the madness of the prophet. I then said, "Lord if you can make the dumb beast talk you can make a poor sinner man talk" and this coming July fifty years ago I made my first attempt before an intelligent congregation of people. I remember the first text I used on Sunday at our regular meeting. It was the language of David, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

Dear friends, I got up and forgot myself for awhile, but when I came to myself I saw the people all over the house shedding tears so I said when I left the house "I'll never do that again." I thought the people were sorry for me and were pitying me and were crying. Just one month from that I was just

as anxious, if not more so, to go back to the meeting again and that day they liberated me to preach against my will. Not long after that they ordained me and now I thought I knew they had made a mistake. Dear brethren, I know if the Lord don't keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain, and in my tottering condition I look back on my past and say my days have been few and evil, and we will soon have to go hence, but I do hope I can say with Paul, "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." Paul said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." I hope and believe I have contended for the doctrine of God our Savior. Dear friends, I have told more falsehoods about preaching than everything else put together. I would say I was through, I did not intend to go any more, but the old prophet Jeremiah said about the same thing. He said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name," but later he said, "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with foreboding, and I could not stay." Many have been the times when I would leave my wife and children to do the work at home and I would go to my regular appointments to meet with those that I love, and try to comfort some one; but, dear friends, it was sometimes a hard go with me financially, but I have been blessed beyond my comprehension. In looking back over my past experience my blunders and my short comings it looks like I could have done better than I have, but it has been one continual blunder.

I will go back to my young ministry if I dare call it that. I got very rebellious. I was determined that I would quit trying to preach; I would leave the country and go where I was not known; I would leave these Old Baptists and forget it. I chartered a car and moved to the north plains of Texas. The first thing I knew I had met the same kind of folks spiritually that I had left. I stayed one year and came back to North Central Texas and yet I was not satisfied. I made another trip to west Texas, thinking to get away where no one would ever find me. I lost all I had except my wife and children. I drove to the little city of Childress, Tex. I walked up the street and saw two men about fifteen feet away from me talking, one of them seemed to be very highly wrought up and was a Campbellite. I walked to within six feet of them not saying anything at the time. Very soon this Campbellite said he did not want to talk to a man like that and left. I stepped up to the man that was left and asked him, "Do you believe what you were telling that man?" He said, "I most certainly do." Then I asked him, "Are there any more of your kind here?" He said, "Yes, there are a few of us scattered around. We have a church about twenty miles from here, down on Peas River." He told me his name but it is so long I have forgotten it. I told him my name and he said, "Our preacher will be here in a few minutes and I would like you to meet him." He came, we were introduced, and it was dear old Elder Harris, Elder W. N. Green's father-in-law. Elder Harris said, "Next Saturday and Sunday are our meeting days and asked me to go with him about twenty miles ride in a wagon." They had found out some way that I had tried to preach. Again the Lord had followed me. I

found out that I could not hide from an all seeing God. Like Jonah I was thrown overboard, I was found out. Again I moved back to North Central Texas, and now it came to me, go preach that preaching that I bid thee. But, O Lord, I am still too ignorant and unlearned. I found the same God was ruling there, and now realized that God was everywhere present and nowhere absent, the same God yesterday, to-day and forever; "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." I had made two long trips to try to get out of preaching, but when I returned home the second time I said, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

Now dear friends, you that chance to read this can see just a part of my travels, and many times in my career I was like those two kins (or cows) that had the yoke upon their necks which I understand to be a yoke of duty. They left their calves at home shut up, carrying the ark along the highway which we understand is a type (or a figure) of the duty upon the new cart, and they went lowing. Yes, it is typical of the poor, old preacher mourning, and he does not know when he gets there what he is there for, but sometimes we hope that it pleases the Lord to stop the ark in Beulah Land which we sometimes understand to be the proclamation of the gospel which is glad tidings to the beloved children or God. We never know whether it is of the Lord or no, we only hope he has directed our steps and so far he has made a way for our escape. A few more days on earth to spend and all troubles and sorrows will end, and we only hope to be carried where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary will be at rest. We are now living in a house our good son-in-law built

for us on his lot in San Juan, Texas. He is so good to us, treating us like we were his own mother and father for which I hope we are thankful to the giver of every good and perfect gift. Many things have been left out but we will bid you all farewell for now. Your unworthy brother.

(Elder) JAMES B. REID

"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.

Note what strong language this is "thou shalt surely die." Did he eat and did he die? Yes it was a sure thing. He died the death that the Lord said he would, and that death was in sin, for you who were dead in trespasses and in sins hath he quickened and made alive. This proves that they were dead or they could not be quickened and made alive. Let us notice why they were made alive, because the Lamb of God stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, slain for sin. Yes, before sin entered into the world for sin entered into the world by man and man was not created at that time; he was created out of the dust of the ground, and a very little portion of the dust it took to make him, but there was enough taken to make man and he was created male and female both, so it took both to constitute man. God's work is a complete work for salvation is of the Lord. The Lord is our salvation for we are his chosen people. Yes, chosen in him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blame before him in love. God is love, and he is holy, so it was necessary for the Lamb of God to be slain for sin, for by man sin entered into the world and it is by the slain Lamb of God that we are saved from sin, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

It was needful for Christ to come and be slain for salvation is of the Lord. Neither is there salvation in any other, and there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. Notice how strong this language is, we *must* be saved by Him. No may be about it, it *must* be for on the day that Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he died, and the dead are in a helpless condition until they are quickened and made alive, then he acts from life.

Let us find out what life is. This life is not natural but spiritual, and it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself for Christ is our life, when he shall appear, ye shall also appear with him in glory. So then he is our life, and when he appears in glory we also shall be with him as Adam and Eve. They were one and when Adam was manifested she was with him, yes, in him and he was her life for He took the rib to make her, and to manifest his work it must be that way for he created Adam male and female both and she shall be called woman. This is a wonderful work, a glorious work which the Lord shall work in your day which ye shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you. This address is made to those unbelievers because my sheep shall hear my voice and they shall never perish. Salvation is of the Lord and God is our salvation and there is no other.

When Jesus came to the sycamore tree he commanded Zacchaeus to come down and said, "This day is salvation come to this house." Why has it come to thy house? Because thou art the son of Abraham. Yes, salvation has come to thy house for as much as thou art a son of Abraham, and the promise was made to Abraham and his seed, and I am the seed of the woman who shall bruise the serpents head and de-

stroy the works of the devil. See him in the garden beguiling Eve, that was why he (Christ) stood as a Lamb already slain. O what a glorious work this is. "I must work the works of him that sent me." I am thy salvation, I have come at the accepted time, today is the day of salvation. I am thy salvation, I have come and it will abide with you for-as-much as thou art a son of Abraham. So one salvation for time and eternity for Simeon only saw one babe in the temple and he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." It is not conditional on our part for when the Lord carried Ezekel out and set him down in the open valley, and showed him those dry bones, he said they represented the whole house of Israel, the household of faith, they said for our part we are cut off and our hopes are lost. Yes, by the law they were cut off and their hopes were lost, but God performed his whole work upon them and they stood upon their feet. Yes, Jesus feet must stand upon the mount of Olives for he is their life and salvation. Some claim we can so live and get blessings by our obedience when the carnal mind is at enmity against God and not subject to the law, nor indeed can be. How can they expect to please him? It is impossible. Then by one man's obedience we are made righteous, and not by the obedience of many that will not work or sin. As I have said it is not by the obedience of many but by the obedience of one man, and that man was and is Jesus Christ himself. Go ye out to meet him, yes, ye virgins, go ye out to meet him! The wise did and went in with him before the door was closed. I set before you an open door, and I have commanded you to run that you may obtain the prize, not to gain eternal life, nor perform con-

ditions in order to get some special blessing, but to obtain the prize or crown for it lies at the end of the race. Christ Jesus obtained eternal life for you on the cross when he cried out it is finished. Back to the foolish virgins. They did not obtain. Why did they not obtain? They did not win in the race. They went off to buy oil and did not go to Jesus to buy the truth. Oh no, they went to buy oil for their lamps for they were gone out already before the wise went in, and they went in at the appointed time. Just as the bridegroom came they were ready as the bride John saw coming down from God out of heaven. Yes, prepared to meet her husband for she is the king's daughter, the only one of her mother, and she is wise and not foolish. It is the wise that shall understand, and their lamps that burneth and do not go out for the candle of the wicked shall be put out, but the wise shall understand for it is given to the little flock and hid to the wise and prudent of this world because it seemed good in the Father's sight. We have no right to say why doest this or the other, it seemed good in His sight and is good for he cannot sin nor be tempted with evil like men. It is impossible for man to run the race for the children of Israel had to stand still before they even saw God's salvation, and were commanded to hold their peace, be still and see the salvation of the Lord. Not your salvation but the salvation of the Lord. Not two salvations, but the salvation of the Lord for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. Not may be saved but must be saved. Nor is there salvation in any other. Then let us consider how could the children of Israel go through the Red Sea until God opened the way to them. The false teachers and false prophets are like

foxes in the deserts. They do not bring up the children of God by the gaps but want to climb up some other way. The gap was opened up in the Red Sea for the children of Israel to go through, and then they were led through by the pillar of fire and cloud not by the horse and its rider, Pharaoh and his people. No not at all. Here is the salvation of the Lord, the only salvation. The wise virgins were admitted to heaven before the door was shut, so the children of God got through before the door was shut, but Pharaoh did not. See the difference between the children of God and other people for the kingdom was not prepared for any other people. Not left for any other people, but prepared for them before the foundation of the world. For those on the left hand their place was prepared for the devil and his angels, so you see there were two places prepared and the most high God knew what he was doing when he prepared them and who would occupy them, so the gulf cannot be crossed over either way, yet people will talk about free moral agents and claim that man can choose which place he wants to go when it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. God has said the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and what God does is done forever. Nothing can be added to it or taken from it. Yours in hope.

(Elder) JAMES W. LINN

Hopewell Road,
Fairmont, W. Va.

Route 1, Campbellsburg, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have been wanting to thank you for a book you sent me some time ago which I enjoyed very much. Although I did not understand it all as I should, I understood as much as the Lord would reveal to me. I am not a member of the Old Baptists but have believed in them for several years.

I hope as I grow older that God will move his hand from time to time and let in more light for a sinner like me.

I would like to pen a few thoughts upon the building of Solomon's temple. "The Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name." "The nethermost chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad." This house was contrary to nature for the chambers got larger all the way up, but are not the things of the Lord contrary to nature? The house was built of stone; they went to the mountain to get these stones to build the temple, but they were already hewn; made ready by the Lord for the temple that Solomon should build. They were not hewn by natural hands, they were all ready before they were brought thither; they were hewn from the foundation of the world. The chief corner-stone of this temple was Jesus Christ. Yes, he is the chief corner-stone, the brace and strength of the temple; he is the shepherd over the other stones that are hewn and placed in the temple. God will watch over them. The people of the world to-day are still trying to build it with their good works, but it is already built with stones made ready before they were brought thither; and these stones are the chosen people of God. Every stone was cut to fit. In this house he made windows and narrow lights, and against the walls he built chambers round about against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle. The first chamber mentions no door. The only way one can get into this chamber is to be born into it. There is a door in the middle chamber, but man cannot enter it without the will of God. If he could that would be salvation by

man, but it has to be opened by the Lord or by the grace of God. That is the way it is with us, we cannot do anything of ourselves. We had no control over our first birth, neither do we have any control over the second. "There was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." It was built by the Master's hand and he needed no ax, tool or hammer. He built the world and all therein and saw the beginning and the end. God had everything fixed, then why should man think he has control over his own salvation? The second chamber had winding stairs leading into it and on out into the third chamber. Are we not traveling those winding stairs as we go through life, and are they not hard to climb? We would fall again and again if He did not gently lead us, but he is hiding in the secret part of the stairs. Yes, he is hiding there and will not let us fall. He will lift you out of the miry clay, place your feet upon a solid rock, the rock of salvation. He will put a new song in your mouth. He will do it all, man cannot do anything. We are the clay, he is the Potter having power over the clay to form it as he sees fit. Can he not make one vessel to honor and the other to dishonor? Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated, neither doing anything to cause this love or hate. One was a chosen one the other was not. The love of the Father to his chosen ones is an unchangeable love, none can pluck them out of his hand; his chosen cannot totally and finally fall away. Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which 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." Neither can hell prevail against the Father's electing love which runs parallel with eternity. He has loved his people with an everlasting love from before the foundation of the world. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Did he not raise up Pharaoh that he might show his power in him? Then did he not harden him so that he would not let the people go? Did he not find Jacob in a waste, howling wilderness, and in a desert land these two being contrary to nature? If he finds you, or me or any one to-day it will be in that wilderness of sin. You do not look for him but he will look for you, and when that still, small voice comes to you then you have a fear and trembling. When he finds you he will not do as the Arminian says he does with Old Baptists, "grab them and drag them in." No, that is not the way, He gets hold of the heart strings and gently leads you in. Grace, at times, may seem to be lost to a child of God, but not so; once in grace always in grace. You are either in or out. The sun may be behind a cloud, yet it will regain its former luster; the trees may lose their leaves in winter yet they shall come forth in the spring; you may be in the valley to-day and on the mountain to-morrow. God does not always seem to strive with man, he may be with you to-day and yet seem so far away tomorrow, but he is there. That unseen hand is there holding you up, and without it you would surely fall. Yes, he is your all in all, yet many times he has lashed and beaten us with many stripes, but we have never learned to perform that which is good. "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the

flesh." It was this truth that made Paul cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

The only one that can deliver is Jesus who "hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up that God's elect might be saved. Yes, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Yes, even Satan has no power except what the Lord gives him. Satan had no power over Job for God had built a hedge about him, and about his house, and about what he had on every side; but the fence was let down that the devil might tempt Job. God told Satan that Job was in his hands, but to spare his life. God was telling him how far he could go and that he could go no farther. Job was tempted in many ways and was made to suffer, but he came through it all for God was with him. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "There is a path which no fowl

knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen," "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." This is the path of the just, that shining path. The redeemed walk there as they return to Zion. Though there be much sighing there is also singing, because the Lord leads them. Therefore, the righteous shall hold on his way, and though the way seems very narrow at times again it is indeed a place of broad rivers and streams to the poor saints who flow together to the goodness of the Lord; to the place where the hand of the Lord rests; where he himself feeds the flock and carries the lambs in his bosom, and leads gently the heavy laden souls; but the poor trembling sinner feels the thunder of mount Sinai in his soul which makes him fear and tremble. He felt himself sinking into the miry clay, and horrible pit of guilt and condemnation; he sighed, groaned mightily for help and the Lord heard his cry, and lifted him out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon a solid rock, and established his goings. I have made this too long but it was hard to find a stopping place. Your unworthy friend.

PAUL G. CHILTON

(While reading the foregoing letter the language of Laban to Abraham's servant, who was sent to seek a bride for Isaac, came into our mind: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" We truly hope that our friend will be given to adopt the language of Abraham's servant: "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren," and then go home to his friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for him, whereof he is glad. R. L. D.)

EXPERIENCE

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

I feel impressed in my feeble and stammering way to write my experience of grace, if indeed I have one, not knowing if it will benefit anyone or not. I am one, if not deceived, that believes in an all wise God. A God who is able to work all things after the counsel of his own will. I do not understand that he needs the help of poor, mortal man to accomplish the things that he designed before the world was. I do not believe there is anything that has happened or will happen that he did not design back in eternity; if I understand it the things he did design are only being fulfilled. I am one of those sinners, I hope and trust, whose name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. One I hope He had under consideration when he said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Thus I find myself crying out in dark hours of sorrow for that grace, realizing that in me there is nothing good and without him I can do nothing.

My road of travels has been no smooth one, but all we are promised is trials and afflictions, but then he tells us about that grace being sufficient. I have had short seasons of rejoicing, caught up on a hilltop so to speak, and think upon the wonderful works of our Lord and Savior to sing the songs of Zion. Then comes the time when I am in that low valley of mourning, seeing myself too sinful to even utter the name of that just and holy One. As I sit here and my mind wanders back

to the time when I first obtained a hope, if such can be for one as vile as I see myself, I wonder if anyone else is like me. I saw myself in such a sinful state that it seemed no one else could be as such. I decided I was the vilest person that God ever permitted to breathe the pure air. I found myself trying to find some little something to justify me but it just was not there to be found. I wanted to talk to some one about my condition, I felt if I did not get some relief my burdened soul was doomed. I talked with others and to my amazement I found that they, too, had similar experiences and it gave me some relief.

At this time there was no Pastor at Good Hope but it seemed imperative that I hear some one preach. It was time for the Association to meet at Providence. We made plans to go and if this poor sinful creature is not deceived I feasted upon some of the glorious truths of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. One precious old brother arose to deliver his sermon and told of some of his travels, and when I noticed myself tears were streaming down my cheeks because he related some of this poor trembling soul's actual experiences. I could see the great God in heaven, his power and his glory, and O what a beautiful sight it was. I wondered if it could be possible that I am one of his little ones that we read about in his Word.

Dear children of grace, I find myself fearing daily the same thing this song suggests:

"If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame,
Hardly sure can they be worse,
Who have never heard his name."

Then this passage of scripture gave me consolation, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye

comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." When I realize that though my sins be as scarlet, He hath paid double for all, I get peace and satisfaction from such passages of scripture. I do not know whether this has been the experience of any who will read this, but when we are called to lie down in death may it be that a warfare be accomplished and be well with us all is my earnest prayer. May the grace of God be with you all. Your little sister in the hope of mercy.

(Mrs.) GERTRUDE RHOADES
Route 1, Scroggins, Tex.

Martinsville, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Unworthy though I feel I have long been impressed to tell the brothers and sisters of the love and esteem I have for them, and how I have yearned to be with them. My health has been poor for over twenty years, having bronchitis and other complications. Before I quit attending church I coughed so much I felt that I disturbed others, and my condition seemed to get worse whenever I went anywhere.

In August 1946 I had pneumonia and I have been almost an invalid ever since. I have already suffered a hundred times more than I thought I could endure, and I cannot tell how much more I will have to bear. I sometimes think my lot has been harder than any others and then I think of those who have been lame or blind from birth. I have had a few short seasons to enjoy along with much trouble, but I think a few pleasures enable us to bear our burdens better.

My mother united with the Primitive Baptist church before I was born, and from my earliest recollection I had the

greatest respect for them, and wished that I could be with them. When a young girl I wanted to enjoy myself like other young people but I wanted to be good, but well I know now that I never did anything good. After my health became so bad I began to be troubled. I would often ask myself what would become of me and I would try to pray for mercy not justice. About sixteen years ago I retired one night feeling very despondent. I fell asleep and dreamed that I heard the song "When I can read my title clear," and the chorus "I want to live a Christian here," etc. When I awoke I was so happy I sat up in bed awhile, then I laid down hoping that I might hear it again, but I did not. In a short time I became troubled again. I tried to pray but it did no good. I fell across my bed on my face and when I arose I was trying to sing, "How firm a foundation." The light shone around me again for awhile.

About two years ago I had coughed until I thought I was almost gone when the words "Cast down but not destroyed" came to me as plainly as I ever heard anything. I do not know whether I have an experience of grace or not, but for some reason I cannot forget those little dreams and visions. I wanted to offer myself to the church but just kept putting it off. In December Elder D. P. Helms, the pastor of Red Creek Church visited me and I related to him part of what I have written here. The second Saturday in January this year he repeated it to the church and I was received into the Red Creek Church but I have never been able to be baptized. I feel that it would be the happiest time of my life if I could be baptized, go to church, hear the preaching and singing and shake hands with the members. I think extending the right hand

of fellowship is the sweetest part of worship.

"I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things come in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know—
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?"

Your unworthy sister if one at all.
(Mrs.) HARRY R. STONE

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are finding it very difficult to maintain our mailing list up to the point greatly to be desired. Our paper being over an hundred years old, we have to expect a heavy death rate among our subscribers, but we believe if our readers will be on the alert for NEW subscribers they can help us more than offset our losses.

We would again remind our Ministering brethren of our offer to pay them \$1. for each NEW subscription, for one year or more, they send us. We know many of them highly endorse the Signs of the Times, and if they will but make mention of the paper in their travels among their brethren and friends, a certain amount of new subscriptions will be obtained.

To other than Ministers we are offering FREE one copy of FRAGMENTS, a very excellent book containing a large selection of articles by the late Elder Silas H. Durand, with 2 NEW subscriptions, or either one of the following books, JONES-RHODES debate, Elder Milford Hall's TWO WORLDS, or SHOWERS OF RAIN, containing the experience and many poems by our late Sister Flossie I. Faulkner with each single subscription for one year.

On the average it costs only twenty-five cents (one quarter) each month to have this excellent paper come into your home. From now until November many of you will be attending Associations, Union and other meetings, and you will be meeting many brethren and friends who should be taking the SIGNS. If you will tell them about the paper some of them will subscribe for it, and thus you will help to enlarge our circle of readers.

R. LESTER DODSON

Box 5, Bassett, Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: As my subscription is expiring I am enclosing remittance for two years. I do not want to miss a single copy. I enjoy reading the good experiences. Many of the letters and correspondence are equal to hearing a good sermon. They tell my own experience better than I can myself. At times they seem to renew my feelings and cause a new love to spring up in me that makes me rejoice. May you be blessed to keep sending out the good paper for many years to come. Please throw the mantle of charity over this writing. I am old and my sight is bad. Yours in humble hope of a better world.

((Mrs.) BETTIE BRYANT

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex., \$3; Elder P. Jones, Wash., \$7; A friend, Ia., \$5; Mrs. M. C. Story, Ala., \$1; Mrs. G. P. Miller, Tex., \$2; Mrs. D. P. Farmer, Md., \$1; C. Berry, Tex., \$1; Mr. and Mrs. A. Burgess in memory of her father, James E. Moore, N. J., \$10; Mrs. S. Stallings, Tenn., \$2; H. T. Earnheart, Tenn., \$1.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder David V. Spangler formerly Route 6, Danville, Va. is now located at Route 2, Annapolis, Md. Please address him there.

GOSPEL COMMENTS

This is an interesting book of 155 pages by Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La. You may obtain it for \$1 direct from Elder Rhodes, or free for one new subscriber to the Signs of the Times, Inc., Box 70, Rutherford, N. J.

CHANGE OF DATE

The date of the Union Meeting in the Lost Creek Association to be held with the Liberty Grove Church (better known as Flat Woods) has been changed from the fourth to the fifth Sunday in July and Friday and Saturday before. July 28, 29 and 30, 1950. 2 miles south of Nauvoo, Ala.

DAVID HYATT

Rt. 5, Box 304, Jasper, Ala.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

JULY, 1950

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"Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Isa. 26:12.

I do not suppose there is anything I can say about this subject that some one has not already said, but this is true of any subject, especially the subject of works. Each time we speak or write, regardless of the subject, we say something about works of the flesh, or the works of the spirit.

This chapter seems to be a song of praise in which thanksgivings for temporal and spiritual mercies are beautifully mingled, though the latter predominate. The church expresses its gratitude for the protection vouchsafed by God to his people. God fought the battles of national Israel, and gave them deliverance from their enemies, so he fights to-day the battle of spiritual Israel. In order that a workman produce a finished product it is not only necessary that he be a good workman, but he must have good material with which to work. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "For what man

knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." The works under consideration are not the works of the flesh, but are the works which are wrought in us. Therefore, Jesus said to Nichodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Since these works are in us and not of us, there must be some one within that is not dead to these works. This man is referred to in Luke 11:22 as the stronger which has entered the house, and set up his own order. "Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:****he drove them all out of the temple,****and poured out the changer's money, and overthrew the tables." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" The work that Jesus did in driving the moneychangers out of the temple, is a type of the work he performs when he enters our bodies.

The first thing we do when we move into an old house is to clean out all the filth and dust before we set the furniture in place; so when Jesus goes into a house he cleans out everything that is unwholesome and implants a new heart. He will not work in a dirty house. He removes all our self-righteousness, all our good works which are nothing more than filthy rags. He takes away the stony heart and gives a heart of flesh which is capable of feeling. The apostle Paul said to the Philipians, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

What are these works which God has wrought in us? The first thing he works in us is the consciousness of our guilt before the eyes of him with whom we

have to do. It is necessary to see the wound before we feel the need of the healing balm to mitigate the pain. Ephraim said, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." All this is the work of God. Man will never feel the need of repentance, or the work of grace in his heart until he hears the sentence pronounced upon him as Hezekiah heard. When Israel came unto him, and said unto him, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live." That which made the message so impressive to Hezekiah was that the prophet said, "thus saith the Lord." This was the message of God and the word of God to Hezekiah, and it had its effect. It wrought repentance in his heart, and he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto God. Then there was another message sent to Hezekiah which said, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears,**** I will add unto thy days fifteen years." It is good to have the spirit of prayer, but how much greater it is to feel that God has heard and answered your prayer. All this God did without any change of mind, but being a good workman he knew how to work conviction in Hezekiah.

When John saw many Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism he said unto them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." God had not worked repentance in the hearts of all these people, therefore John would not baptize them without seeing some evidence of the work of God in them. Genuine conviction of sin lies at the root of vital godliness, for the whole need not a physician, but those that that are sick. Conviction and repentance never cease in the new man that is

created in righteousness and true holiness. Where there is repentance there is confession; where there is confession there is forgiveness; this is in keeping with the promise, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jesus sent his disciples out to preach repentance, but he did not send them out to work repentance. He sent them out to preach the gospel, but he did not send them out to apply the gospel. This is the work of the spirit. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts. 5:31.

Faith is also the work of God, for without it it is impossible to please God. One might gather some kind of belief in God, and him whom he has sent by reading the Bible, or by hearing preaching, but Webster says that belief, as a rule, suggests little more than intellectual assent. Faith implies also trust or confidence; as one in whom persuasion and belief has ripened into faith. Faith cometh by hearing, that is, by understanding. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" that is, let him understand. We may, by reading the word of God, believe in it with the mind without any understanding of its teaching. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but the preparation of the heart is of the Lord. "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." There is a lot of difference in historical faith, and the faith by which we are justified. Every promise of God to his people must be received by faith. Those of

the army of Gideon who lapped putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men; but all the rest of the people bowed down their knees to drink. The hand from which they lapped water represents the hand of faith by which the people of God drink of the water of life, and receive the food that God has prepared for his people.

Fear is another work of God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and is a new covenant blessing. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." God works in the heart, or on the inside where man cannot work. It seems to me that there are more people fearing the devil, than those who fear God. If they have any mind to do good it is just because they fear the devil, and not God. This is a slavish fear, and not the filial fear by which the people of God fear him, serve him and obey him. Those in whose heart God has worked have no fear of the devil, but love God because he has shed abroad his love in their hearts. But man is a worshipping creature, and in his nature will worship anything but God. "What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?" Paul said; "We know that an idol is nothing in the world." It is just an image representing some false thing, made or used as an object of worship. Man is such a worker that he will set up some image upon which he can bestow his love and affection. "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it." Hab. 2:19. "Woe

unto him that saith to the wood, Awake;" that is to the dumb idol, something that has no breath in it to arise into action, that which is dead to awake, and to save. All our forms of worship, all our good deeds, and all our conversations be ever so polished that they shine as gold and silver, but mind you "every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Many seem to rest in perfect complacency after having attended Sunday School or church, knowing nothing of the great load of dead works that rest upon their conscience. And this is not known until God works and applies the blood of Christ which will purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Jesus said "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." All the works that man may do before he has an experimental knowledge of the grace of God are dead works. There is no breath or life in them. His reading of the Bible is dead reading, his going to church is a dead service, and if he tries to pray when he gets there, his prayer, all his efforts to serve God are dead if his conscience has not been purged from dead works. But the mercy of God is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

The only way we know anything of the work that God has wrought in the hearts of his people, is by the manifestation of that work. I am asked why I do not preach duty and good works, how could I know what the duty of the other fellow is? God has not wrought the work and duty of some one else in

me, but has wrought our works in us. The Spirit does not use a middleman to convey its work in us, but it takes of the things of his and shows them to us. I have thought that we as individuals and also the church have misjudged the work of God and the gift of God in the hearts of some. I feel that I have seen men that would have made good deacons ruined by placing them in the pulpit. There is the gift of exhortation; this gift is often put in the pulpit to preach when it should have been left on the floor. James tells us, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." May God make us able discerners of spirits that we may not mistake his gift or misjudge his work. Many things were decided in olden times by casting lots, and the term was used to decide a controversy. As an example, the disciples were much concerned about one to take the place of Judas, and they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. They gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. But God never wrought the work of apostleship in Matthias for we have no evidence of that work. When the time came to fill this vacancy God did it of his own choosing. The one that was to make up the twelve apostles was on his way to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief Priest, who "saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said I am Jesus

whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." Paul said, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

It is obvious that this man was to make up the twelve apostles because of the work that he did. When an exhortative gift is put in the pulpit it will cause the bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen. "Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" A few years ago there was a lot of complaint about so much exhortation from the pulpit. The trouble was not with the gift, but the gift was trying to function in the wrong place. When the sheep get hungry they will let you know it, they will begin to complain that the food has no nutriment in it. After God rejected Saul from reigning over Israel, he said to Samuel, "fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons." "Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel, and Samuel said unto Jesse, the Lord hath not chosen these. And Samuel said unto Jesse, are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither." And they brought

David in. "And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he." The elders of Israel chose Saul, but God chose David. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." God will not repent of any gift that he bestows except in the way of support. He will not support and bless one in a work for which he has not qualified him. He will not bless an exhorter who has settled as pastor to govern and feed the church for this is not his work. But he has invested in others that high ministerial gift whereby they are able to edify the church which he has purchased with his own blood. May we all seek to know what our work is and how to perform it.

The church under the legal dispensation was a type of the church under the gospel. Whatever desolations the Lord brought on the nations around her, she felt that he would ordain peace for her. The Lord had often made her to triumph over her enemies, and rendered her endeavors successful. She had indeed often been subjected to other lords, who not only enslaved her, but usurped authority over her. Because of the former blessings which had been so abundantly bestowed upon her, she felt that one day when the battle is over the Lord would give her peace. "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." How comforting these words should be to the household of faith. I feel to conclude with the words of Paul to the Philippians, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things

are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. 4:7-8.

H. O. N.

THE SON OF DAVID

One of our readers in Maryland, who says she is not "one of the dear people," but enjoys the many good things they write, has asked that we explain, "Why Jesus was called the son of David." We think she gives excellent evidence of being one of the Lord's little ones, and we hope she will get some satisfaction out of what we may say on the subject.

Matthew begins his record of the gospel with the earthly genealogy of Christ by calling it, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." We understand this to be our Lord's lineage according to the flesh. It is in this chapter that we find the declaration of the angel to Joseph, "fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:20-21. Luke gives us this account: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." In the second chapter of Luke's record we find these words: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them: and they were sore

afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." These declarations of sacred truth establish the fact, we think, that JESUS means SAVIOR. The prophets had testified before hand to the effect that God would manifest himself in the flesh. The Psalmist said, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Therefore his own arm had to bring salvation, and there is no salvation in any other. It should be noted that in Matthew's record of the lineage of Jesus there were sinners guilty of various and sundry types of sin, including Ruth, the Moabitish woman, and Rahab, the harlot, as well as David, Solomon and others. This should encourage us to hope that the efficacy of the blood of the dear Redeemer dying Lamb will never lose its power, "Till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more." The most important question of all with us is are our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life?

Under the law Jesus was portrayed in many wonderful and beautiful types and shadows. We think Joseph's being sold into Egypt by his brethren because of the evil intent of their heart is one of the outstanding portrayals. The sufferings of Christ were truly typified by Joseph, and the manner in which God unfolded his purpose in sending him ahead of his brethren and prospering him with the wisdom for the storing up for their needs, that much people should be saved alive, beautifully presents to our mind the purpose of

God in sending his only begotten Son into the world to suffer, bleed and die, and rise again for the redemption and sanctification of his brethren, who according to nature were his enemies. Jesus was, indeed, the good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, and he still provides for all their needs. He appeared in the fiery furnace when old king Nebuchadnezzar thought to destroy the faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego by having them cast into a furnace heated seven times hot. He was so astonished and amazed at what he saw that he said to his counsellors, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." God's faithfulness towards his people never fails.

Another very picturesque type in the Bible, which we feel is apropos to our present subject, is found in Ezekiel 17: 22-23: "Thus saith the Lord God; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." We can think of no greater or more glorious type of our Lord than this. We understand the highest branch of the high cedar to signify David who was of the tribe of Judah, and the young twigs represented his house, and this tender one who according to the flesh was the son of David was also the Son of God, and it was he who was cropped, or

crucified and exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high, or planted upon a mountain and eminent. This tender one brought forth boughs, and has borne fruit, and is indeed the most goodly of all cedars; and under his shadow are dwelling in the secret place of the Lord his people among all nations. Peter, on the day when Pentecost was fully come, said to those there assembled, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Paul said, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" This was he of whom Isaiah spake, saying, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." When His side was

pierced and there came forth water and blood, the prophecy of Daniel that a fountain for sin and for uncleanness would be opened to the house of David was fulfilled. The prophesies contained in the Old Testament scriptures have been sealed by their fulfillment in the New Testament declarations. Jesus, himself, confounded the Pharisees by asking them, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then called him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." Mat. 22:42-46. Jesus also said, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Rev. 22:16. Jesus was both verily God and verily man. John said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." Later on in the same chapter he says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth," He was God before he was man. The record is, "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were

with the sons of men," Prov. 8:27-31. Paul, writing to the church at Philippi, said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, said, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

We particularly like the words of Jesus where he said, "I am the root and the offspring of David," as we feel they set forth a glorious truth. All that David could lay claim to in a spiritual way was because of Jesus being the root from which it all sprang. He, indeed, is the true Light which lighteth

every man that cometh into the world. He is the vine and we are the branches, and without him we are nothing and can do nothing. We are made to hope that we are new creatures in Christ, and if so, we too are both human and divine, and we may rest assured that nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in him. Paul said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 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," That inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled and shall never fade away. This is that treasure which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and it is laid up where thieves cannot break through and steal. How glad we are that it does not depend upon us to obtain or retain it through our own efforts, but Peter said 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. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of 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."

We have quoted a considerable amount of scripture, and while it may well be said that quoting scripture is not preaching, nor is it necessarily explaining or expounding the word of God, we hope we have been blessed to do more than simply quote scrip-

ture. We are convinced of the fact that when the scriptures are rightly used, they are their own best interpreters, and as far as possible we like to clothe our thoughts in scriptural language. We have been dealing with the most wonderful and extraordinary event of all time: the incarnation of the Son of God, and we do not feel that we can conclude this article without quoting the great apostle, Paul, to his son in the ministry, Timothy, where he said: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I Tim. 3:16: Indeed, no greater mystery ever engaged the thought of mankind than this, that God was verily manifested in the flesh; he was justified in the Spirit; by faith he has been seen of angels, those whom God has called and qualified to preach him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and this same God has sent forth his Spirit into the hearts of his people, causing them to believe on him in the pardon of their sins. Lastly, he has been received up into glory, where ere long he will call all of his redeemed ones unto himself, and they shall see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. In that world that shall have no end, but shall endure on and on after all earthly thrones and kingdoms shall fall and crumble back to dust from whence they came, his loved ones shall join in songs of everlasting praise to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and Christ shall be their song. May all glory be to his most holy and adorable name! Amen.

R. L. D.

MEMORIALS

WHEREAS, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from this life our dear sister in Christ, MRS. PRUDENCE ANNE HARRIS, of Dallas, Texas, having in his mercy and love fulfilled the sweet and comforting promise of Jesus to his

disciples, If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also, and

WHEREAS, Sister Harris was a strong believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, and a faithful attendant at her church, showing her faith by her works and so strengthening others, which makes us feel that the church has lost a faithful member but believing it is all to her gain; that she has entered into eternal rest and will forever be with the Lord. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we bow in humble submission to the Lord's will who doeth all things for the best, hoping to meet her in the home above where sorrow never comes.

Mrs. Harris was born in Hopkins Co., Texas, in the year of our Lord 1869. She departed from this life Jan. 13, 1950, in Dallas, Texas at the age of 81. She was the widow of the late Elsberry Harris, who preceded her in death several years. In their early married life they moved to Wood Co., settling near Pleasant Grove. She joined the Hopewell Church of the Primitive Baptist faith on Oct. 26, 1900. She was the mother of four children, one having died in infancy. Surviving are two sons, Earl and Bryan Harris, and a daughter, Mrs. W. J. Atkins, of Dallas, Tex. There are four brothers, Lonnie, Bobbie, Tommie and Ocie Cobb; one sister, Lizzie Henson; a step-daughter, and one step-son, Wylie Harris; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, with a host of other relatives and friends who are made sad at her demise. She spent the last years of her life in the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. J. Atkins, Dallas, Texas. She was afflicted for the last eight years or more and all was done for her that kind hands could do, but the Lord called and she must obey. She joined Saints Rest Church of Dallas, Tex., Oct. 16, 1932, and was a faithful member until the last. The writer visited her several times while in her afflictions and found her always patiently awaiting the coming of her Lord.

Elder E. J. Lambert of Scroggins, Tex. was called to conduct the funeral services which he did in a most comforting discourse. She was laid to rest in the Hopewell Cemetery to await the sounding of the trumpets, when she shall be raised a spiritual body to meet the Lord in the air and so ever be with the Lord. Be it further

RESOLVED, that we, the Saints Rest Church, extend respect and sympathy to her sorrowing kindred and friends, pointing them to the Lord for comfort, (in whom she trusted) and that we send a copy of this memorial to each of her children, one copy to be written in our church record, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Done by order of Saints Rest Church, Sunday, Mar. 5, 1950. Written by request.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE

Inasmuch as God in his kind providence has seen fit to remove from our midst by death, Nov. 21, 1949, our beloved and highly esteemed pastor, ELDER W. N. GREEN, who so faithfully served our church for almost thirty-two years, and inasmuch as we, the members of Hopewell Church, Mangum, Okla., feel that we must bow in humble submission to the divine will of our heavenly Father, knowing and realizing that he doeth all things well, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that we extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to his dear wife and children in this time of sorrow and bereavement, and

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, a copy to his wife and family and a copy put in our church record. Done by order of the church April 16, 1950 while in regular conference.

(Elder) C. E. TURNER, Moderator
R. L. BUCKNER, Church clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. GERTRUDE HEARN TRUITT of Snow Hill, Md., departed this life Sept. 6, 1949, at the age of 73 years. She was married March 20, 1895 to Mr. William K. Truitt. She is survived by her husband and three children, James W., Elijah P., and Mrs. Gertrude Mariner. One child died in infancy. Also six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Sister Truitt united by experience with the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church in Snow Hill, Md., and was baptized by Elder B. F. Coulter, the Pastor, the second Sunday in September 1914. She was exercised about her soul's condition for about sixteen years before being brought by faith to rest in the finished work of her Savior, Jesus Christ. During these sixteen years she was very despondent at times, feeling that the wrath of God rested upon her, yet at the same time hungering and thirsting for righteousness. She looked for death, believing she was condemned before a holy God as a poor vile sinner, and while wrestling with such convictions during the night, begging God for mercy, suddenly her prayer was answered and she was filled with the praise of God. Her experience was published in the Nov. 1, 1914 issue of the Signs of the Times and will be refreshing to those interested to read it, especially those who knew her. Her life in the church was a blessing to the church. She was faithful in attending to every duty connected with her church life. She often attended services when she did not appear physically able, but the desire was to mingle in a spiritual way with the ones she loved as the dear children of God.

Her home was an open home to her beloved in Christ both by herself and her husband. Though

not a member he loves to entertain the Lord's people. The church feels deeply her loss, yet we would say the Lord's will be done. Sooner or later every tie that binds us all here will be severed, yet we are not to be unmindful that it is He who makes no mistake who calls away. For such as our sister we believe it is leaving a land of sin and sorrow to be forever with the Lord.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder H. M. Bennett and the writer from the Old School Baptist Church in Snow Hill, Md. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery adjoining the meeting-house. May the God of all grace comfort all that mourn, and the precious things manifested in her life be remembered by us in the years to come, and to Him be all the praise.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

ELDER BERRYMAN OLIVER JEFFREY, aged 77, a resident of this community for the past 34 years, died Tuesday evening, Feb. 28, 1950 at the Weiser General Hospital, Weiser, Idaho. Mr. Jeffrey was born May 14, 1872 in Boone Co., Mo., and was married in 1893 at Lockwood, Mo. His wife, Lillian Jeffrey, died here in 1947.

A retired Weiser rancher, Mr. Jeffrey was also an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist Church. Elder Jeffrey was ordained to the full work of the ministry the second Sunday in October 1928. The presbytery was composed of Elders J. C. Turnidge, D. E. Robinson, W. B. Hall and C. W. Bond, with Deacon D. C. Ledington acting as clerk. Elder C. W. Bond of Elgin, Ore. delivered the charge. All the Elders and Deacon who composed the presbytery are gone to their reward. Now Elder Jeffrey has answered the final call. His passing leaves us without a Pastor. The last three years of Elder Jeffrey's life he traveled among the churches. He made a trip to Missouri and several trips to the churches in Oregon and Washington. He loved to tell the story saved by grace. He always urged peace and harmony among the churches. We can only bow in submission and say, Thy will be done. We miss him greatly but feel our loss is his gain. With the help of Elder Wolf of Elgin we intend to hold meetings on the second Sunday in the month. May God comfort Elder Jeffrey's family and give us grace to carry on.

The survivors include two daughters, Mrs. Dewey Lee and Mrs. George Fliegel both of Weiser; one brother, Frank of Pleasant Hill, Mo.; seven sisters, Mrs. J. H. Blevins, Weiser, Ida., Mrs. Dee Holland, Pleasant Hill, Mo., Mrs. Arthur McArthur, Kansas City, Mo., Mrs. Mary Snodgrass, Hanna City, Iowa, Mrs. Lucy Shelton, Deer Trail, Col., Mrs. Ella Rector, Nebraska and Mrs. Rose Love, Minnesota; seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder R. R. Wolf of Elgin, Ore. at 2 p.m. Friday at the Northam-Jones Chapel on East Court St. Burial at Rosedale Memorial Park, near Payette.

(Mrs.) A. L. TURNIDGE

The Church at Hillsdale, Guilford Co., N. C. in conference Feb. 14, 1948, asked me to write the obituary of W. I. WITTY, our beloved brother in Christ, friend and neighbor. I feel my inability very keenly, but if the Lord wills I will try.

He was the son of Ezekiel and Martha Williams Witty, born June 8, 1853, and quietly passed away Jan. 30, 1948 after living a long and useful life of 94 years and 7 months. He was married to Miss Carrie Cummings and to this union were born ten children, nine of which survive, five boys and four girls; William of Yanceville, Robert of Summerfield, Thomas of Thomasville, Clay and Atlas of the home; Mrs. Garrett Sharp, Reidsville, Mrs. John Adkins, Summerfield, Mrs. Richard Paschal, Reidsville and Miss Annie of the home.

He was a kind husband, a loving father and good neighbor. To know him was to love him. He spent all of his life on the same farm. He never united with the church but had a sweet hope in Christ. I heard him tell his experience which was an experience of grace as wonderful as I ever heard. I had the pleasure of being in his company many times and hearing him talk of the greatness of God, his loving kindness and sweet mercy. He was firm in the doctrine of the sovereignty, greatness and wisdom of Almighty God and the total depravity of men. We, the church, looked on him as a good counselor and a father in Israel. He was a sweet singer and enjoyed singing the songs of Zion. He was faithful to his church, filling his seat as long as he was able to go and was always ready to help financially. The Lord blessed him in many ways. He had a kind and good wife who preceded him in death in 1933. They raised nine noble children.

Besides being a useful man in our church he was also useful in our county. He served four years in the State Legislature, and served the county as surveyor, commissioner and as a member of the Board of Education. He also served many years on the local school board and was Justice of the Peace for years. He was confined to his home for four years, most of which he spent in bed, but bore his affliction with much patience, never complaining or murmuring. He had the best of care. I never saw children more devoted to their father. All was done for him that loving hands could do until the hour came when we believe he heard the blessed Savior call, child come home, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

His funeral was conducted at Hillsdale Primitive

Baptist Church, Feb. 1, 1948 by Elders G. W. Hill, D. G. Staples and D. A. O'Briant. Interment beside his wife in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, there to await the morning of the resurrection, when we have a sweet hope of meeting him, together with all the redeemed family of God around the dazzling throne of God to praise the Father, Son and ever blessed Spirit forever. Written by one I hope loved him for Christ's sake.

S. P. KNIGHT

RESOLVED, that we, the church at Hillsdale, bow in humble submission to the will of Him who is to wise to err, and too merciful to be unkind.

RESOLVED, that we extend to the bereaved family our heartfelt sympathy.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book, a copy sent to the family and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church at Hillsdale, Saturday night before the third Sunday in Feb. 1948.

(Elder) G. W. HILL, Mod. and Pastor
O. J. WRAY, Asst. Church Clerk

SISTER FANNIE MELISSA ADKINS departed this life Oct. 19, 1949. She was the daughter of William Sampson and Elizabeth McGee Adkins and was born on a farm between Salisbury and Powellsville, Md. July 18, 1868, where she lived her entire life. On June 10, 1894 she was baptized by Elder A. B. Francis, uniting with the Forrest Grove Church where she remained a member until God took her home. The church suffered a great loss as well as all of her relatives and friends. She lived to see her church get down to two members and one of them an invalid, but then God blessed her and the Church with an addition of three new members in 1945 and one in 1946.

Sister Fannie was never married but left several devoted nieces and nephews. At the time of her death she was living alone at the Adkin's homestead. She had lived there alone since the death of her sister, Rhona, in 1935. She was ill only a short time and seemed to be reconciled to God's will as she always was in every condition. Her funeral was held in the Forrest Grove meeting-house and her body placed in the adjoining cemetery.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

PLEASE REMEMBER

1.—To renew your subscription promptly when due, if possible. The date on your wrapper cover will show to when you have paid.

2.—That when your remittance reaches us before the 10th of the month, credit will be shown with the next issue of the paper, otherwise it cannot be shown until the second month following. This also applies to changes of address.

MEETINGS

Mt. Carmel Church, Coffee Springs, Ala., meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m.
W. A. WILLIAMS and J. J. COLLINS, Pastors.

Ramah Church, Cottonwood, Ala., meets each third Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Mt. Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church, located 2 miles south of Dothan, Ala., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Old Union Primitive Baptist Church meets each Saturday before fourth Sunday, near Dozier, Ala.
Harmony Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles S. W. of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Little Hope Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m., ten miles west of Fayette, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Liberty Church meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before, 11 a. m., eight miles south of Gordo, Ala.
O. G. CARVER, Pastor.

Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Sunday and Saturday before, five miles north of Hartford, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Bethlehem Church, Malvern, Ala., meets each second Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Hopeful Church, Ozark, Ala., meets each fourth Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

The Primitive Baptist Church at Pratt City, Ala., holds meeting every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock. Meeting place at Alder St. at the top of the hill. First car stop going into Pratt City from Birmingham.
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor.

Ephesus Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday and Saturday before in Slocomb, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each first Saturday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

Wrights' Creek Church, Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday, 11 a. m.
J. J. COLLINS, Pastor.

New Prospect Church meets each third Sunday at 11 a. m., six miles S.E. of Sulligent, Ala.
H. MATT BROCK, Pastor.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church meets each 4th Sunday, south end Three Notch St., Troy, Ala.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a. m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. H. Y. BEAUCHAMP, Pastor,
137 Chestnut Ave., Long Beach, Cal.

Bethel Church meets every third Sunday and

Saturday night before at the home of L. H. Riley, 5265 Ardelle, Stockton, Cal. For information write Elder L. L. WILSON, 2627 North Tulare St., Bakersfield, Cal.

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship third Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr., 5214 Harper St., Dillon Park, Washington 19, D. C.

Salem Primitive Baptist Church meets each first Sunday, 11 a. m., north end Harrison Ave., Panama City, Fla.
F. A. COLLINS, Pastor.

Salem Old School Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho, meets every second Sunday at 5th and E. Park St.

Pleasant Valley Church Kingman, Kansas, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before, every second month (Nov., Jan., etc.)
L. L. SCHENCK, Moderator, Williamstown, Kans.

The Lost Creek Church of Old School Predestinarian Baptists meets first Sunday each month and Saturday before near Denton, Carver Co., Ky. Ten miles south of Grayson and two miles from Denton on Grayson and Denton Highway. Leave U.S. 60 at Grayson via Hutchins. Take graveled road to the church.
C. H. EVANS, Pastor.

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, Ky.
R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

The Zion Church of Primitive Baptists meets the first Sunday in each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. on South 7th St., Mayfield, Ky.
O. W. PERKINS, Pastor.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every first and third Sundays at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert St.

Meetings are held with the Black Rock Church (outside of Baltimore, Md.) every second Sunday.

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a. m. in the meeting-house.

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church
ASHOKAN, N. Y.

Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 1:30 p. m.

The Middleburgh Old School Baptist Church meets fourth Sunday in each month. Services held in the American Legion rooms, over Judge Golding's office (third floor), Main Street, Cobleskill, N. Y., 11 a. m. and 2 p. m.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

**Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY**

Meetings every first and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 23rd St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to Park Room second floor. 11 A. M.-1:30 P. M.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

Dan River Church between Danville, Va., and Reidsville, N. C., meets each fourth Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday before.

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

The Predestinarian Baptists meet at Primitive Baptist Church, corner Shotwell St. and Fizer Ave., Memphis, Tenn., on second Sunday each month at 11 a. m. and Saturday night before.

E. H. LANIER, Clerk.

Sardis Church meets first Sunday each month at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 2:30 p. m. at Potter Co., Court House, Amarillo, Texas, Elder C. E. Turner, Assistant Pastor.

The Old Orderly Mt. Zion (Cash) Predestinarian Baptist Church meets on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in each month, at the home of Bro. J. J. Darnell, Campbell, Texas.

Sister SIMMONS, Clerk.

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets first and third Sundays each month 11 a. m. 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas.

L. D. ROSE and W. W. TAYLOR, Pastors

Forth Worth, Texas, Primitive Baptist Church, 1211 8th Ave., meets first Sunday in each month at 11:00 a. m. and Saturday at 2 p. m. Take South Summit car to All Saints Hospital, get off and go one block North to meeting-house.

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets each first Sunday 11 a. m., Saturday before 2:30 p. m., on Little York Highway, 4 miles north of Houston, Texas. One mile east of Highway 76.

W. O. BEENE, Pastor.

The original Pilgrim Rest Church of Lawn, Texas, meets every first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor.
HOWARD EASON, Clerk.

Macedonia Church of Predestinarian Baptists meets at Rising Star, Texas each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 2 p. m.

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

Mt. Olive Church of the Predestinarian Baptists, Stockdale, Texas, meets the third Sunday in each month at 10:30 a. m. in the Dr. Wood church-house. Those interested write Mrs. Lela Culpepper, Stockdale, Texas.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk.

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets every fourth Sunday at 10:30 a. m. and Saturday before at 11 a. m. at the home of E. B. Ault on Progresso Highway, three and one half miles south of Weslaco.

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

Danville Primitive Baptist Church meets each second Sunday 11 a. m. and Saturday night before Bradley Road, Danville, Va.

W. R. DODD, Pastor.

Malmaison Church, ten miles from Danville, between Chatham and Danville, Va., meets each first Sunday 11 a. m. D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor.

Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church meets each third Saturday at 2:30 p. m. and Sunday at 11 a. m., Fairmont Park, 3023 Cottage Toll Road, Norfolk, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church meets each fourth Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting house, 28th St., South Richmond, Va.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor.

Little Zion Predestinarian Baptist Church meets at my residence, on Pacific Highway, U. S. 99, about one mile southeast of the southern city limits of Chehalis, Wash., the fourth Sunday of each month at 11 a. m.

C. M. FISHER.

Bethel Old School Baptist Church, Riffe, Wash., meets every third Sunday, 11 a. m. in the meeting house.

I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.
ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

Mizpah Church, Touchet, Washington, meets the fourth Sunday and Saturday before.

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash.

A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

Harmony Old School Baptist Church meets each second Sunday at 11 a. m. and Saturday before at 3 p. m. about four miles east of Huntington, W. Va., N. S. Route 60 on Russel Creek.

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

TO OUR READERS

After making three trips to the Hospital, where we were for a total of 63 days, and spending many weeks at home, we are glad to announce that beginning with May 29th, we were able to begin assuming some of our regular duties again. We again wish to thank our brethren and friends for their interest in our welfare.—R. L. D.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118

RUTHERFORD, N. J., AUGUST, 1950

No. 8

POETRY

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted;
that I might learn thy statutes." Psalms 119:71

"I went astray before I was afflicted;
I wandered thoughtlessly from paths of right;
My foot had slipped, had not Thy love prevented,
And brought my foolishness before Thy sight.

And now I thank Thee for Thy wise correction;
Not joyous once it seemed, but hard to bear,
Till Thou didst bring me to Thy wealthy places,
To find the joys Thy chastened, share.

I am not poorer for Thy fires' refining;
'Tis true Thou didst take many things away,
But much more Thou didst give, and Thine own
gladness
Reigns o'er my heart with gentle, soothing sway.

Nor do I love Thee less since Thou didst chasten;
Nay, Lord, Thou knowest well I love Thee more;
My heart goes out with more intense affection,
With more exclusive longing than before.

I would not be without the lessons taught me,
E'en though I learned them in the school of pain;
Thou didst draw me, and teach Thy child to profit,
Not only for Thy glory, but my gain.

I know Thee better since Thou didst afflict me—
Know more about Thy tender sympathy,
Thy patient love, Thy faithfulness so wondrous,
Thy precious thoughts of peace and love to me.

Thou art more dear to me, my chief beloved,
My heart is glad in Thee, and satisfied,
And when I feel Thy presence, it is easy
To count as vanity, all else beside.

Dear Lord, I thank Thee for Thy wise correction,
Not joyous once it seemed, but hard to bear;
But now I know it was because Thou lovedst me,
And I bless Thee for this token of Thy care."

Kate Staines

Submitted by (Mrs.) LAURA REED GOOCH

CORRESPONDENCE

"Is any thing too hard for the Lord?"
Gen. 18:14.

Abraham was asked the above question. According to nature it could not be, but it was. We are always full of doubt and I am speaking to the people that have been born of the Spirit and have rejoiced in God our Savior. Even those that have been called to the ministry have many times been made to doubt. Yes, doubt our call by grace, also doubt our call to the ministry. Thomas doubted yet he had seen the Lord; Peter doubted and even denied the Savior; Paul was cast down and doubted, fearing, after he had preached to others, he himself might be a cast-away. Persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed. O! wretched man that I am. Sarah laughed, Abraham doubted, Isaac was born, the promised seed, contrary to nature but by the power of God. Here in type, Isaac the one that it was said of, "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Miracles are being performed every day, every hour. A miracle is a supernatural operation performed alone by the power of God. John who had been shut up in prison, hearing of the miracles that Jesus did, doubted in his mind, and, dear brethren, when we are shut up in prison we have time to think. Even though John had seen the one in question, had baptized him, heard the voice that spoke saying, "This is my

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Jesus did not send back the answer that I am the Christ, but shows John again the miracles that were being performed: the dead are raised, something that the world in all its power cannot do, no one can raise the dead but Almighty God; the lepers are cleansed, this baffled the science and medical profession then and now; the poor have the gospel preached unto them, this what the world calls easy and any one can learn to do it, they are liars, and any one can give their heart to God and be saved, but Jesus tells John and classes the preaching of the gospel to a supernatural source for the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to the believer; and the poor leper who came to Jesus asking help saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," "Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean." And he said to Lazarus, "come forth." There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

I have heard it said the day of miracles is past, but not so for every hour, every minute there are poor sinners being brought to the knowledge of the truth. This is something that man cannot do, money cannot buy, all the powers combined in the earth cannot accomplish it, it is truly a miracle. Life must precede action and God is the only giver of life. Jesus, who is truth, spoke the truth to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Here is a miracle that you, my dear readers, can vouch for in your own experience, and as the hymn writer said, "Tis mine to inherit, I'll glory begin." Ye are witnesses to these things, you have the witness within and you believe what Jesus told Nicodemus, these two witnesses establish the fact. What I say or what you say will not change the truth of

God, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and whether we like it or not he is still at the helm working out his own purpose according to his own will and purpose of his own glory. Rejoice, dear brethren, and be exceedingly glad that your name is written in the book of life; be glad that he has revealed himself to you. All we know of him he has taught us, all we have he has given us, and thanks be unto God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only one that can give us peace, the only one that can save. We thank him for our repentance for he has granted it to us, and faith to understand his saving grace, and what he gives abides with us always, this faith, hope and charity. Charity is the greatest of these gifts Paul says. Charity is love in action and was the great self-moving cause even when we were dead in sins. It quickened us to life, raised us up together, and made us to sit in heavenly places. What a wonderful God we have! There is nothing too hard for the Lord. The Lord asks, "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" I would say no for he is omnipotent. To Elder Dodson first, then to all who know God in truth, this is dedicated.

(Elder) GEO. L. WEAVER
2802 Marcum Terrace,
Huntington, W. Va.

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken."—Gen. 3:22-23.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is in the strength of our God (I hope) I am attempting to write on so great a subject. When requested to write this I felt oh who am I to write of the deep things

of God, but immediately faith began its work in my heart I hope, for I felt sure if it pleased God to give me a mind on this line of truth, he was able to fill my feeble mind with words to write.

It is clearly understood I believe that what we write about these things are not taught us of man for to know a thing naturally you have to see it for yourself, and when this marvelous work was being done Adam and Eve were the only people on earth. Think of what peace and contentment there must have been with them in the beautiful garden of Eden with all manner of fruit and beauty there, and they could eat of it all except of the tree of knowledge. At this time they did not fear God. (But remember Jesus stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world to redeem his people from under the curse of the law.) "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." The serpent told Eve to eat of the fruit would make her wise. She ate and gave it to Adam and he did eat. Seemingly before this eating took place they had no knowledge. God revealed to Adam that Eve was taken from man, and he said she shall be called woman, and enabled Adam to name everything that God had made, but the tree of knowledge was placed in the garden to give them the knowledge of good and evil, natural knowledge to my mind. There is good and evil in our natural lives: the good is to be a good citizen, honest and square in our dealing with our fellow man, good workers, providing well for our own household, enjoying the fruit of our labors, etc; the evil is scheming, defrauding and wrongfully treating our fellow man. Is this not the knowledge received by our forefathers of the natural activities of this world, which is a type of the spiritual knowledge re-

ceived in the new birth, and as God told them, in the day thou eateth thereof thou shalt surely die and they did; died to the peaceful mind they had enjoyed, and that day death passed upon all, and with God a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, in other words it is one eternal day with God. Since that day that Adam and Eve became wise, men have sought out many inventions. Oh, the greatness of God speaking this world into existence; forming Adam of the dust of the ground; causing a deep sleep to fall on him; taking a rib out of his side, making it a woman and presenting her to Adam as it was not good for him to dwell alone; putting them in the garden where God had placed everything that was necessary to be there. Watch all his works, how marvelous indeed. Cain and Abel were the two first sons to be born in this world. Look at the beginning of these things. Cain was a tiller of the ground, Abel was a keeper of sheep. Neither of them knew why it was so but each brought an offering of the best they had. Cain's offering was from the ground which God had cursed before Cain ever tilled it. With vain expectation Cain offered the very best he could which before God is as filthy rags, workings of Cain's hands. Abel, keeper of sheep, brought forth an offering the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof. He offered it up by faith and God had respect for him and his offering, but Cain and his offering he did not respect. Abel offered his by faith which was given him of the Lord.

Just so he hears the prayer of his little ones when he gives them the spirit of prayer, but all that is produced by our own effort falls to the ground. Oh how marvelous are the works of Almighty God. He was and is bringing all things to pass as it seems good

in his sight, or according to the determinate council of God. Time passed on. (Gen. 4:8) Cain talked with Abel, his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel and slew him, but that doctrine that is so much hated, that Abel represented, is still standing and will ever stand, and all the powers visible or invisible cannot overthrow it thanks be to God.

When God placed Adam and Eve in the garden they were not in a state of ability to grasp knowledge as to the activities of this world, how to make use of all that the Father put in this earth for their good. Just so the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit before the new birth. God placed the tree of knowledge in the garden, and the serpent was on time for his part in the matter. The command was given, the law broken and all fell into condemnation, as Adam, being not deceived but willing to go down in order to be with Eve, his wife. So Jesus stood as a lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, and at the appointed time of the Father came down, born of the virgin Mary, and took the sins of his people upon himself to conquer death, hell and the grave that where he is they shall be in eternity. The perfection of Gods' work is so great, "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." He watches over them from the beginning of time and on through eternity; he sets the bounds of their habitation and establishes their going; he is their repentance, their hope, their faith, their charity, their salvation; he is their all in all. Yea, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Our road is not an easy one, we must also suffer with him if we would reign with him in glory. He suffered as no man suffered, even cried out on the cross,

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yea, he was tempted in all points even as we, yet without sin that he should know how to succor them that were likewise tempted.

God's children are born of earthly parents and all grow up together, all nature the children of wrath even as others, but there comes a time when they begin to have trouble along the way. In the beginning of this way they find they cannot go free like their friends, something inside is telling them not to do this and that. Oh, why do I have to be different from the others we say, and we begin to strive to go along with them, but how little we know of his restraining power. We begin to find that we are peculiar and folks look at us and wonder why we are thus. We want to tell them but we cannot, neither can they understand. At last we give up, knowing we are different, but why we ourselves do not know. We strive to mend our way before God only to grow worse. We begin to beg for mercy. "Ye must be born again," but that is all a mystery to us for we know not how it could be. The first scripture that seemed to embrace me was "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." That was the sweetest *shall* I had ever known for I believed I was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and that some day I would be filled. I humbly hope there came a time when the Bible described to me how and when that was done. "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." Oh, I hope I am not deceived but I have enjoyed that gentle breeze that seems to lift our souls above this old world, and the sweet meditation that gives us re-

newed strength and courage sufficient for our day. Thus the child grows in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I heartily endorse Elder W. D. Griffin's article on 1 Peter 2:2-3. Earthly parents have to try different foods for their babies, sometimes not being able to find the proper kind of milk lose them, but not so with our heavenly Father for he prepares the child to receive the food that is needful for it, whether it be the sincere milk of the word or the strong meat. Without the preparation of God they cannot receive either. But oh my soul, when it pleases our Lord to give us understanding, and he fills our hearts with his love the whole world looks different, and we feel we can go for days in his strength; then so soon it fades away and we, like John, ask "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" It is in these dark and trying times we learn we are not (of ourselves) able to stand. We find we have no strength and resolve to be silent on the previous things we hoped to have been ours for surely it would not have been thus with us if we were a child, but we yet have to learn we are not able to hide our emotions when filled with rejoicing for love maketh us not ashamed. So we find the blessing from the Lord has left us a cripple, but bless his holy name he also gave us a staff to lean upon and that staff is Jesus, and his grace is sufficient for us. Oh, can I claim such promises for me? I can but write the things I have felt, heard and seen when he bids me look. I must close there is no end to these things.

Brother Dodson, I am sending this for your disposal, trusting and believing you are capable of judging. May God's richest blessing be with you and all the Associate Editors to continue

your good work is my humble prayer.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL
3347 Tutwiler Avenue,
Memphis, Tenn.

Centralia, Va.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.: I am enclosing check to renew my subscription for two years. Sorry I am behind with my renewal, but I am getting forgetful and find if I do not attend to things at once I often forget until I am reminded again.

Bro. Dodson, I am enclosing a letter from a very dear Brother and Deacon, Maj. A. D. Alston. I would like to see it published in the *Signs* if it meets your approval. I feel it is too good to lay aside as it has been so much comfort to me and I think will be of comfort to others. Your brother in hope.

G. S. WEIDER

We thank Brother Weider for sending us this good letter. R. L. D.)

Georgia Military District, Box 1736,
Atlanta, Ga.

OUR VERY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER WEIDER: Your letter sent to us at Herdon, which I have here, is very dear to me and to us both. It is a prayer for our keeping, and particularly for my direction and keeping as a deacon in God's house, and it comes to me from a brother and father in the church. I want to keep it all my life; I want to go back and refer to it when trials and troubles seem to arise before me. You have traveled the road, and, indeed, I am only to begin. May the Lord in his mercy and compassion look down upon me and sustain me, and enable me to do whatever work he has for me to do in such a manner as will reflect all the glory to him, and in every way be acceptable to him and in his sight.

Brother Weider, I look upon the days that I was privileged to know you peo-

ple, live close to you and to visit a little with you; I recall them with sweet memory; you seemed to us as parents; you loved us, helped us, comforted us and advised us. At Hopewell we felt so much away from the Baptists—none there—yet you were a near neighbor. I do hope and pray that the Lord, in his infinite mercy, may keep and comfort your people, and the dear ones of the church there in Richmond. It does seem that as we grow older our burdens become heavier and our afflictions greater. This life is but a moment, relatively, and is so soon passed away and the eternal life is before us: what matters the things of this life that are so perishable and so soon gone. Let our eyes, our hearts and our souls be staid upon the things of his kingdom; and may we be kept submissive and obedient to his will, made willing to present this body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable in his sight, for it is indeed by the mercy of God that we are enabled to do that. The flesh is not willing, but the spirit, strengthened by the Lord, can enable us to do it.

Carolyn and the girls are now with me here in Atlanta. They came down for about eight weeks. I was so glad to see them again. What a blessing they are to me! O if I could, I would praise my Lord and Savior for sparing us to live together, and to be a comfort one to the other. We have been blessed to have a companion that could understand spiritual things in a like manner, and to be made a great comfort to each other. Oftentimes I feel that we have to be separated in order that we not depend on each other too much, but that we be brought low and forced to call upon the Lord in our distresses. We have to travel through the valleys, else we would forget the Lord and he who saved us from our sins.

Brother Weider, you spoke of the

duties that often come before the deacon. Why I had to be ordained, and straightway sent away from the church—yet not away from sister churches—I cannot know. It has been a burden to me and a cross. If I must act in any way as a servant to the church, I would want it to be, at least at first, in my home church and under the watchcare of the brethren that asked for my ordination; I would want to be corrected and guided by them, for indeed I need their guidance and their help. But the Lord did not will it that way. Why, I cannot know; maybe I will some day, maybe never. I want to be submissive and I try to be obedient, but O how hard and how I utterly and miserably fail in my efforts. Then again, the Lord sometimes softens my heart and makes me sit still in peace and in submission; but O how it has to be the Lord that does it.

I remember with pleasure your visit to us in May. There is no way for me to express what it meant to me. I hope that the visit can be repeated. If I know my heart, there is a love and a fellowship there for you that is more than a natural love; nor did I put it there or have anything to do with it; it is the Savior's love that is reflecting there; it is deeper and not to be compared with natural love. I think I love the Lord's people and the church that he sustains here on earth, and sometimes when he enables me to see that church and that people, as only he can enable us to do, I am made to long for them and to reach out, as it were to embrace them with my whole heart, crying what else in this world matters! But then I am snatched back to the realities of this life and my daily duties. We have only the earnest of the inheritance while here; we see him only as through the lattice; only as he looks in by the window; he is present, yet we cannot see

him, perceive him and embrace him. We are made to seek him and to go about the village in search of our beloved. Mary Magdalene stood at the tomb weeping, crying for him and seeking him. His very presence was with her and enabled her to seek and to cry and to pray, yet she could not perceive him; then he spoke one word, Mary, and she knew him and fell at his feet, and would have touched him; indeed would have held on to him with every effort and every bit of her strength lest she lose him again; but no, he would not let Mary touch him. To see him was enough. Mary was instructed to go to the brethren and tell them of these things. Mary was to learn that she must henceforth commune with her Savior, not by touch, but by faith. She was sent away with a duty and a message from the very Savior's presence or sight; She must walk by faith, she must know by faith that he was and is always near and strengthening for every task, and every trial and every day's demands.

The other disciples came, looked in the tomb, saw the grave clothes and the napkin all folded and in order; then they turned and went away to their own homes. Why did not Mary turn away and return to her own home? Was it not the very present strength of her Lord and Master that would not let her go away? Why did she persevere? why did she remain and cry, I cannot go! I must have my Master! I cannot live without him! I must have him! My very life depends on him. So she *wept*, and she *stooped down*, and she *turned*; it was only by his strength that she persevered until he made himself known to her. Mary was the first of all of the disciples to be shown the resurrection; the very first the see Jesus after he had come forth from the grave, conqueror over the grave and death.

I did not mean to start writing about

Mary. I meant to say that I hold in my heart a deep and God given love for you, my dear brother. And I shall say that I believe it is of the same love that came from the Savior and existed in Mary's heart when she cried for her Lord and Master.

This Sunday is meeting day at your church; how I would love to walk in at the meeting with my little family! How I would love to go home with Brother and Sister Weider and talk and visit with them. May it please the Lord to enable us to commune together in his name at some time that seemeth wise in his sight. Until then may we be made a willing, submissive and obedient people in his sight. Yours in the bonds of sweet love and fellowship of Christ. DOUGLAS, CAROLYN AND THE GIRLS.

Gantt, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I want to try in my weakness to write to you a personal letter. You remember once I told you that I wanted to see you, and that I had rather see you than any man I knew of. That want is still with me. I know not whether I will ever see you in the flesh, but I believe there will be a time when we will see each other. We cannot tell how long it may be but we know the time is drawing nigh, and we hope that time will be a happy day with us, not only us but all the Lord has called. We know not whether our names were written in the Lamb's book of life but if they were then we will. We read in the scriptures where it says, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound," and sometimes I believe I know that sound for there is no other sound like it.

My mind has been meditating on love for a great while, and that comes to me in this way in the question, what is love? God is love. He is the only

true love there is and all other loves are only like love. They will fade away like the winds that blow, but this love will stand forever the same. I belonged to the church a good many years before I knew what love is, and to tell you how it came to me I read Sister Young's experience in the *Signs of the Times*, and I was made to love her. Although I had never seen her I have that same love for her. I believe that is the way God displays his love among his children. If it does not come that way it is no more than like love. Since that time I have read many experiences published by you. People that I have never met I love. It is not what we can see that we count love, but that what we feel. No one has ever seen God for he is a spirit, and by the Spirit we are made to know. I believe there are many claiming to be the children of God that say they have no experience. I believe that he brings all of his children by the same path, and they cannot be mistaken for the signboard is too plain. We know there are only two ways and only one way is right. That way we know the lion's whelp has never trod nor the vulture's eye has seen for there is nothing dead on that way. There never has been or ever will be. I have been made to wish that all the true lovers of God would publish their experience; we would then know where their foundation lay.

Dear Brother Dodson, I am an old creature who passed my ninetieth mile post in March 1949, and I feel illiterate. I cannot see to read or write and my hearing is limited. I never go to preaching on account of being unable to hear. I sit and meditate a lot on things that are a joy to me. The preaching that I get now is from the *Signs of the Times*, and I have to get that by some one reading it for me. I thank the Lord that I can always have some

one to read for me, and therefore claim that the Lord has always been good to me when I knew him not. I will close by asking you to give me an answer, sweet or bitter as it may be in your mind. Your brother in hope of eternal life.
J. S. SCOTT

134 E. Prince Road, Tucson, Ariz.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR ELDER: Regarding the request contained in your good letter I am glad to report that we got together recently with about ten church members from various parts of the country who were in good standing with their home churches and the services were much enjoyed by all present. There is an organized church at Phoenix and their pastor and some members met with us.

I was distressed to notice in Old Faith Contender where you had a serious operation but was doing very well, and I hope and pray you will soon recover.

I am enclosing a letter from Elder G. B. Bird which I would like you to edit and publish in the *Signs of the Times*. I shall let you hear of our progress here from time to time, and hope to hear of your personal welfare soon. Yours in hope.

(Elder) T. J. ROBINSON

Canada, Ky.

Elder T. J. Robinson,

134 E. Prince Road, Tucson, Ariz.

BELOVED IN THE LORD: I really feel ashamed of myself for not writing you sooner, but there seems to be so many things in my way that I seldom have a mind to write any more. I assure you, dear brother, there is not a word in either of your two letters that I am not in hearty accord with, in fact I have often expressed my feelings in this manner to my dear wife. There are none of the servants of my God that I am

more fully in oneness of mind and spirit with, and few indeed that will compare with you in the high plane of wisdom and understanding. I am just trying to say that I hold you as a jewel of great price, a brother in wisdom, for are we not the children of wisdom, brought up in wisdom's way? which way is one of trouble and suffering to the flesh—the outer man—the thing that shall be destroyed, that must be destroyed in us before we can worship God in true holiness. We are told that God has “created the waster to destroy,” and in my own experience I can witness truthfully that this waster is created in me to destroy that which is unholy and unclean.

Yes, dear brother, I firmly believe that Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, which birth was but the manifestation of that that eternally was or is. (I think the word *is* to be more appropriate in the eternal now of God) So also the flood, the children of Israel going down into Egypt, the tower builders, Cain and Abel with their offerings which is a vivid portrait of our offerings before the Lord today. Often when I am come to the stand I am made to know that I am Cain, that I am raised up to shame and contempt, and I am troubled until I cry, “My punishment is greater than I can bear.” It is then that I am made to know that I am an “unprofitable servant.” Again, at another time, I am blessed to hear the words of my Lord whispered in my soul, “Come, ye blessed of my Father.” Yes, we in vital and living reality inherit something; we put on immortality and enter into the holy of holies. We cease to be a servant but become the Sons of God in the oneness of love, power and wisdom. We then, for these brief moments, witness the putting of all things under his feet; time is ended, time is no longer; in the spirit of life

we witness the resurrection of the dead, not only are we then living witnesses, but we are actual partakers of it when we are raised with Christ. Those of God's children that have had this experience know that “There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” The word *is* means in the present or now tense. Perhaps all this may seem foolish to you for you see that I have such a poor way to express what I am trying to tell.

I am deeply interested in what you tell me about the dear children of God out there where God has moved you to dwell. Write me more about them and your labors among them that I may learn what God hath wrought. There is nothing new to tell you about Mates Creek, things are about as usual with them. I think I know that I can only go to all God sends me, nor can I fail in the most minute detail to go when, where and unto whom he sends me. He works out of my sight as well as out of my reach.

I have a dear niece, Mrs. Ida Hill, who with her family lives in Phoenix, Ariz. She is a member of the Providence Church in Poca. Ass'n. I do not know her street address, but I think her husband, Frank Hill, works in the Post Office at Phoenix. I am sure they would rejoice to meet you. If interested in getting in touch with them you could write her sister, Mrs. L. H. Dolin, St. Albans, W. Va. She would be glad to aid her precious sister in getting in contact with the people she loves. I must close. Please write again and I will hope to be more prompt in replying. Yours in sweet fellowship. (Elder) G. B. BIRD

Premier, W. Va.

ELDER R. LESTER DOBSON: I received the January issue of the *Signs of the Times* which is about the only preaching I hear except once in a while. I am

caught somewhere in the wilderness, hunting or wearing out the Bible, trying to find comfort, or out by myself somewhere mourning and groaning to the end of my strength, Then, too, there is much peace received following the many sorrows of this world. It seems I have been cut off from my people, being prevented from going to hear the truth proclaimed for some reason. I have had only a few opportunities to sit under the gospel of Christ in the meeting-house, but was privileged to attend the Association at Davy, W. Va. last year which blessing was too much for a wretched and guilty sinner as I. Nevertheless if it please the Lord it is well with me. What grace and mercy beyond this world through hope in Christ.

The subscription blank reminds me that my subscription is due which I find it impossible to renew now, but I want to continue to read the paper and hope to be able to send in the price when the Lord wills. It seems we are a family about as poor as can be and still survive both in natural and spiritual things. I look upon my little family that is so precious to me, seeing their needs, and must say if God wills give us raiment to wear and food to eat so that I can come again to my Father's house in peace. Then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set for a pillow shall be God's house. As I read this over it seems there is a beautiful type of the knowledge of God, drawing his people to a willing mind of confessing Christ as the only sound foundation for refuge from great distress. May some one who feels the revelation of it give their views on it for a poor, naked, undone soul as I feel to be.

I am not a member of the church, but it seems the same faith and hope that they, the Primitive Baptists, have

is the same experience that I have had if I have had any at all. Many times I wish to offer myself to the church, but so often see myself so unfit. When working in the field, mines or other places the spirit seems to revive me that I could well say that if I could give this testimony to them my desire would be fulfilled, but when I would I am a failure.

While clearing some new ground yesterday I sat down to think it all over and seemed to be in a trance, and had like a vision of standing before the chosen people, trying to give what I thought was a hope, which I thought was all gone, saying that in time I had tasted of salvation and it was sweet to my taste; but it did not seem reasonable for me to have it and I must take my place in the world with a very broken heart. Suddenly a voice from within that could not be held back bowed my head to the stones at my feet saying, "Salvation is of the Lord," and I rejoiced at the words.

About that time a man came along behind me up on the roadside, and threw a rock down at me and said something. I did not turn around for fear he would ask me "why cry." I have heard his testimony before trying to present an anti-Christ. He would have said if that be thy hope why not jump up and shout as those in the flesh and glorify Baal? But, my friend, when a man has been brought down to the dust of the earth, and willing to cry Abba Father, desiring to be absent in the body and present with the Lord he has already shouted praise unto his Lord, the almighty Creator of heaven and earth, the dry land and the seas. Though the thorn be in the flesh and the messenger of satan to buffet him his grace is sufficient, for by grace are ye saved; paid for with blood, sealed with the testimony of Christ. My

hope and desire is when this journey is finished, and we approach Jordan, such a river as we have never seen before where there was never a bridge; that the heir of all things shall convey us safely over to the other side flowing with milk and honey. Less than the least and very unworthy.

L. C. BRANCH

Stem, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: You have been in mind a number of times since I learned that you were ill and in a hospital. I was very glad to hear recently in a letter from Sister Ethel Werner that you were improving. I hope you are gaining steadily, and if the Lord's will may soon be restored to health.

It is not agreeable with us to be sick. I believe it was Daniel who said, "I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread." How true that is in sickness. Our taste and relish for the things we enjoy in health are taken from us; our strength is replaced by weakness; and like Job "wearisome nights are appointed" unto us. Paul has recorded a wonderful promise to the Lord's children in Corinthians, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness," and Isaiah says, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." Christ told his disciples to "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." When we are sometimes led into desert places how very precious many promises become to us. Words we have read again and again, but which until then had no special meaning for us, we can claim as our own; then the desert blossoms as the rose. Today I was reading a poem some one gave me, and which has been sweet to me. It may be

you already have it, but I will enclose a copy in case you have not. I believe it will express some of your experience.

I remember what dear brethren and friends you and Elder C. B. Hall were, and I felt you would be interested in this clipping from last Sunday's Greensboro paper about Sister Malone who is Sister Hall's mother. She is a most remarkable woman. One thing I would like to mention in connection with her fractured hip, which I was reliably told, was that at the time, I suppose that due to her advance age the doctors felt the only thing they could do for her was to make her as comfortable as they could. Pretty soon, as she states, her doctor was taken sick, and it was some days before he could see her again. When he did and found that the bones were in place and beginning to heal he said to her, "You have a better Physician than I am," and she replied, "I knew that all the time." She is a dear, sweet old lady.

The last copy of the *Signs* seemed better to me than usual. I much enjoyed your comments on the subject of the first letter. I must have read the same from your pen in October 1944, as you refer to it, but it had escaped me. I have not the least desire to introduce instrumental music in our church services, but all my life I have dearly loved music, (I mean real music, not the conglomeration of harsh, discordant sounds which confront us almost everywhere we turn these days) and especially in my loneliness it has been a great comfort to me. The letter of Brother Staggs, and the one of Sister Helen Jones were both good to me, too. Enclosed I am also sending a little token of my loving interest, to you. Yours in fellowship, I trust.

(Mrs.) LAURA REED GOOCH

2338 Orleans St., Bellingham, Wash.

DEAR ELDER AND BROTHER DODSON: I am enclosing my subscription for two years and please use the rest wherever you feel it is needed most. I should have sent in my subscription before this but we have been so unsettled I was waiting for a permanent address. There are no Old School Baptists here or any one I can talk with that is a comfort to me. They all believe in works we must do to be saved. One man wanted me to tell him how the Old Baptists differed from the other churches, and I tried to tell him in my weak way without getting into an argument with him. I told him Christ said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." He said, "Yes, as far as he could and now the rest is up to us." How can we poor, weak mortals limit God's power when he has all the power, and all the powers that be are ordained of him. I know from my own experience if not free grace then I am lost.

About thirty years ago I was trying the do and live system, and I wondered then why I could not be as good as I thought the others were and then I was shown that it was "not of works lest any man should boast." I was soon made to see the people I was fighting so hard against were my people. My father, as I believe you know, was a firm Old School Baptist, and it is the only faith I can feel any hope in. Even now at times my faith is so little I almost lay it by, yet sometimes it is sufficient if I were called to die. When I look back through my life, see how sinful I have been and still am, I often feel I am deceiving the church. The *Signs* is surely a comfort to me here among these strangers. I feel when they do not speak my language (the scriptures as I see them) they are strangers to me. When I opened my last *Signs* tears of joy came to my eyes. I

felt I was among my people again. How true these words are:

"We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness."

May God bless you and help you to keep up the good work you are doing as I believe that is the only "works" the scriptures speak of—as we grow in grace. As ever a little sister in hope of his mercy. (Mrs.) BLANCHE BROWN

1826 Williamson Road, Roanoke 12, Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: You may publish the enclosed letter in your good paper if you think it worthy of space. If not cast it aside and all will be well with me. I have been a subscriber since 1944 and the more I read your paper the better I like it. I have read so many articles I felt were worth the price of the paper. I am a shut in and do not hear preaching often so am hungering and thirsting for a crumb from the Master's table. Hope the Lord will bless you and give you strength and a mind to keep the paper going for it is a blessing to me.

I know the promise is "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but the little seasons He visits with us are so sweet it seems the most bitter trials will be easy to face. I feel too unworthy to claim a hope in his mercy, and a place among the dear brethren, yet if it was not for that little ray of hope that is given me, and the love I feel for them and the doctrine of an all wise, all powerful and unchangeable God whose counsel shall stand there would be nothing here to rest upon.

A few weeks past I was called to the home of a Deacon. A small company had gathered there for the purpose of receiving a brother in the church. I have known him and his wife for a number

of years, and have spent many happy moments talking with them. He was the most spiritual minded person I most ever knew. I felt to know his home was in the Primitive Baptist church. They gladly received him making me happy indeed and I am sure many others are. I am sure there was a burden lifted off him that will never return. I often thought I would mention the subject to him as I felt to know he was longing for a home with God's people, but the thought would come to me, who am I to invite knowing that it is God's work who has a plan, time and purpose for all things under the heavens. I feel he came home to his friends at God's time not his. His dear wife united with the church in 1948. She was one I dearly loved and not only I but all who knew her. She passed on to her eternal home in Jan. 1949. May the Lord bless and bring us together in that place where there is no death.

"Pity the nations O my God,
Constrain thy flock to come;
Send thy victorious word abroad,
And bring the stranger home."

God alone can turn our joys to sorrows, also our sorrows to joy. How well do I recall a time in my past life in the month of October. I was walking out to my garden. It was a lovely day, not a sorrow or worry on my mind. Just as I stepped inside the garden a still, small voice (deep within) spoke to me telling me I was going to die. A dark cloud fell over me. Oh, that guilt and burden that possessed my whole being. I felt to be sinking down, yes, beneath God's righteous frown. I was made to see God's power and man's nothingness, knowing if he cast me off I would be lost worlds without end. My continual breathing throughout the fall and winter months was a prayer, Lord have mercy on me, please God help

me out of this condition without thee I can do nothing.

"Amazed I stood, but could not tell
Which way to shun the gates of hell,
For death and hell drew near;
I strove indeed, but strove in vain;
The sinner must be born again,
Still sounded in my ear."

Pardon me for making this too lengthy. Yours in hope of a better world. (Mrs.) MAUDE A. MORAN

Route 1, Box 199, Sulphur Springs, Tex.

DEAR EDITOR OF SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Find enclosed \$3 to pay for another year's subscription for the dearly loved paper; I do enjoy it so much. It contains what I hope I believe; it is my food and my drink. I am in Dallas, Tex. at present and had the pleasure of going to meeting Sunday and hearing Elder Taylor of Arkansas preach. He preached a wonderful sermon, Christ the firm foundation. As ever a sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

(Mrs.) H. A. CHANCE

1330 Mt. Holly St., El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, AND TO ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: I am sending you some of my meditation on the Scriptures. If you think it worthy of space in the *Signs of the Times* you may publish it, if not cast it in the waste basket and it will be all right with me.

My mind is on the word power. The power of God, the only true and living God who made all things that are made in heaven and earth for his own glory, for his own chosen elect people which he hath purposed to do before the foundation of the world. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." Eph. 1:19. It is the power of the Spirit of God in you that causes you to be-

lieve in God. There is no power but of God, and the word God means power. The word exceeding means greater than all the powers of man; greater than all other powers combined. "Having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1: 5 and 11. This was Daniel's God, the God that delivered the three Hebrew children from the fire, and I have a strong hope that this is my God. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Heb. 8:10. I have a hope that I am one that is included in this covenant which was made before the world began. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Rom. 8:14-15. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, (This does not mean our natural Adam spirit we have in childbirth; but the Spirit of Christ, Christ in you the hope of glory.) that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:16. It takes the power of the Spirit of God to change our natural spirit of the Adam nature which is contrary to the Spirit of God. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." Rom. 8:6. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." Isa. 45:7. "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." Rom. 9:22.

Some will say, that makes God the author of sin; but I say, God did not sin in all that he proposed to do and did; for how could God sin against himself? Did not the only true God who made all things have a right to make everything his own way for his own purpose, known only to himself? "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he (God) yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Rom. 9:19-20. "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. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (How come that it was not fixed with faith in them? I say that God had not given the Spirit of understanding to them, for it was not his purpose that they should believe. The scripture reads that Christ knew from the beginning who would believe on him. Without that exceeding greatness of his power of the Spirit was first given to them they could not believe.) There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Heb. 4: 1-2-9-10.

While I am trying to write on the subject of the power of God, I can only write what comes to my mind first, and my words seem to be scattering, but I write this verse, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Heb. 4:12. The word of God here does not mean the scriptures, for the scriptures are not quick and powerful and sharper than any twoedged sword. I do not find in my Bible any place where Christ or any of the apostles ever referred to the scriptures as being the word of God. "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5: 37-39. If the scriptures were the word of God, why did not Christ tell them to search the words of God? Do the scriptures testify of Christ to you when you read them: If Christ be not in you when you read them they will not, nor will you have any understanding of them; but if Christ be in you the hope of glory, then you have faith to believe them and rejoice in the truth. "I receive not honour from men, But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." John 5:41-42. All men have not faith. They must have been some of Esau's offspring, the children of the non-elect, who Christ knew would not believe. Your brother in hope of the first resurrection with the saints.

F. L. COX

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The regular annual meeting with the Brookfield Church and Congregation, Slate Hill, N. Y. is scheduled to be held as usual on Friday before the fourth Sunday, August 25, 1950. A welcome is extended to our brethren and friends at that time.

R. LESTER DODSON

The Powell's Valley Association of Predestinarian Baptists will convene, God willing, with the Church at Powder Spring Gap at the head of Dotson's Creek, Union Co., Tenn. in its 131st ses-

sion, Sept. 1, 2 and 3, 1950. All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

J. E. WALTON, Clerk

(Elder) JOHN WILDER, Mod.

Rt. 1 Maynardsville, Tenn.

Pineville, Ky.

The Bethel Church of Predestinarian Baptists, Riffe, Washington will hold their annual three days meeting, the Lord willing, beginning Aug. 20, 1950 and continuing the two following days. All lovers of truth are invited. For further information write.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk
Riffe, Wash.

The annual three days meeting of the Predestinarian Baptists will be held, the Lord willing, with Elgin Church at the old Highland school house, five miles east of Elgin on the Elgin and Joseph highway, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 1, 2 and 3, 1950.

All who can come will be welcome, and we especially desire ministers of our faith and order to be with us.

Written by request of the church.

R. R. WOLF, Pastor

The First Primitive Baptist Church at Memphis, Tenn. will, the Lord willing, hold its regular annual two days meeting on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 12 and 13, 1950. Our little band here is all that is left of the Miss. River Association. All lovers of the truth are welcome. The church is located on the corner of Fizer Ave. and Getwell St. just south of the Kennedy General Hospital.

(Elder) H. G. BROWN, Pastor
E. H. LANIER, Clerk

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y. on Wed. and Thurs., Sept. 13 and 14, 1950. Meeting will open at 10:30 D.S.T. Wed. morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and ministers of our faith and order in fellowship with us, and all friends of our faith will be heartily welcomed. Those arriving on Tuesday will go to the Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes, where they will be cared for. Those arriving Wed. morning will go directly to the meeting-house in Shokan. Buses connecting with bus lines to N. Y. City and Oneonta pass through Shokan and Ashokan; also Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. Central R. R. For the information of strangers it may be noted that the villages of Shokan and Ashokan are connected, each having a separate post-office. The meeting-house is located in Shokan.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver desires that his correspondents address him 2802 Marcum Terrace, Huntington, W. Va.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

AUGUST, 1950

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Rutherford, N. J.

IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH

We have been asked by a sister in Texas to offer some thoughts on the above subject for the consideration of our readers. As we attempt to approach the subject, we are almost overwhelmed with the enormity of the field into which we are liable to find ourself. In a true and final analysis of the spiritual church we must confess that it embraces each and every member of the mystical body of Christ which, like the grains of sand by the seashore, are innumerable. We have assumed that our inquirer has reference more particularly to the militant or visible church here in the world, which is but a small remnant of that group which no man can number. Our understanding of the meaning of the word *church* is "called out," separated from the world, or as Jude says, "them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ." This implies to us that God, by the mighty workings of his power in the hearts of his people, sets them apart to serve him. God spake by the mouth of the prophet, Isaiah, saying, "This people have I

formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." The church of God is a living body of baptized believers, and there are certain spiritual laws and principles by which she is governed. She worships the true and living God in spirit and in truth, and absolutely refuses to bow down to graven images or worship inanimate idols. Divine inspiration has employed different similes for presenting, in type, the visible church, and for the moment we shall consider it from the point of view of a building. We would say, first, that in order to clearly establish the identity of any specific edifice or structure it is necessary to furnish some descriptive marks which are peculiarly applicable to the object in question, and which are not applicable to other structures. A very important part of any building is the foundation. Unless this is solid, secure and durable, it will not withstand the assaults that will be made against it. In this respect, we could ask for no higher authority than the One who has been declared to be the head over all things to his church, which is his body, and he said to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Mat. 16:17-18. We cannot conceive of a stronger or more sure foundation for the church to rest upon here in this world than that of the revelation of God to his people. So long as he sits upon his eternal throne, doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and is pleased to condescend to make himself known unto those whom he foreknew and chose in Christ in the counsels of eternity, just that long will men and women of

Adam's race believe on and confess him whom to know is life eternal, despite all that men and devils can do to prevent it. The apostle Paul said to Timothy, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." We are definitely persuaded of the fact that one of the distinguishing marks of the true church of God is her belief in his sovereignty, and another one of these marks is that God reveals himself unto each and every one of his little ones before they can have any true conception of him who hath made all things for himself, and know that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that they may even ask or think. Since it was God who created the heaven and the earth and all that in them is, he is most certainly able to do all his pleasure, not only in heaven but in earth as well, and none can hinder him in his work or stay his hand. Paul spake concerning the church when he said, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. He also said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." We also like especially that scripture where Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This declares plainly to us that

God not only begins the good work in his people, but that he also will perform or perfect his purpose in them. The church, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, embracing every race on earth, is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." How unmistakably clear this sets forth that it is all God's work, from beginning to end. The Psalmist, many centuries before our Lord came into the world, said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." We are, indeed, glad that we are one who, if not deceived, have been taught both by the Scriptures and our own experience that the building of the church has not been left to poor vile and puny man, but we are persuaded that God works in his people both the will and the to do of his good pleasure. We hope the prophecy of Daniel has been fulfilled in us where he said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." God's church and kingdom are synonymous, and Jesus told his disciples that his kingdom was not of this world. We would like to emphasize the fact that God's church is composed of living characters, witnesses who will not lie, nor will they give his glory to graven images. Peter said, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have

tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." We like the manner in which Solomon described this work of God when he said, "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." In other words, nothing has been overlooked or neglected by God in either establishing his house here in the world, or in providing for her every need. Isaiah foretold what would come to pass in the last days by saying "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." She is above the earth, and the serpent with all of his deceivableness and unrighteousness is unable to do her real harm, for her life is hid with Christ in God, and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Notwithstanding the fact that we by nature are vile and corrupt, and cannot even think a good thought, yet God draws his chosen race by his rich resistless grace, for he who loved them with an everlasting love, draws them and they come from the North and the South, the East and the West, and they all go up that highway, which is not seen by the vulture's eye nor trodden by the lion's whelp, unto Mount Zion, the Holy City of our God. She is declared to be the perfection of beauty, and God dwells in her, for it is said that out of her the perfection of beauty God hath shined. This city is also said to be "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion,

on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge," and we are told to "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby." How good and how pleasant it is when we are enabled by God's Holy Spirit to "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." The city is also well watered, for "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the most High." In this city there is law and order, for the government is upon the shoulders of her King, and she delights in the law of her Lord, after the inward man. She is a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." The Lord has given unto her his word, which is a lamp unto her feet, and a light unto her path. It is written that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Those who profess to be followers of our Lord should certainly search the scriptures most diligently, for they testify of Jesus and instruct

us in the way of righteousness. Jesus said to his disciples, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven (the church): and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Here, it seems to us, we are told that anything which is not according to the scriptures, whether it be doctrine, order or keeping the ordinances, should be bound, or not permitted, while that for which we have a thus saith the Lord is to be maintained and earnestly sought after. The scriptures clearly set forth that the door by which one is to enter the visible church is baptism, which means immersion in water, not something else. Baptism is significant of death, burial and resurrection; therefore in order to be eligible for it, one must first be killed to the love of sin to the works of the law as a means of salvation; he must be buried or completely separated from his former life and have a love for righteousness and true holiness. Jesus said to those who followed after him, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." We believe this to be one of the most outstanding marks by which the true church can be identified. Where love abounds there will be the desire to walk softly and humbly before God, and a taking heed unto doctrine and to one's self, lest one of His little ones be offended. There seems to be a great turning away from the old paths to-day by many who choose to call themselves the true church, and we are referring particularly to those identified as Old School Baptists. They are introducing music, Sunday Schools, and pleading unduly it seems to us with the unregenerate to join the church. Such things, in our opinion, are gross departures from what the scriptures approve. In

the days of old it is said that God added to the church such as he would own and have to be saved. We believe in encouraging to the fullest extent those who give evidence of having passed from death unto life, but at the same time we also believe in requiring that every man who seeks admittance to the church give a reason of the hope that is within him. We fear the present day trend is to let down the bars all along the line, to become careless and indifferent with regard to both doctrine and order, as well as the kind of life we live. Membership in a sound and orderly Old School Baptist church should be a badge of honor, so to speak, in our walk among men. Where one does not live an honest, upright and moral life, the light that is in him is being hid under a bushel, and we are told by our Master that it should be placed in the candle stick where all that are in the house may see. We would like to see a striving to enter in at the strait gate, to observe all things whatsoever God hath commanded, especially on the part of Old School Baptists. We would also remind our readers that when Israel of old borrowed trinkets of gold, etc., from the Egyptians and made gods of them, they brought sorrow, suffering and death upon themselves, and we would strongly urge that Old Baptists be satisfied with the things of God's house and not borrow or adopt the methods of other people. The true church in order to maintain her identity, must be kept separate from the world and all its allurements, and "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." We have often thought of the prophecy of Isaiah as being fulfilled in this day, when we see those who profess to be God's people turning away from the things of his kingdom. Isaiah said, "seven women shall

take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." A careful reading of the fourth chapter of his prophecy will show that he was talking about the daughters of Zion, and not as we frequently hear applied to other so-called religious orders. Isaiah also, however, gave us a wonderful picture of the true church by saying, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." How good to behold in our time those branches which are abiding in the true vine, and see them bearing forth the fruits of righteousness. It is, indeed, a beautiful sight to behold churches not only earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, but at the same time adhering to the order of the house of God and keeping his commandments by manifesting their love for one another. We have endeavored to present some of the marks by which the true church can be identified here in the world to-day. Action speaks louder than words, and unless we believe and maintain the doctrine and order of God our Savior, we have no right to make any claim to being the true church of God.

Our inquirer also desires that we give our opinion as to when the church was actually organized, whether before or after the day of Pentecost. Jesus himself most certainly set the example by being the first to be properly baptized. It was also Jesus who instituted the Lord's Supper, and it was he who, after his death and resurrection, preached the gospel to Cleopas and the one that was with him while on their way to Emmaus. According to the record in the second chapter of Acts, following Peter's pentecostal sermon, "there were added

about three thousand souls" to the church, so we would judge that there must have been a body of baptized believers in existence at that time. We do not believe that the Scriptures give us more definite information on this point.

Our sister further says that she has a friend who is affiliated with another group who claims she cannot understand why we believe as we do. This is perfectly natural and normal, for no one can believe that Jesus is the Christ but by the workings of the Holy Ghost. He that believes and is baptized must have the witness within himself. Without this he simply cannot bear testimony to the things of God. When God sets up his kingdom in the heart he overthrows all other kingdoms; he writes his law in the heart and puts it in the inward part, and those who experience these things are made to turn away from all false idols and worship the true and living God in spirit and in truth, and they will have no confidence in the flesh.

We trust what we have said will be helpful to our sister and of interest to our readers.

R. L. D.

Copied from "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES." By Arthur W. Pink, Editor and Publisher, 29 Lewis St., Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, Scotland. August 1946 issue.

A. THREEFOLD MARVEL

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." Isa. 57:15. It will at once be obvious to any spiritual mind that no human pen, however gifted, could begin to do justice to such a verse as this: rather is he likely to detract from its sublimity and depreciate its grandeur in the estimation of the reader. It is one of those out-

standing declarations of Holy Writ which is stamped so unmistakably with the autograph of its Divine Author. The mind of the creature could not have invented it, for the thoughts of a fallen being would never soar to such heights, conceive of such an ineffable Object as is here presented to our view, nor have imagined such an amazing act on His part as here predicated of Him. As a whole it exhibits a threefold marvel and miracle.

First, a marvel and miracle of *Divine condescension*, namely, that of the Highest and lowest meeting together. Our estimation of the stupendous and amazing nature of this marvel will be proportioned by our concept of the greatness and majesty of the Lord God. Alas that in our day this is so little perceived, even by the majority of those who profess to be His people. So little does the modern pulpit set forth the perfections of Deity, yea so wretchedly is He caricatured, that He has good reason to say of those in the pew, "thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself" (Psalms 50:21)—feeble, fickle, compromising: unable to accomplish His purpose, swayed by the events of time, indifferent to sin. It is not too much to say that the God of Scripture is "the unknown God" of modern Christendom. The "god" of the "churches" possesses scarcely any of the attributes of the living God, but is instead, a disgusting figment of their own perverted imagination and corrupt sentiments.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One," He is the One "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?*****Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted

as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.*****All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to him as nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" Isa. 40:12-18. Pause, my reader, carefully ponder these words, and then ask yourself, Is there not real and pressing need for me to revise, yea, radically alter my concept of this mighty and majestic Being? "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God." Isa. 44:6.

The God of Scripture is "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." 1 Tim. 6:15-16. If that were more clearly grasped by our minds and if it more powerfully influenced our hearts, we should stand in awe of such an One, and in astonishment exclaim with one of old "But will God indeed dwell on the earth?" 1 Kings 8:27. Such was the wondering exclamation of Solomon upon the completion of the temple—probably the most remarkable and imposing building ever erected by man on this earth—the placing of all its sacred vessels in their proper places, and the dedication of the whole. For Jehovah to take up His abode therein, seemed to him a thing incredible, impossible. Considering His immensity, he went on to say "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded."

The One whom the heavens are incapable of containing cannot be circumscribed in place nor held by space,

being infinite and omnipresent. The heaven is His throne and the earth is His "footstool:" shall then the King of glory occupy that for His seat! Can such an One take up His abode in a human heart? Surely such a thing is far beyond the widest stretch of imagination. What! that He "Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven" (Psalms 113:6), should deign to tabernacle in a worm of the earth, is utterly beyond comprehension. That He who is infinite should make His home in one that is finite had never been thought of by mortal mind. That He who "inhabiteth eternity" should indwell a creature of time, what is it but indeed a marvel and miracle of condescension—one which should bow to us before Him in overwhelming wonderment and worship.

Yet Jehovah is not only the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, but "whose name is Holy:" His very nature is ineffably pure. To His immaculate eyes the heavens themselves are unclean (Job 15:15), "the stars are not pure in His sight." Job 25:5. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." Hab. 1:13. If then it be a thing incredible for the great God to dwell on the earth, if it would be a thing incomprehensible for Him to tabernacle in a finite creature of time, even if that creature were himself sinless; what shall it be for One who is infinitely Holy to dwell within one that is fallen, corrupt and vile? That is indeed a marvel and miracle of grace—appreciated only in proportion as we apprehend *who* He is and what we are! We read that "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid" (Isa. 11:6), and that is a miracle of nature; but for the Holy One to indwell a sinner is a miracle of miracles, the transcendent marvel of grace.

Yes, it is not only a marvel of condescension that the infinite God should indwell a finite creature, but it is also a marvel of *Divine mercy* that the ineffably Holy One should take up His abode in the heart of a fallen and sinful creature. Were it not that the Word of Truth clearly and repeatedly taught this, we had not dared to affirm it, nor even imagine such a wonder for ourselves. "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly." Psalms 138:6. O that our hearts were duly affected by His peerless benignity. If they were, we should exclaim with the Psalmist "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That He may set him with princes, even with the princes of His people." Psalms 113:5-8. The high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, yet "the God of all grace." 1 Peter 5:10.

"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." That exhibits to us, third, a marvel and miracle of *Divine power*. By nature there are none of a "contrite and humble spirit." So far from it, all the fallen children of Adam are in love with sin and self. The world over, the unregenerate are intractable, impenitent, proud and self-willed. It is only by the supernatural operations of Divine power that the wild are tamed, the stout-hearted made contrite, and the haughty become lowly. Above, we have said that the great God takes up His abode in a worm of the earth, yet it is not one considered as a "worm of the earth" that He does so, no, rather it is one upon whom the Lord had set His heart from before the foundation of the world; as one redeemed by Christ and

cleansed by His precious blood, as one who has been renewed by the Holy Spirit, as one who has thrown down the weapons of his warfare and surrendered to the claims of God, as one who has been made a new creature by the might of Omnipotence. Wonder and adore at this threefold marvel and miracle.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to remove from this life our beloved sister DELLA COOK, who died December 24, 1949, at the age of 81 years, we, the members of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church with her relatives and many friends, greatly mourn her passing from this life, but we of Bethel Church, where she united early in life and where she maintained her membership ever after, especially have a precious hope that she has passed to life eternal which God has promised his elect through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Sister Cook suffered the loss of three sons and her husband and was also afflicted herself during the last several years of her natural life with paralysis which rendered her almost speechless and helpless. However, she was blessed to be left one son, two daughters-in-law, three grandsons and two granddaughters who lovingly and kindly cared for her. It is precious and refreshing to remember Sister Cook as one who through a huge portion of affliction and suffering in her life steadfastly contended that God is just and right in all his ways, that salvation is by his grace. She manifested great joy in meeting with those of like faith, and in washing one another's feet as Christ so directed his followers. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, by Bethel Church in regular conference, March 18, 1950 that this resolution be spread on the church record, a copy sent to Sister Cook's son, one to the Signs of the Times and one to The Old Faith Contender for publication in said papers.

(Elder) W. A. SPEER, Moderator pro tem
BARNEY EVERS, Clerk

OBITUARIES

In memory of MRS. DOCIA WARD HUDSON, born March 8, 1878, and died March 14, 1950, making her stay on earth 72 years and 6 days. She was the daughter of John T. and Sarah Elizabeth Ward of Union Parish, La. January 7, 1897 she was married to Charles H. Hudson. To this union eight children were born: Mrs. George Miller, Mrs. James Carmack, Mrs. Herbert Miller, June, John and Woodrow Hudson of Farmerville, La.,

Mrs. Clyde Harper, Spring Hill, La. and Mrs. Velma Hall, Sterlington, La. The husband and all of the children survive her. There are twenty-two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, as well as a host of other relatives and friends and church members all of whom mourn her loss.

She united with Liberty Hill Church, Aug. 22, 1915 being baptized by the late Elder W. K. Smith. She was very faithful and greatly devoted to the church and the faith and practice of the Old Baptists. She with her husband and family made their home an Old Baptist home any time they had the privilege of entertaining them. Many brothers, sisters and friends will remember her on account of the enjoyment and hospitality received in their very pleasant home. The writer always found an outstanding welcome there on many occasions. To know her was to love and admire her as a neighbor, a good and devoted wife and mother, also as an humble, meek, plain, sound and faithful Baptist. Her husband did everything known possible for her, her children were very attentive and all was done that they knew to do, but the final hour came when she should lay down this body of pain and suffering as is set forth in Eccl. 3:1-3. She will arise in the glorified image of our Savior in that glorious and perfect day, when the blessed Lord shall come to gather his jewels and carry them home to that blessed and eternal abode.

Weep not dear precious loved ones, she is much better off than we who are still subject to the turmoils and sufferings of this sin cursed world. In the 7th chapter of the Revelations it reads: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." I have no doubt that her sufferings are all over. In my humble opinion she bore every evidence of this, and there is a much better day in the near future when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel, and then the graves must give up their victims, and all who hope and believe alone in Christ Jesus for justification will awake from their sleeping dust and rise and shine in the perfect image of our precious Savior. What a wonderful hope this is for poor sinners such as I feel myself to be.

The unworthy writer tried to conduct the services in the presence of a large and devoted congregation. There was great evidence of the deep grief of her devoted husband, children and friends. The floral offerings indicated that she and her family had many friends. She was buried in the Taylor Cemetery at Liberty Hill Church. May God bless all who mourn and enable you to look

to Him for comfort as he alone can do. Your poor and unworthy brother and pastor.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MR. JAMES JEFFERSON JACKSON, better known in his community as "Pappy Jackson," was born Feb. 2, 1872, and passed away March 25, 1950 at his home in Limbs, Ky. He was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jackson, and brother of John and George Jackson, Mrs. Elizabeth Ridgeway, Mrs. Sally Long, Mrs. Jenny Dorth, and Mrs. Mollie Sutherland. All lived to a ripe old age and preceded him in death. Dec. 8, 1889 he married Emma Dora Simmons. To this union six children were born. He is survived by his widow and the following children: Leon and Kilmer Jackson, Mrs. Bertha Chappell, Mrs. Volena Lee, Mrs. Lizzie Simmons. One daughter, Mrs. Viola Witherington, preceded him in death. There are twenty-one grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren who will greatly miss his passing. He was known far and wide as "Pappy Jackson" and "Uncle Jeff." All the children in the community loved him, and he was always wanting to do something for them and others.

Mr. Jackson was formerly a merchant, but in later years was very active in farming. He assured his children that he was prepared to die and was often seen reading his Bible and heard singing gospel hymns. He was a very strong believer in the foreknowledge of God, predestination and salvation by grace, and the final perseverance of the saints through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ unto everlasting life. He was a most honorable man in his dealings with his fellow man, and was loved by all his neighbors. This was made manifest by the large congregation attending his funeral. His grief stricken widow and one son were confined to their beds and unable to attend the services, but the other children were all present. He never united with the church but gave evidence of being a member of that invisible church, the members of which are so numerous no man can number them. He did not feel worthy of asking a home with the Old Baptists whom he loved so much.

The writer tried to comfort the family by using a text in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, "Behold, the Lord God will come with a 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 that are with young." He was laid to rest, awaiting that last sweet and final call from on high to be in the image of Christ to rejoice for ever and ever. Now may the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, comfort

Sister Jackson and the children with his spirit, and reconcile them to his will is the desire and prayer of the unworthy writer.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

HARVEY JONES WHITE, beloved member and deacon of New Valley Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, finished his earthly course at Poolesville, Maryland, on February 28, 1950. He was born March 9, 1869 at "Stoney Castle", Montgomery County, Maryland, the son of Benjamin and Elizabeth Jones White. In November, 1893, he was married to Miss Ida Dyson, and to this union were born Dr. Byron D. White, Frederick, Maryland and Mrs. Kathryn Hayes, Cleveland, Ohio. After the death of his first wife he married Miss Nannie D. Poole and after her death was married to his surviving wife, Alethea B. White on July 25, 1929. Surviving also are two sisters and a brother, Mrs. Mary E. Claggett and Mrs. Louise W. Ball, Washington, D. C. and Mr. Benjamin White, Poolesville, Md.

Brother White united with New Valley Church July 19, 1914, and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Lefferts. In May, 1915, he was set apart as a deacon and faithfully filled that office until his death. Brother White was deeply concerned for the welfare of the church and shortly before his death he talked with the writer on several matters pertaining to the churches. He had hoped to live to see two deacons ordained at New Valley, since he was the only surviving one, but this was not to be. His desire, however, was carried out shortly after his passing.

Having served as a County Commissioner and in the State House of Representatives, Brother White was held in high esteem by all in every walk of life. The large concourse of friends and multitude of flowers paid tribute to his memory and bespoke the feelings of all that they had lost a worthy friend. His counsel and gracious manner will surely be missed by all the brethren of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the home, after which interment was made in Monocacy Cemetery, Beallsville, Md. May the reconciling grace of God be with Sister White and all the family, together with the brethren with whom Brother White was long associated.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. S. W. Heitmuller, Va., \$1; W. R. Wallis, Miss., \$7; H. T. Faulk, Tex., \$2; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., \$1.

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CORRESPONDENCE

5265 Ardelle Ave., Stockton, Cal.

ELDER R. L. DODSON: Dear Brother: I have long delayed writing you for no other reason than that my mind was not made up to do so. My troubles have been many, my afflictions much, all seemingly without a cause. Yet I feel to realize God has a cause for everything; directs and brings to pass every act, both good and evil, according to his own good purposes and pleasure for there is no other power to bring it about. To me it is plain to see that in the very beginning God was using the devil to bring about Adam's transgression, to cause a fall into sin and death, that salvation by grace would have its perfect way and place, through and by the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, for there is no other way whereby we might be saved. Moreover God used the same wicked hands to take this same Jesus and crucify him. If it was just by chance, as some claim, or upon conditions of man, whether these wicked acts were carried out, then would salvation have been sure? I say, no. But as I see it God used the devil's devices as a means of man being cut off by the law, just as much as he purposed salvation to come by Jesus Christ. Could salvation have come without the shedding of the blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? I say, no. Then would there or could there have been any shedding of the blood of the Savior without a devil to crucify him?

Had the devil failed to perform these wicked acts would salvation have been sure? No, no. If it was by chance that the devil could have failed in any of these acts then let us preach salvation was by chance. But why have so many of us so called Baptists gotten so far from the truths; the truths that speak for themselves; truths that need none of man's works and opinions to prop them up in a flimsy way? Let me say here that I have not yet come to the place where I desire to shun preaching the hidden truths and mysteries of an all wise God just because there are so many whims of the natural minds that are objecting to so great truths. Now-a-days we find so many of these objectors among us we can scarcely preach a sermon of truths without being called in question or objections made because there are so many weak on different points. Should we leave off a part to please those who prove to be wise in their own conceit, or should we go ahead and preach the whole truth as revealed in God's word, showing no respecter of persons? If we believe God has revealed these things to us as truths, and then complain and say let us not preach this or that too strong, it may offend this or that one, or it may drive some little one out, or it may do this or that; if this be right then let us get a pencil and paper and sit down and figure just how much of God's revealed truths, and just what parts of it we are to preach, and just what part we are to leave off. It is an evident fact

that many of us have come to just that, but is it not much better to suffer for the truth's sake rather than to suffer for forsaking any part of the truth to please man? He that seeks to please man has ceased to be the servant of God, and we see so much of this among our people, oh so many, preaching so much hinging salvation on man's works.

When we go back to the election of God, and this took place even as yet when there was none of them, it was then and there God made choice of his people, and it certainly was not because of any good or evil that any had done that caused him to choose them for there was not any of them then born, having done any good or evil. How then, say so many among us, that God loved Jacob and hated Esau because of what Esau did? If we are going to condemn Esau to hell because he afterwards sought repentance and found it not, then let us give ourselves the same condemnation as we are all under the same. I will answer this in Esau's stead by asking any, did you find repentance by your own works, by your own seeking or did repentance find you, or was it not a gift from God and not by your own works of seeking? The ninth chapter of Romans has been and is being one of the most misused chapters in the book by our own people. It is time we should come together by sound reasoning, and for our ministers to leave off the preaching and debating about things which have not been revealed from above. I say all this in respect to God and not to man, I mean the man in error. If man is right in any-thing it is by the righteousness of God that God has given him, and that not because of any good any have done. We are all Esau's in the flesh. It is my own Esau that causes me so much trouble. These things are all written for our learning and can only

be understood by actual experiences, so my admonition to any of my brethren is to be careful how we condemn others for what they preach or say lest we find ourselves in great error and later experience as some have a swift destruction of sorrow and shame upon our heads. Be slow to speak and quick to think is a wonderful example to follow.

I see this is getting somewhat scattering, but if you will bear with me I want to treat a little farther on the ninth chapter of Romans. As I see it the chapter is treating upon the doctrine of election, showing that the God of our salvation chose us all in this election; and in the eighth chapter he, before the world was, predestinated that we should be conformed to the image of his Son, and in times to come he would make known to us what are the riches of his mysteries and of his glory. I want to say with shame I have many times heard our good brethren take Jacob and Esau as a text, and use it to show that it was because of Esau's works that he failed to enter into the heavenly kingdom, and before they finished with it they would get all hinged on works and the like of man's works. The scriptures speak for themselves and the answer is there, "the election hath obtained it." We read from Genesis to Revelations that there are two generations spoken of in the scriptures: one natural, fleshly, Adamic, earthly; then the generation of Jesus Christ, a spiritual, an incorruptible, a holy chosen generation different from the first Adam, of another seed altogether, the seed of Christ and every seed after its kind. As I see it Esau is representing the first seed, Adam, man who is of the earth earthy; and Jacob, whom He loved, the representative of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit, the regen-

erated principal spiritually minded for the natural mind receiveth not, (and what a hard not,) the things of the spirit. Esau is a figure of the church under the law. How many under the law sought repentance by the law, their own works, and found it not by the law? I answer not one. If Esau had found repentance after he had sought it even in tears, do we suppose God would have then been obligated to give Esau salvation? No, the scripture does not teach such arminian doctrine.

In tracing Esau's history we find his father left him one promise, just as God left a promise to all the first church under the flesh covenant, that he would take all from under the yoke of bondage in times to come. Jacob represented the church under the gospel, and we see, later after Jacob's time to return to face his brother Esau, them brought together and embracing each other. Just as God brought those brethren under law and grace together and broke down the middle wall of partition and made peace between them, just as that sweet peace was manifested between the two brothers Jacob and Esau.

The Bible was written to be taken spiritually, and to be used as a spiritual guide to guide you in the way of all truth as it is in Christ. I am but little concerned as to what is truth in the first Adam, or as to what the first Adam believes about anything, as far as spiritual things he receiveth not such. God found fault with the first covenant just as he did the first Adam, and for this cause he took it out of the way to give place for the second. It is in our own experiences we have to have our old Adamic taken out of our way before we can love that second from heaven brother of ours, that brother Jacob, the lot of God's inheritance, so by the election of God we are heirs

of salvation. "By grace are ye saved through faith;****Not of works lest any man should boast." If God chose his people in the election, and he did, then and there were not all others left out? He that was to be condemned was condemned there and then. Remember this took place in the ancients of eternity while as yet there were none of them yet born having done any good or evil, and, let me remind all our people, if Esau was condemned as some claim he was it certainly is proven that it is not by what some of us claim it was that he was condemned, certainly not by what he did or did not do. If we profess we believe in the doctrine of election, then let us leave scripture where it rightfully belongs by confessing that the election hath obtained it. There is no such teaching that any one can send themselves to hell as some are teaching, any more than they can do good and go to heaven. I have no more sense than to believe that if a man can pay his way to hell he could just as easily pay his way out. If that is truth then the election of God is of no effect. I feel certain we have many among us who will object to our putting it this plain, but I am sure it is only those who have and are following the traditions of men, those who have in their own minds builded them a hell of their own and want to make use of it. Naturally a fellow wants to put his ideas into use. I believe in a hell but I am sure I know nothing about one except the one I have to live in. I remember a shameful remark I made a few years back when I said I would die and go to hell before I would ever try to preach any more, but little did I know at that time my lie would be proven later as truth. Not long ago it came to me while meditating upon Jonah's travels to the ministry. I can see now that is and was exactly what

Jonah had to do. He went down to the belly of hell, and let me say I believe he had to die before he was a fit subject to preach the God given truths; had to die to all self works, and then he could vow from the belly of hell that salvation was of the Lord.

Now, dear brother, I hope this will be no discouragement to you whatsoever, and I hope I have put it in a way that God's truths will be found in it all and that you will find no fault, giving God all the praise to whom praise belongeth. May God continue to guide you in all the ways of truth by spirits divine, and that he may go before you as in Israel's day and fight your many battles that I know lay just ahead of you and me and all others who dare to stand for pure truths. His promise was that ye shall suffer persecutions in this world, but bless your heart there is a better promise. After this life of sorrow and troubles we will be caught up into yonder world ever to be with the Lord and his heavenly host in a world that knows no sorrow, pain or death, but a life of eternal joy and happiness. Farewell for this time. Yours in love for the truth.

(Elder) SETH BYNUM

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Rom. 11:33.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Some time ago my good friend and brother Baptist, Loren Barger, of Golconda, Ill. wrote me, quoting the above scripture from the pen of the apostle Paul and remarking, "I am reading the *Signs of the Times* and get great comfort from it; and as I do not get to hear the gospel preached very often, I thought what a great feast it would be to read an article you had written in the *Signs*, using for a subject Rom. 11:33. I know every

reader of this dear Old Baptist paper would share the joy and comfort with me."

At last I find a few brief moments to grant Brother Barger's request, and am now attempting, as God may give grace, to set down some of the thoughts I have in mind relative to what I understand, or at least some of the things I understand, Paul was writing about. He begins this 33rd verse with the interjection, "O"; an expression of wonder, amazement and inexpressible awe: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" By the grace of God and the revealing light of his Holy Spirit, Paul is given to catch a glimpse of some of the deep things of God, which deep things are beyond the reach of carnal perception, and are revealed to the Lord's people only by the Spirit of God that searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2:10) This wonderful experience of the great Paul is the same blessed experience that comes to every child of God who has come to know him as he is, and is ready to confess the riches of God's wisdom and knowledge reaches to such profound, immeasurable depths that they cannot be fathomed by the wisdom of this world; and they are ready to say with David, "Thou art the God that doest wonders." As defined by Mr. Webster; Wisdom is knowledge practically applied to the best ends. Believing in God, as he is possessed with the attributes of *omnipotence* and *omnipresence*, we could not think of him applying his knowledge to any other than the best ends, because God's wisdom is perfect, infinite and all embracing, and his knowledge is all perfect, all embracing foreknowledge. God has never learned any thing because he has eternally known all things; yes, God has eternally foreknown and foreseen

all things whatsoever come to pass, and he has foreknown and foreseen all things coming to pass in just the way, and at just the time they have come to pass; and to say that the all knowing, sovereign God has no purpose in all things, whatsoever comes to pass is to deny every attribute of Deity, and leaves the ordering and governing of this world and its affairs to blind chance with nothing certain. Considering the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of the eternal, sovereign God, no wonder Paul would say, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever, Amen."

The very immutable character of the attributes of God, successfully refutes the idea of LIMITING predestination and conditional salvation. It is my candid conviction that no one can truly believe in the foreknowledge of God as embracing all things, without having to admit that God predestinated all things. I cannot bring myself to believe that there was with God in eternity, a power or wisdom that was able to inform him of what would come to pass, and thereby give God the foreknowledge of all things that come to pass. This being true, I cannot think of any reason for God certainly foreseeing and foreknowing all things, other than that he predetermined them to be, and by his providence ordereth them to fall out according to his eternal purpose that nothing befalleth any by chance and without his providence, and as Paul in another place declares of God, "Who worketh ALL THINGS AFTER THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN WILL." God's purpose and

divine order of things—ALL things—is as fixed and immutable as God himself; for "He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." Job 23:13. To the eye of faith, the wisdom and knowledge of our God is displayed in all the works of his hand. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Psalms 19: 1-2. Who but the almighty, sovereign God in whom we trust, and before whose untarnished throne men and angels bow, crying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" could hang the earth on nothing and keep it there as the ages roll on? Who but our God could hurl, as it were, from his finger tips, the countless stars with which he sowed the field of ether and stretched across the heavens the dazzling milky way like a band of sparkling gems? What joy and peace of mind; what blessed assurance the people of God experience, when the sublime character and mighty works of God engage their thoughts and the glorious revealing light of his wisdom and knowledge is flashed upon the great, melodramatic scene of his creation both in nature and in grace, and they are blessed to trust their all in his hands, knowing that he is their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble! And to all who truly believe in and trust him, the only true God, how out of place and how foolish it seems to hear those who claim to be teaching the truth of God's word, to exhort the lost, poor, weak, finite man to LET or PERMIT God to do this and that, and represent him as being a complete, disappointed failure in the things he has purposed to do and to have done.

I heard one preacher, preach on the subject, "God's hands tied!" He said

that God wanted to do so many things but man had tied his hands; that God had failed in the very beginning of time, in that he could not get Adam to do what he wanted and expected him to do. Most every day I hear some preacher telling his audience that God is expecting people to do so and so. God never has expected any man to do any thing that he knows that man will not do; nor does God expect any man not to do any thing he knows that man will do. Every phase of Arminianism denies the sovereignty of God, brings God down to the level of finite man, and then they seem surprised at the people not manifesting more interest in their preaching. There is not one crumb of comfort in such preaching for the Lord's little ones, whom God has taught to know their weakness and littleness, and that without his help they can do nothing well pleasing in his sight.

Lest I make this article too lengthy I must soon come to a close, but before leaving off speaking, may I have a personal word with our dear old brother and yokefellow, Elder Lytle Burns, of Florence, Ala. Some years ago it was the pleasure of myself and my brethren here to have Brother Burns in our midst, when and where we enjoyed his timely messages from my pulpit, and I had him as a guest in my own humble home. I greatly enjoyed your article, dear brother, on predestination appearing in the February *Signs*; and I note that you say "I will soon be 81 years old, and have been trying to preach Christ as a complete Savior for 44 years." On the 15th day of last month (February) I celebrated my 83rd birthday which is in the 60th year of my gospel ministry. I am still pastoring my home church, whose humble servant I have been for 58 consecutive years. Back in September I baptized two into the church fellowship of our

church here in Johnson City, one of them being my own daughter. I am happy to hear of the restoration of your sight and of your general good health.

Now to all who love our God and tremble at his word, let me say I love you all and may God be with you all to bless and keep you from all harm if it be his will. To Brother Barger may I say I have complied as best I could with your request, though I have only barely touched the heart of the subject matter in the text you gave me. If you can derive any benefit from my poor, imperfect effort, to God belongs all the glory, and I am sure you realize that, and will give him what is due him. In hope of eternal life which is in Jesus, and looking for his blessed second appearing, I subscribe myself a poor sinner, saved by the grace of God and that alone.

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DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have wanted to write you many times and two letters started were never finished. I hear you have been in the hospital and I do want to wish you a good recovery. I hope it has not been serious. I know that whatever you have been through you could feel the strength that comes from our Lord because he never leaves nor forsakes us. It seems strange that after hearing an Old School Baptist minister, or any brother or sister talk one is sure that whatever comes they have more than their own strength to lean on; while after some one of the world talks one feels so sorry for them in time of trouble because they are depending on human strength. God is near them just as he is near us but he has not seen fit to reveal himself to them.

Why are a few of us so blessed? I look around me and see all the worldly possessions some have and sometimes I feel a little envious, but the next minute I know that I am far richer than some of them because I have that ever present help and comfort which is all that keeps me living. The riches of material things are nothing when the tests of life comes.

I wish we could have some of the good preaching here more often to keep me more in the spirit. I cannot seem to thrive spiritually without preaching from some of you Elders. I rise above the worldly things at association time but through the rest of the year I grow dead. I never lose faith because I have to ask for help to live every day, but the wonderful rejoicing comes only when I can hear the preaching and hear the others talk. They seem to express just what I have felt and make my faith so sure. This may sound foolish to you as you know all about it in so much greater experience than I can ever know. It seems God must have shown you great things to enable you to preach some of the sermons I have listened to. Perhaps being sick has given you a chance to rest from the strain of preaching, but I hope you will not rest too long as we all want to hear you again. That is a selfish way to look at it but your gift has meant so much to many of us through the years that we all want to hear you again.

It seemed hard to know that Elders Vaughn and Topping had gone beyond our call but Elder and Sister Wood have already begun to fill the empty place there. Last year I thought the Association would be different without the well known Elders there except Elder Bellows who has kept us supplied so faithfully, but that only showed how weak my faith had been as we never had a better Association, and I then

thought that God does not have imperfect work. One can surely see the work of God at our Associations as there are so few of us with rather a faltering strength behind us as far as worldly eyes can see. I am not much, if any, help to my church except that I love all the members and love to hear them talk, but my head gets confused so easily that I cannot help as I ought, and my grandmother is tied by a handicap. With two or three members from each of the three churches having to bear the heaviest part of the care the Association is held and the meetings are good. The churches of the other denominations would think we were insane to have meetings without a beautiful building, instrumental music and hot house plants creating a beautiful atmosphere, but little do they realize the spirit of fellowship that is among us making us as one. The earthly standards disappear; the well to do and those of more humble position mingle with and enjoy each other as though they had always lived the same lives and had much in common; and so they have for what do they need to have in common more than the love of our God who caused their sins to be taken away as though they had never existed. I sometimes look for my past sins and find they have been washed away. I remember them all but the guilt is gone. I wonder why? The only answer is the grace of God which seems almost unbelievable except that I have felt the power of it.

I must not tire you with more rambling. After I have written I fear it is not as a true Old Baptist should write but trust you will make allowance for my ignorance, I have but little chance to talk with Old Baptists. My health has been unusually good of late and I try to appreciate it, but I can see the more blessings one has the

more that is expected. When one has to beg for strength minute by minute, as I once had to do, I was a better follower of God, but I am thankful to him that I am allowed to be a half normal wife and mother. I am assured now that if God could improve me as much as he has he can carry me through life even though I may go down again and have to beg for courage each step.

I do hope you are improving rapidly and you and your family are well in every other way. Our home is our joy with the hand of God to guide it as we know he does. Hoping for your patience I am yours in the hope of our Lord.

(Mrs.) RUTH CLARK

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ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN FAITH AND FEAR OF THE LORD I HOPE: My mind of late has been considerably exercised on the fruit of the gospel spirit; by that I mean, the fruit of the spirit by which it is evidenced that there is an abiding principle of faith, hope and charity animating our life, soul and spirit. It is said that a tree is known by the fruit it bears. In Matt. 7:16 it reads, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." In verse 17 to 20 it reads, "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*****neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*"

Man in nature, who has not experienced that new birth, is the corrupt tree, and although he may be a good citizen, a successful man of the world, a man of wealth both in this world's goods and social friendships, rich in prestige, influence and power, yet he is in the category of that corrupt tree that cannot bring forth good fruit and is

destined to be hewn down and cast in the fire, unless it is in the will and purpose of Almighty God to vouchsafe unto him a dispensation of his grace at the good pleasure of his will.

By reason of the above references we would expect to find some evidence or fruit in the life of God's children that would mark them separate and apart from men of the world or flesh. Now just what are the distinguishing marks that manifest the difference? We all have one common origin, inasmuch as we are all the children of Adam by nature, and all are inheritors of the death sentence pronounced on Adam because of his sin; and since Adam sinned, we all sinned in him. Therefore it must be made manifest by the fruit that we bear that we are the children of God, if one is to be distinguished from the other.

"The fruit of the Spirit is *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Gal. 5:22-24. The fruit enumerated above are not prerequisites in order to attain to the blessing of Almighty God but they are beams of his refulgent glory shining forth in the life of his children. Just as the moon beam is the reflected light of that great luminary, the sun, so is the goodness, love, meekness, faith, etc., in the life of God's children reflected from the God of love.

In contra-distinction it is appropriate to enumerate the fruit of the flesh, also, or that fruit which marks the man of the world which is, "*Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings*, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time

past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. 5:19-21.

Here, dear brother, is my conflict, for it seems to me that I bear more fruit in the latter group than the former if indeed I bear any at all in the former. Is it so with you? I feel this so heavily at times that if it were not for that little hope that burns eternal in my breast I would have no hope. When our Lord, after the supper, had laid aside his garment, and washed his disciples feet, he gave them a new commandment. He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:34-35. How can any one manifest his love for his brethren except by the fruit he bears? He may outwardly profess love for his church and his brethren, but if his life or his actions do not comport with his professions of love, where is the evidence of his profession? In John 14:15 he said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and again in the 23rd verse he said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words."

In view of the foregoing scriptures, it seems to me, the child of God will be found manifesting his love for the brotherhood, and that means, he will be instant in season and out of season in attending to the things that make for peace, harmony, love, fellowship, prompt attendance at all meetings of the church, if possible to do so, and a willingness to spend and be spent for the good of the brotherhood, and to freely contribute to the upkeep of his church property. I believe that a well kept and orderly house of worship is a very good barometer of the interest of any church membership. This applies alike to both the physical properties of

the church and to the order of business. "Let all things be done decently and in order."

While meditating along this line of thought my mind is directed to the 15th Psalm. David inquires, "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" The reference here obviously is to the tabernacle in which Israel worshipped during their journey in the wilderness, and in Canaan until the temple was built by Solomon. Also, thy holy hill has reference to Mt. Zion, which also is called Mt. Moriah where David, by the direction of the prophet Gad, built an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah from whom he purchased the threshing floor and oxen for fifty pieces of silver on which he offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. This was in consequence David having numbered Israel, and as a consequence God sent a three day pestilence on Israel in which seventy thousand men died.

It is on or about this same place that the temple was built, and in this same mount that Isaac was offered, in spirit, by Abraham and therefore, to the Israelites, it was a holy hill. The tabernacle and the holy hill in this Psalm, however typify the New Jerusalem which is above. David cried, "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" There is no doubt that David's conscience was a burning fire of remorse for his many sins. Although God declared David was a man after his own heart, David was a great sinner, having committed adultery with Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah and had Uriah placed in the forefront of the battle to insure his death so David could have his wife. With the heavy weight of this guilt on his conscience, plus all the many sins of his life, he was brought to the brink of despair when contemplating where he

would spend eternity. I believe this place of remorse, foreboding and despair is the place that all God's people are brought at some time in their life, and are made to drink of the bitter dregs of weakness, hopelessness and despair. It is when we are weak that God performs his perfect work. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commanded his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5:6-10.

When the import of this truth is realized by God's children it will cause them to be obedient to the exhortation recorded in James 4:7-10, wherein he says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." There is every indication that David was humbled for the answer came to David in the second and third verses of the fifteenth Psalm, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor." It is manifest that the type man here described by David (who should dwell in his holy hill) was not

the type of man that bore the fruit that David's life had produced. Is it not manifest here that our lives, as considered in Adam, do not and cannot bear the fruit of true holiness and righteousness demanded of Almighty God? Then that being so, where is the remedy? We are now in the position to understand what we are by nature and what we must be by grace to ever enjoy the heavenly felicity that is in store for God's little ones.

In Psalms 14:1 we find what we are by nature. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." In another scripture there is added, *no not one*. We have here, in few words, what man is by nature. In contra-distinction to this, it is by love, goodness and mercy of God through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ that reconciliation was made. Therefore, it is by grace that we are saved. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Rom. 5:1-2. Inasmuch as all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." The salvation, righteousness and the intercessor for God's people are all embodied in the person of Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth the fulness of the godhead bodily, who because "the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bon-

dage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2: 14-18.

In conclusion let me say that herein lies my hope, all my expectation that I might be of that number for whom his blood and water flowed on Calvary's cross. I am a great sinner but he is a great Savior, and since it is sinners that he came to save, my hope is that he sprinkled a portion of that blood on the doorpost of my heart, by virtue of which the destroying angel will pass over this unworthy sinner and, not only so, but over God's people every-where. If we have this hope, which is sure and steadfast, and is anchored to that within the veil, then come tribulation, peril, death, we will enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God. May God bless his word to the edification and comfort of his people is my prayer for Christ's sake. Your unworthy brother in hope.

H. M. BOWDEN

Saragossa, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BRO. IN THE LORD I HUMBL Y HOPE: The *Signs* came a few days ago which reminds me to renew my subscription. I know every one will be glad to help you enlarge the paper for I think we all agree that all that is wrong with it is that it is just too small.

Maggie Lee Hayes and I have been writing to each other expressing our views on different scriptures, one in particular Luke 9 beginning at the 12th

verse. I do not know that I had or have now any light on this or any scripture, but sometimes I love to meditate. I picked up my Bible to read a little and opening at John 6 found the same subject Maggie Lee and I had been writing on. I then read what Matthew said and turned to see what Mark said in 6:39, "And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things." What a beautiful picture of the Gentile church: these disciples wanted him to send the multitude away because it was time to eat; one of the writers said, "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes." Even they did not know how unlimited their Master's power was. Even today he is still feeding the souls of his hungry little sheep, when he sees fit to make them sit down and when he blesses those five loaves and two fishes the lad had it is a plenty; it was all they had then, it is all we have now; it was all the lad David had; it is all that was, is or ever will be needed; when he blesses and hands it to his servants, and they give it out it is sufficient for the people of God for it is the gospel, the power of God. It filled the souls of his people on the day of Pentecost. There have been times when I could feel to say with David, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

As I look from my window this morning the clouds are dark; the trees in my yard have no leaves; vegetation has been bitten by frost and the world looks gloomy; but across the road is a field of alfalfa; in the corner of my yard a cedar; up the road in the top of an oak hangs a bunch of mistletoe. This

reminds me that life is not gone from the earth. It is only the gloomy season; there are some things that the frosts, snows and cold winds do not affect. This is a beautiful world our Lord created for us. Even now when the oaks are bare, the grass dead, we know that at his good pleasure he will pull the sun north; we will have sunshiny days, the trees will bud, put forth new leaves, the ground will be warmed and little flowers, that man did not plant, bloom to beautify the woods. All this natural beauty is for our natural eyes, our natural enjoyment; and think of the spiritual things he has provided for our spiritual pleasure. It is perfect when we are given an eye to see. The people of God pass through these dark seasons, and sometimes cannot even see the cedar in the corner of the yard or the mistletoe in the oak. We do know there is something in the child of God that never dies, but lives on and on forever.

As I read Elder Lambert's letters tears filled my eyes, and I felt in my heart at that time surely there is a bond of kinship here. I have met Elder Lambert and heard him preach and have no doubts regarding him, but myself, I fear sometimes that I have been deceived and have deceived others as to what I am. I spend so much time in darkness; my path seems to be strewn with thorns so much, but I have seasons of rejoicing. Sometimes when I meet with the people of God I forget that I may be an imposter among them, and I too enjoy joining in singing hymns of praise and eating those two fishes and five loaves of bread. Sometimes all alone at home I feel to be lifted and am comforted with the precious promises; sometimes receive sweet letters from Maggie, Sister Edwards and others precious in the faith, and they cheer me and give me cour-

age to press on. My health is not good I cannot get out to meeting often. I spend a lot of time writing and after I read what I have written I find it does not express my feeling and, therefore, it goes into the fire. In hope.

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND

Route 1, Box 71, Merryville, La.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS: I see that it is time to renew for the good old *Signs*. Last year I had just sent in my renewal when you announced the raise in price so I am sending an extra dollar this time. The preaching that I get from your paper is about all I get. There is not a sound Primitive Baptist church near here. I will be seventy-four years of age the ninth of next month. Have had double pneumonia twice in less than three years so am not able to travel very much. I go to hear the folks around me and hope I gather a few crumbs sometimes. A few days ago I attended a meeting and thought the first man that spoke preached a good sermon, giving God all the power and glory. His successor, it seemed to me, in a rather rebuking manner said he would agree that before regeneration it was entirely the workings of God, but after that regeneration the individual has the knowledge and power to walk in obedience. Dear child of God, one whose feet have been lifted out of the miry clay and placed upon a rock; one who has been in the blackest darkness with no power to come forth; does the above witness with your experience? I dare say no. Oh, the dark hours that this old sinner has spent groaning and moaning for deliverance. Like one of old I am made to cry, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." Psalms 51:1. I am persuad-

ed that David wrote this after regeneration. "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, (something that the individual had been in possession of) and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment."*****Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle." Ezek. 34: 16 and 22. No room left for man's works. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him (on whom? Jesus Christ.) the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53:6. You see Jesus Christ is the deliverer not man. God demanded Jonah to go and preach unto a certain city, but like other men he thought he would out smart God and do his own will. Had he succeeded that poor old fish might have been waiting there yet for him to come along. God's ways are not our ways. He had (in the past tense) prepared a fish to swallow Jonah. He had fixed the exact time and place for this to take place, and it worked just as God had predestinated it. After the apostle Paul was stricken down on his way to Demascus we hear him crying, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do." Jeremiah 10:23 says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

My remarks have been very scattering, but if what I have written does not condemn the theory of man salvation, then I fail to understand the teachings of the Bible. Will repeat that I enjoy reading the *Signs* and often wish I could write something comfort-

ing to a sin sick soul. If saved at all it is by grace alone. Your brother in hope.
J. PAUL McMILLIAN

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will convene with the Olive and Hurley Church at Shokan, N. Y. on Wed. and Thurs., Sept. 13 and 14, 1950. Meeting will open at 10:30 D.S.T. Wed. morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren and ministers of our faith and order in fellowship with us, and all friends of our faith will be heartily welcomed. Those arriving on Tuesday will go to the Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Bynes, where they will be cared for. Those arriving Wed. morning will go directly to the meeting-house in Shokan. Buses connecting with bus lines to N. Y. City and Oneonta pass through Shokan and Ashokan; also Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. Central R. R. For the information of strangers it may be noted that the villages of Shokan and Ashokan are connected, each having a separate post-office. The meeting-house is located in Shokan.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Mod.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudon Co., Va., Wed., Thurs. and Fri., Oct. 11, 12 and 13, 1950. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. The meeting-house is 8 miles north of Leesburg and 4 miles from Point of Rocks, Md. half a mile from Lucketts on Highway Route 15. Those coming Tues., 10th will come to Leesburg and inquire for Bruce McIntosh or call C. R. Hollandsworth. Greyhound buses leave 12th and N. Y. Ave., Washington, D. C. A local train leaves Rosslyn, Va. near the end of Key Bridge at 2:25 p. m. Those coming Wed. by bus to Leesburg too late to be met will find taxi service near bus stop. Those coming Wed. by private conveyance will go directly to the meeting-house. For further information write

M. W. HOWSER, Church Clerk
Purcellville, Va.

CHANGE OF DATES

Meetings held on second floor of Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N.W., Washington, D. C. formerly on third Sundays each month are now held on fifth Sundays.

FRANK T. SIMPKINS, Sr.
5214 Harper St., Dillon Park,
Washington 19, D. C.

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md., meets every third Sunday at 11 a. m. in the meeting-house, 210 E. Madison St., near Calvert. For information contact QUINCY A. GLADDING, 5 Hill Top Rd., Baltimore 28, Md.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

SEPTEMBER, 1950

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"And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant."—Ezek. 20:37.

I received a request some time ago from W. A. Chandler, Jonesboro, La. to write upon the text of scripture quoted above. I undertake to do so fully aware of my inability, trusting that God will grace us with his Spirit to illuminate the mind with spiritual meditations. I have found by sad experience that I cannot command the Spirit at my will.

We desire to consider first, the people to whom this is addressed.—the "you" in the text. We find this addressed only to the house of Israel. God spake through the prophets in olden times to the Israelites—national Israel. These same words are now applicable to spiritual Israel, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Spiritual Israel is now scattered in every nation, kindred, tongue and people throughout the earth. God is not speaking to every one of Adam's race, only to the Israelites. All the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments are addressed to God's

children. They are the only ones who can receive them. You will note that all letters recorded in the New Testament are written to a people of certain characteristics. There is not a command, exhortation, invitation or promise recorded in the Bible without a character description attached thereto. I feel that I would be guilty of high treason before Almighty God should I attempt to apply any of the Scriptures as addressed to all of Adam's race. So, in this treatise I want the readers to consider that the "you" in the text applies to all who are included in the *everlasting covenant*, all those who shall finally be saved in heaven and immortal glory. Sometimes I think it may be boresome or monotonous to those who sit under the sound of my voice, or read my writings for me to stress the fact that all Scriptures contained in the Bible are written to God's people only.

Let us notice next, the "I" in the text. As stated above it is God speaking. The One who created the heavens and the earth makes these assertions. The One who worked all things after the counsel of his own will is the author of these expressions. The One who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth decreed these things. The One who said, "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," spake these words. He that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast made these declarations. He has spoken it; he will also do it; he has purposed it; he will also bring it to pass!

Jehovah says, "I will cause you to pass under the rod." What does he mean by this statement? What is the rod, anyway? When I think of a rod

I am reminded of the adage "Spare the rod and spoil the child." I think of the proverb, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." The Lord chasteneth and scourgeth every son that he receiveth according to Hebrew 12:6. When I think of a rod I think of a whip. I think that troubles, trials, temptations, afflictions, tribulations, and all things that sorely oppress God's children are the smartings of the rod. These things do not come about accidentally. They do not occur haphazardly because God causes you to pass under them. They are in your path and you cannot escape them. God has ordained them for your good and even though they are not good to you they are good for you. Some people would have you believe that trouble is solely of the devil, but I am persuaded that it is a blessing of God. He says through the Psalmist, "I will be with him in trouble." I dare say that your brightest experience immediately followed your greatest distress. According to the Psalmist, He makes the clouds his chariot. It is in the darkest hours that he appears to his people as their deliverer. We would not appreciate the bond were it not for the rod. We would not appreciate the staff were it not for the rod. David said, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The rod beats us down to lean upon the staff, Christ Jesus. The chastening rod of Almighty God causes us to know the filthiness of our own righteousness, and how destitute we are of ability thus fitting us to call upon him. When we are given to trust in him, our past troubles then become a comfort to us for we learn that God used even these as means to bring us unto this trust in him. Paul said, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience experience," etc. Paul realized that these tribulations were necessary means that

God used in bringing us into that hope that maketh not ashamed. The rod is not applied to us in order to punish us for our sins because Christ paid the penalty. This penalty is not against those who are encouched in the covenant for Jesus satisfied the law in our stead. The rod is applied to us in order to *make right*. It is applied to us to whip us into the right path. It beats pride out of us and makes us humble. The effect of the rod is that we learn obedience. Paul told the Hebrews that Jesus learned obedience by the things he suffered. If Jesus was taught obedience by the things he suffered is it a terrible thing that we should learn obedience the same way? Then surely it is a wonderful blessing indeed that he causes you to pass under the rod!

The last portion of the text is "I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." You will notice that our Lord said, "I will bring you into the BOND of the covenant," not into the covenant. I think all God's children were in the covenant in eternity before time. They have always been embraced and included in the covenant, having been chosen in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world, but they must pass under the rod before they can embrace the covenant and come into its relationship. You were chosen into the COVENANT but you must be brought into the BOND of the covenant by the power of Almighty God.

What is the BOND of the covenant? Could it be that precious hope that is experienced by you? When hungry and thirsty your soul fainted in you and you were without hope and felt hell would be your just doom, God was gracious to you, he restored your soul and spoke sweet peace to you. Could the bond be that personal stamp of mercy and grace that is imprinted in your heart? Could the bond be the

fruits of the spirit that characterizes God's children such as: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance? Could it be the *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah that makes the covenant sure and certain to all those embraced therein?

I like to think of the *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah. It is expressed in this covenant that "I *will* be to them a God, and they *shall* be to me a people." God says in Psalm 91, I *will* set him on high. *****He *shall* call upon me, and I *will* answer him: I *will* be with him in trouble; I *will* deliver him, and honour him. With long life *will* I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." Jehovah promises, "I *will* put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Space will not permit me to list the many *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah that is now flooding my mind. Suffice it to say that there is not a single condition left for man to perform. Could the setting on high be the *bond of the covenant*? The rod brings us low and makes us to realize that we are in the miry pit sinking down, seemingly, into perdition. All our feeble attempts sink us deeper and deeper. He comes to our rescue, takes us up out of the pit and sets our feet upon the rock, Christ Jesus. Is it not a setting on high to see Jesus as our Savior? Is it not an elevation to be raised from the fellowship of this world to the fellowship of the children of God? I well remember the joy experienced by me when the church received me into their fellowship. It is indeed a high place to be graced by the Spirit to sing praises unto him, to pray to him, to meditate upon his wonderful promises to the children of men, to write and preach his wonderful doctrine of love and grace! Could the *bond of the cove-*

nant be the full fruition of it? Could it be heaven and immortal glory that awaits you who are kept by the power of God? Could it be the final fulfillment of all the obligations and vows expressed in the covenant that will be experienced in eternity after this time world?

I am persuaded that the *bond of the covenant* is the *earnest* of the inheritance that is experienced by God's children here in time. This foretaste of his love is sweet. The experiences of these many deliverances are wonderful. The few moments spent in prayer are sacred. The joy of His fellowship is sublime. The tie that binds us together in sweet fellowship one with another is great. All his gifts are matchless. These fleeting moments of enjoyment make us yearn and look forward toward the prize of the high calling when we shall quit the walks of men and be received into the full fellowship of God and all his dear little children.

I submit these few columns over my signature to the readers of the *Signs* trusting that God will bless as he sees fit. May I add that I have been much concerned about this periodical. I feel it a high honor to be on the editorial staff because I feel that God has blessed it to the comfort of Zion for more than a century. Its writers are contending for the same things that the writers were in 1832. May God bless us to make an attempt to enlarge its circulation. God has blessed it to be the oldest and best periodical of its kind among us and I deem it worthy of our support.

Now may the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, be ours to grace us with a godly walk in this life, choosing our changes in this life, and making us submissive to his choice. May he comfort us across the chilly waters of death and finally receive us up into

that better clime where no sin or shame shall be is my prayer if not deceived.

E. J. L.

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

—John 11:25-26.

Brother W. L. Gossien of Little Rock, Ark., solicits our views on the above scripture. While we are aware of the fact that all of our readers will not agree in toto with what we shall have to say, we do not feel to withhold such thoughts as we may have from our subscribers, especially when they are sought in the spirit manifested by brother Gossien.

It seems quite significant, we think, to note that it was Martha whom Jesus was addressing in the language of our text. Luke tells us that "Martha was cumbered about much serving," and complained to Jesus, saying, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me." Jesus came to separate the *law* from the *gospel*, or to fulfill the *law* and establish the *gospel*. Martha was still entangled with the *law* and its requirements. Therefore she needed to be taught and instructed more thoroughly and perfectly just who Jesus was, and the purpose of his coming, before she was to be qualified to sit with her sister, Mary, who had ceased from her labors and had entered into the house and was sitting at the feet of her Lord, hearing and receiving his word. Mary who typified the *gospel* church, having been brought out from under the *law* could no longer serve there-under even with her sister, Martha. There is a tie which is strong-

er than those of the flesh. To Martha, the resurrection was something in the far distant future, or "at the last day," but the reply of Jesus was, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." By way of emphasis, we repeat that Jesus came to put an end to the *legal dispensation* and to set up his kingdom, or the *gospel dispensation* which, while in the world, is not of the world. The gospel proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord: it is the day of his power, when the dead are raised up, the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. When Jesus arose from the dead, we are told that all power both in heaven and in earth, was given into his hands therefore in this *gospel dispensation* he is known as the I AM, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. He said of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. 1:18. We believe this is what he had reference to while he was yet with his disciples when he said unto them, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John saw him in the midst of the seven candlesticks, or churches. Paul, in writing to his Corinthian brethren, declared boldly, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." In our humble opinion, the apostle here did not mean that Jesus was the first to rise from a corporeal death, for the

record in connection with our text plainly shows that during his lifetime, he raised Lazarus from the dead. Paul was speaking, according to our understanding, concerning them that slept under the condemnation of the law. The sentence of death rested upon all, from the fall of Adam to the coming of our Lord, and not a single one had ever been able to keep the law or deliver himself from under its bondage. When Jesus came and fulfilled the law, satisfying its demands in every jot and tittle, he delivered from its bonds all that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Therefore he became the first fruits, or the first to rise above the law, and thus he became the deliverer of his people. Paul in addressing his Hebrew brethren said, "Foreasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." This same apostle in writing to the church at Rome said: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Christ is presented throughout the scriptures, in substance, as being head over all things to the church, which is his body, and we cannot conceive of any kind of relationship or fellowship existing be-

tween a *living head* and a *dead body*. Therefore those who worship him in Spirit and in truth must, necessarily, be quickened by the same mighty power which wrought in Christ in raising him from the dead, in order that the members of his body also be alive with him; to them he is their resurrection and their life. In connection with the vital union of Christ and the church, we sometimes like to sing the following hymn from Beebe's Collection:

"Twixt Jesus and the chosen race,
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne'er dissolve, or rend in twain.

This sacred bond shall never break,
Though earth should to her centre shake;
Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God has pledged his holiness.

He swore but once, the deed was done,
'Twas settled by the great Three One;
Christ was appointed to redeem
All that the Father loved in him.

Hail sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace, how sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate deity!

One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all he is, or has, is theirs;
With him their head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety, and their all."

If we are one who has been born again of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, we are persuaded that though we were dead (in our natural state before having been quickened and made alive in Christ), we shall live as long as he lives. The record is that we are not only heirs, but that we are

joint-heirs with Christ; therefore our inheritance is certain and sure and nothing can ever deprive us of it, so long as our 'God sits upon his eternal throne. We realize that the experience of these things here in time is as Paul says, "every man in his own order."

Our brother says that he is especially concerned about the twenty-sixth verse, which reads as follows: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" We understand from reading some recent editions of certain Old School Baptists papers that the claim is being made that the children of God do not now nor will they possess eternal life until their bodies are raised in the general resurrection at the last day. This we cannot subscribe to, and since our text has to do with this point, we will endeavor to support our view by evidence brought forth from the divinely inspired record of Holy Writ. All other evidence must be regarded as irrelevant and immaterial. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. In John 5:24 we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Also, in John 6:47 we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." If these were all the scriptures we could produce they should suffice, since his word cannot fail. However, we feel to submit further evidence on this point: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14-15. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they fol-

low me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28. Paul in writing to Timothy admonished him to "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." I Tim. 6:12. To deny that we are in possession of eternal life here in this time state is to undermine the very foundation of our hope. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This being born again is how we become members of the family of God. John said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Peter said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively (living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36. If we do not have eternal life here, how can we hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ and the things of God's kingdom? We have been made to hope that we have had a foretaste of those things which are heavenly and divine, that we have seen through a glass darkly here those things which shall be revealed in all their splendor and glory hereafter. Paul must have had some comprehension of these things, otherwise he would not have desired to depart and be with Christ, which he said was far better; he could not have com-

pared "our earthly house of this tabernacle" which shall be dissolved, with that "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." At funerals and in obituaries, we often hear and read such expressions as the departed having gone to be with their Lord. This is a comforting thought to us. Not long ago we were called to conduct the funeral of a dear sister in Christ, and we verily believe the words spoken by our Lord, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," were given to us to speak from. We felt assured that our dear one was at that very moment in the presence of her Lord, enjoying the pleasures which are at his right hand and shall last forevermore. We believe that all of the Lord's little ones have often been made to rejoice over Paul's declaration to the church at Rome where he asked the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Then by way of answering his own question, first he speaks of tribulations, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword, all of which pertain to the sufferings of this life. He does not stop here, however, but after saying, "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us," he then declares, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." How well this ties in with and confirms our text: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John said, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." We have just come across the following comment on this

passage by a former Editor of the *Signs of the Times*, which we believe will be of interest to our readers: "Christ was the first born from the dead, the first to rise from the dead to die no more. The resurrection of Christ is, therefore, the first resurrection. Those who have part in this resurrection are those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and for whom he died and rose from the dead. These are risen with Christ and cannot die any more, because he has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Those for whom Christ died cannot die, they have everlasting life. The second death, the death of the mortal body, has no power over them, for while their mortal bodies do die and return to dust, the spirit, or life, cannot die. He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die, but hath everlasting life. When the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, they shall be clothed upon with that building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Two different houses, but the same child of God that now lives in this earthly house shall also dwell in that other house not made with hands, the building of God."

The last part of our text is in the form of a question which Jesus put to Martha, "Believest thou this?" We can but feel that those who, like Martha, did not understand or believe these things, are still under the influences of the *law*, or *legal dispensation*. We humbly hope that we are among those, like Mary, who have ceased from their labors and are sitting at the feet of their Lord and Master, hearing and receiving, and believing his word. To all such, he is their resurrection and life, their all and in all; the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, and there is none in heaven or in earth

they desire beside him. May his glorious name be exalted and praised among the children of men above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that world which is to come! Amen.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 9, 10, 11, 1949 sends greetings in the Lord to our sister Associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN: In accordance with our custom, as in years that have passed, we address you by the so-called circular letter, and if it be God's will we will give you the reason for the hope within us that we have been called from nature's darkness into His marvelous light, making us sons of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Also, if God so wills, we will mention some of the dealings of the Lord with his elect family whom he has chosen as his own before the world was, for it is written that God so loved the world (meaning his elect or chosen ones) that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The natural or carnal man, before he has been wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, goes his way satisfied with his way of living, believing himself, as long as he stays within the law of the land, to be as good as he needs to be, enjoying life and the vanities of the world, thinking himself to be the master of his fate, and if he ever thinks of God or of going to heaven when he dies, he believes that if he lives a good moral life, and this he believes he is able to do, he thinks he merits salvation. (works)

However, there comes a time when

he begins to see little faults in himself, and as time goes on he sees the little faults or sins growing larger and larger, and more and more of them come to his attention. He resolves in his own strength to correct these errors only to feel himself growing worse and worse until he is driven to utter despair. He feels himself sinking into a horrible pit, hedged about on every side without God or hope in the world, and he is made, in his anguish, to cry, God, help I perish. Then it is that the Lord appears to him and the still small voice whispers to him saying, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." His burden is lifted and he is filled with that peace that passeth understanding. He is made to say with the Psalmist, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 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. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Surely those who have passed through similar experiences to the above know that their salvation is of the Lord, and that their hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness and can say in the words of the poet:

"Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly:
Wash me, Savior, or I die!"

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you for a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15. So our hope is given us not for any merit of our own, or for works lest any man should boast, but by God's electing love, "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:*****who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice." Then the apostle speaks of us being in heaviness for a season, if need be, through manifold temptations: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of 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. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you."

Although at these times of heaviness, spoken of above, we do not lose our hope, but we do feel to mourn because of our depraved natures, and we do hunger for his appearing, but we are comforted because it is written, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteous-

ness: for they shall be filled." Matt. 5:4 and 6.

We realize our unworthiness and inability to write on such a subject, but we hope the mantle of charity will be thrown over all errors and lack of understanding for it says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Peter 1:20. In closing we wish to state that this Association stands firm in the doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all things; a revealed religion; salvation by grace, looking to the time when we shall awake in his likeness, and see him as he is and be satisfied.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 9, 10, 11, 1949 sends greetings in the Lord to our sister Associations and meetings of our correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN: Your correspondence has been received with gladness, and your ministers, Elders A. H. Bellows, J. D. Wood and E. C. Jones, came to us preaching the gospel, giving all honor and glory to God and his Son, Jesus Christ, the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Peace and harmony prevailed and we were made to behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

We hope the next meeting of the Maine Association will be held, the Lord willing, Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in Sept. 1950. We hope to have a notice giving the place of meeting in the *Signs of the Times*.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS,
Moderator S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS

The West Fork Church, while in session April 8, 1950, delegated the undersigned moderator to write a resolution of respect to our dear sister and kindred in Christ, REBECCA ROSE, who departed this life April 3, 1950 at the age of 74 years.

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God to call her from among us to her reward which has ever been reserved for her, and all the redeemed family of God. She was a member of the church for many years, and was sound in the doctrine preached by the Primitive Baptists and surely believed by us. Due to ill health she was prevented from attending church the last five years. She was a daughter of the late Elder Daniel Hicks, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be spread upon our minutes, making it a part of the same, and a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, and the Old Faith Contender for publication. Done by order of the church.

HURSHEL HICKS, Moderator

WHEREAS, our heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom, has removed from the scenes of this life our beloved brother and deacon, HARVEY JONES WHITE, and

WHEREAS, we have long recognized and appreciated the value of our dear brother as a wise counselor and conscientious leader among us, and

WHEREAS, we shall long cherish his memory for his keen interest and gracious manner in serving as our deacon, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that we give thanks to our God, who is the giver of every gift to the church, that he was pleased to give our Brother White to us, and that we bow in humble submission to his will in removing him from us, and be it

RESOLVED, that we, the members and friends of New Valley Church, extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved widow, Sister Alethea White, and to all the surviving family, and we pray that the Lord will grant them necessary grace to reconcile and sustain them in their great loss, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be placed in our minutes, a copy given to Sister White, and that it be published in the Signs of the Times and the Old Faith Contender. Done by the unanimous voice of the church this 1st day of April, 1950.

JOHN D. WOOD, Moderator
MARTHA W. HOWSER, Clerk

WHEREAS, in the infinite wisdom of our God, there has been removed from the shores of time three of our ministering brethren, Elders, D. L. TOPPING, C. W. VAUGHN and H. H. LEFFERTS

with whose presence in our Association during the past years we have been blessed, and whom we highly esteemed as servants of the Most High God.

THEREFORE, we, the Maine Association, desire to go on record as follows:

FIRST, we would bow in humble submission to the will of our God and say, Thou doest all things right.

SECOND, we feel to thank our God for the gift of these brethren unto the brotherhood in Christ and for the comfort we have derived in their fellowship, and from their preaching the gospel of the Son of God.

THIRD, we desire to extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of these brethren. It is therefore

RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread on our minutes and be published in the Signs of the Times, and a copy sent to the families of each.

Done by unanimous vote of the Association this 10th day of Sept. 1949.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator
S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. IDA SMITH was born in Union Parish, La., March 25, 1876, and departed this life Nov. 27, 1949, making her sojourn here 73 years, 8 months and 2 days. Before her marriage to my oldest brother, J. H. Smith, Sr., she was Miss Ida Dettenheim. To this union five children were born, all of whom survive: Odell, Myrtle (Mrs. Ray Veles), Mary (Mrs. Lyle Berkley), Philip and James.

Jim and Ida with their five children, some of them quite small, moved from Union Parish, La. to La Porte, Texas more than thirty years ago, making that their permanent residence. With the exception of Myrtle, who lives in a near by town, all the children live in La Porte.

Ida had many noble traits of character—her exemplary life of honesty, industry, straight-forwardness, plain, modest, unassuming manner of life, utter faithfulness to her husband and family, and last but not least her unquestioned virtue. These, to mention no other, were some of those happy qualities that ever characterize true womanhood the world over, and every one of them is an inestimable blessing bestowed by none other than our heavenly Father. However, it must be noted that important as all these things may be they certainly sink into insignificance when compared with those higher and nobler graces which are the product of the Spirit of God in the soul here, quickening it out of a state of death in trespasses and sin, into a state of life and holiness in Christ Jesus. Happy, thrice happy are the souls of all those thus wrought upon by the Spirit of

the living God! Giving them a proper knowledge of sin and of self, and that true wisdom from above which disdains every evil way and thought; and carries with it an eye single to the good of others here, and to the glory of the adorable Redeemer here and hereafter.

Judging from what I trust I have seen and felt in Ida, (my kind, noble sister-in-law) her utter loathing of self and of sin, her belief in and entire dependence upon the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for life and for righteousness, her ardent love for the dear old Bible, (blessed volume divine) I feel that I have been enabled to gather indisputable proof, how comforting the thought, that she was an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ. Her mortal body was laid to rest in the local cemetery in La Porte to await the all glorious resurrection morn. The local Methodist minister and the unworthy writer conducted her funeral services in the Methodist meeting-house, she having united with the Methodists at a very early age. God be thanked for the unspeakable riches of his wondrous grace. Written by the request of my dear old brother Jim and all the children.

(Elder) JOHN LEE SMITH

In memory of ELLA J. JONES who passed away at the writer's home Jan. 8, 1950. She was born in 1872 at Melbourne, Ont., and married the late Wm. A. Jones in 1898. They lived at Mayfair near the Ekfrid meeting-house after their marriage, later moved to Staffordville and then to Tillsonburg. Aunt Ella had been a faithful member of the Covenanted Baptist Church for a long time. Visitors to their home were always welcome. They loved to entertain the church people and looked forward to the visits of the ministers, their wives and friends.

Uncle Will preceded my aunt in death leaving her very lonely. They had no family, but had relatives and friends who loved them dearly. Auntie sold her home and from that time until her death unselfishly tried to make the path easier for others. She and her husband never wanted to burden others and we feel they were repaid in that respect for their unfailing kindness to others.

Aunt Ella loved the scriptures and the preaching, and after the death of her husband it was her desire to live and die among her church friends. We know she looked to God for comfort, and we felt our helplessness to know what was best for her here but God saw fit to take her to himself.

A copy of a part of a sermon was sent to me recently on "The blessedness of those who die in the Lord." It was comforting. They rest from their labors, freed forever from the sorrows, afflictions and toils of life. I believe it may be said of such

as die in the Lord that their works do follow them. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." Should we not remember the prayers, exhortations and reproofs of our loved ones that "being dead yet speaketh."

Aunt Ella suffered a weak spell, and a few days later had a stroke and was in an unconscious condition until her departure. Her funeral service was held in London and our dear pastor, Elder Ruston, spoke comfortingly from Psalms 127: 1-2. "For so he giveth his beloved sleep," as he said the dear sister just seemed to sleep away. The twenty-third Psalm was used and the hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way" was mentioned as one of Auntie's favorites, and I have also heard her repeat the hymn, "My times of sorrow and of joy," especially the verse,

"What is the world with all its store?
'Tis but a bitter sweet;
When I attempt to pluck the rose,
A prickly thorn I meet."

Her remains were taken to the Aylesmer Cemetery, Aylesmer, Ont. The church, her remaining relatives and friends will miss her but we feel it is her eternal gain to be forever with the Lord. Written by her niece.

(Mrs.) VERNA CARSCADDEN

MR. CHARLIE MASON of Atlantic, N. C., our dear friend and brother in Christ we hope, was born in 1882, and passed away June 7, 1950. He was a wholesale fish dealer. He is survived by his wife, sister Alice Mason; three children, Mrs. Ervin Morris, and Loyd Mason of Atlantic, Mrs. Ray Hughlen, Tampa, Fla.; six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; two brothers, Elmer and Joseph Mason of Atlantic.

He was a man of high standing with the church at Atlantic, of which I am Pastor, and with the people of this community. To know Mr. Mason was to love him. He had a wonderful personality. He loved the Primitive Baptist church at Atlantic, of which his wife is a member, and was a great help to the church. Not only the church but his friends as well will miss him.

His funeral service was held from the home June 9, conducted by the writer. He was laid to rest in the Atlantic Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the morning of the resurrection when all the saints shall rise and their bodies fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ.

(Elder) SYLVANUS GRAY

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

C. W. Edwards, Ala., \$10; C. R. Myers, Pa., \$2; Mrs. G. T. Franklin, Va., \$1; A friend, Ia., \$5; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., \$1.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118

RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1950

No. 10

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 386, Canyon, Texas

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INCORPORATED.
Dear Brother Dodson, if one so sinful as I may address you as brother. I have a desire to write some of my experience but have put it off from time to time, feeling it would, if published, crowd out something of more interest to the readers of the *Signs*.

I am failing in health and have been in the hospital six times with four operations in three years, and the last operation the doctor said, "you have a cancer." This operation was a year ago and I feel I will soon need to have another. I am in my sixty-seventh year. I was born in Tate Co., Miss. I came with my parents to Texas when I was a small boy. At my earliest remembrance I liked to hear my mother read the *Signs of the Times*, and did like to go to church and hear the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone preached by some of God's able ministers such as Elders J. C. Sikes, C. T. Nance, J. R. Hardy and many others. My father moved from Miss. to Bowie Co., Texas when I was about four years old, then to Gatesville, Texas in Caryell Co. when I was about seven. Elder C. T. Nance was the preacher there. We moved twice more and when I was fourteen we came to Ohio, Texas. Father got me a job working on the farm for a brother Hedgepeth. I stayed with this lovely family seven years and then married Beulah Farman.

As far as I can remember I loved the preaching and wanted to go every opportunity. Brother Abb Koen was the preacher at Sardis Church where father and mother were members, as well as Brother Hedgepeth and most of his children. Father built a new home at Ohio, Hamilton Co., Texas when I was about sixteen years old. When I was thirteen we lived at Pidcoke in Caryell Co., Texas where my parents went to church at Hilsdale. A Brother Chambers was the preacher. At three different meetings I saw a beautiful golden light that filled the whole house, and the faces of the people shone so bright to me. Every time we went to church mother would watch me as I wept, and when the door of the church was opened I would leave the house. I was afraid I would offer myself to the church, and I knew those God-loving and God-fearing people would not have me. I had heard mother read in the *Signs* where some brother or sister had found themselves up with the preacher trying to tell what God had done for them and I did not want that to happen to me. I did not think they would receive a child, and I knew if they could see me as I felt they would not want my name on the church book.

Now back to Ohio where father built the new house. Sardis Church was a large church and a large membership. Brother Abb Koen was the pastor. I wanted to go every time I could. About that time a Brother Broom came preaching through the country and was at

Sardis for their regular meeting, then he was going to Hilsdale where Brother Chambers was pastor. I wanted to go so father said—go. We went to several places with Brother Broom. I loved the brethren, and I loved the gospel if not deceived. Many times before, father had told me any time I wanted to go to church he would take me even when I was thirteen and fourteen years old. When I was seventeen I dreamed or saw a vision. I thought I was sleeping in a room off an ell porch. Something wakened me and the room was filled with the same soft, golden light I had seen before. I got up and went to the door. This golden light was everywhere, so bright yet so soft. When I got to the door, a brother younger than I was lying on his face with his head to the wall, and was using his arms and legs as though he was swimming. I said to him, "Fear not, it is Jesus." He was groaning. I had not seen anything but the golden light. There was a large oak tree that stood in the ell of this porch and I walked out in the yard and looked up to my left. There was Jesus as plain as I will ever see him. He was in a small cloud. I could just see his head and shoulders. Then I turned and looked at a windmill; steel from the ground up, but it was pure gold. When I looked the wheel was turning very slowly, but not a sound was to be heard. I ran to the northeast corner of the yard and around a buggy shed and got an uncle by the hand and led him out to show him Jesus, but when we would see the cloud Jesus was gone. I pointed to the golden windmill and said, "this is for us to pattern after," then I awoke and wondered what this meant. The third night after this dream I dreamed again. I saw an angel standing at the corner of my bed in the room. It was a wonderful sight to behold. I threw the cover

back and arose to my feet to go to the angel but it disappeared. I awoke and wondered what it meant. Then I dreamed the third night again the third dream. I was flying through the heavens, and I looked back toward the earth, a fear came over me and a voice said, "Look up and not down, you are going to heaven." Again I awoke and wondered what this meant to me—a poor sinner. The brother that was lying on the porch as though he was swimming and was groaning, about ten years later died in my arms, and as he was struggling for breath said to me, "this is the end of your dream where I saw him as though he was swimming on father's porch."

At this time father and our family had moved to O'Brian in Haskell Co., Texas. The death of this brother ended that part of the dream. Both father and mother were strong believers. He was a preacher and was widely known as Dr. W. R. Presley and passed on in 1936. Mother also passed on in 1932. I feel she and father are with the Lord. As long as I can remember their home was a gathering place for the Predestinarian Baptists. When the division came in 1900 father and mother were of the seven or eight that stood for predestination and election. There has been a falling away in the church and will be until time ends. About five years ago I dreamed I was in my car, traveling it seemed, and I came to a desert, sandy country, then to a dry water course and the sand was deep in it. This stream ran by the side of a high mountain and the road went up the side of this steep mountain. I looked up and said to myself, "afraid my car cannot make it up to the top, but I must try it." I got about half way to the top of the mountain and my car stopped. I looked back and was afraid. The road was so straight and narrow

and so steep, but I let my car back to the bottom, then backed off a distance so I could get a run on the long road up the side of the mountain. I made the run and just got on top as my car stopped. Everything up there was so beautiful and green, below it was burned up and sandy. I got out of the car, the grass was tall and green, the country up there was a beautiful place, cows and horses were fat, and while I stood admiring the beauty a little white lamb appeared a few feet from me and was looking at me. I said to the lamb, "I love you," and the lamb said, "I know you do." A beautiful white lounge chair appeared to me. I said to the lamb, "Come sit here," and I awoke.

For many years I put off going to the church until the Lord's time came. It was in November 1938 or 1939 at Altus, Okla. Elder W. N. Green was the pastor. The church received me on Saturday and Brother Green baptized me that afternoon, and since that time I have attended all the meetings I could at three churches, Amarillo, Texas, where my membership is, the first Sunday of each month, Altus, Okla. the second Sunday, and Mangum, Okla. the third Sunday.

Now what I believe. I believe in one true and living Lord God, and this God works all things after the council of his own will. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, every thought of man's was with God before man was formed of the ground. This man of dirt cannot please God, he must be changed and no power on earth can change his nature, it is the work of God. Read the first twelve verses of the third chapter of John and see what Jesus told Nicodemus; then read the twenty-seventh verse of the same chapter. In nature this fleshly man cannot please God, he must be born again, not

of corruptible seed but of incorruptible. Read Genesis, chapter twenty-five, beginning with the twenty-first verse and see the two seeds again. Romans ninth chapter beginning with the ninth verse and including the twenty-fourth. Now read all the eight chapters of Romans and see the two men. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Rom. 8:5. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. 8:8. It seems the above is enough to show the elect and non-elect. Now turn to Ephesians and read the first chapter, see God's predestination and election; read the second chapter, see how they are changed from natural to spiritual.

God is a sovereign God and works all things after his own will. "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Exodus 9:16. This was God speaking of Pharaoh, the wicked king of Egypt. God told Moses, go tell Pharaoh to let my people go, but I will harden Pharaoh's heart so he will not let them go until God's appointed time. Seven times God hardened Pharaoh's heart so he would not let the children go, but the eighth time (which to me represents the resurrection of the spiritual deliverance of Israel) Pharaoh let them go. God hardened Pharaoh so that he followed the Hebrews of Israel even into the Red Sea where God drowned all the host of Pharaoh. The apostle Paul said that all that was written aforetime was written for our learning. What do we get from that statement? It means to me that God does with every creature as he did with Pharaoh. To me Joseph was a type of Christ and when Jacob, their father, had died Joseph's brethren went to make a covenant or agree-

ment with him, "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." Gen. 50:19-30. Peter preached and said, "Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:*****Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2:14 and 22-23. Then read Acts 4:7-8. Now to the poor, hungry soul that is looking and longing for that life beyond the grave, that immortal life: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." So there is not a spot or wrinkle against any of God's chosen ones. Jesus Christ came to this low ground of sin and lived the life that God required. If it had been left for mortal man to live none would have been saved, but Christ bore all the sins of his people all the days of old; they were never left to man to keep; Christ stood as a lamb slain before the foundation of the world for his people; their life was hidden in Christ before the foundation of the earth was laid. I do not believe there will be a soul saved that did not have a standing in Christ before time was. Our life was hidden in Christ before time was. "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." John 6:39. I so often hear people say you must

make the choice. Some say, "Choose ye, whom ye will serve," but the scripture says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." John 15:16. The world says you must repent in order to have eternal life, but we read, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 11:29. So you do not repent in order to obtain life, but because of life; the life comes without repentance. Without life we could not repent.

This is getting lengthy so, dearly beloved, read and remember Matt. 1:21. This is what God told Joseph through the Holy Ghost, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." The three "shalls" in the verse are positive. The world says the first two "shalls" came to pass, but the third depends on the sinner. Beloved, if you love God there is not the slightest chance for you to fail to be with your Lord. No, it is positive and as sure as our Lord came to earth, suffered and died. Oh, but was my name written in the Book of Life before the world was? That is my hope and faith. Now my hope goes beyond the grave. I believe that after time ends all of God's people will be changed from fleshly bodies to spiritual bodies. Read the words of Jesus, John 5:28-29, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Read the eighth chapter of Romans and notice especially the last three verses. Time would fail me to give all the proof of the steadfastness of the elect, the ones chosen in Christ before time was, so no timely thing can interfere with their redemption, resurrection

and immortal glory. I meditate most of my time on these things. I have almost worn out my Bible reading it. I believe if all the reading of the Bible I have done was put together I would have read it through two hundred fifty times. It is my meat and drink. Now to all that love God may his blessings be yours.

C. M. PRESLEY

"It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."—Isaiah 40:22.

Brother Dodson and all the household of faith, is it not a wonderful thought that our blessed Savior created the earth for we poor worms and grasshoppers to dwell in? and the heavens in which he shall call us home into where we shall spend eternity? I have often been made to wonder why our blessed Master created this earth, populated it with these teeming millions and millions of us lowly grasshoppers and worms of the dust? Then my mind turns to Romans 11:33 in which Paul says, "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!" and again in verse 36, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Brother Dodson, sometimes it is hard for us to see into and through the marvelous works of God, but we must not, we cannot question God's work, for the arminians and his chosen ones were both (the sheep and the goats) placed together here on earth and he will separate them on the day of judgment. We must not ask him why for he said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," though there will be many on the judgment day who will try to convince God that they

should be saved for their good works saying, "Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works," Those are the ones who are trying to establish their own righteousness; and are trying to organize the whole world into their own camp to follow blindly after conditional salvation.

Not long ago I heard a preacher pleading for lost souls to come to the altar and be saved saying, "this is the Lord speaking through me, and Jesus is standing with outstretched arms tenderly pleading with you to come today and be saved for today is the day of salvation. Now sinner friend what are you going to do with Jesus? are you going to accept him or are you going to reject him, he is doing everything in his power to save you and it is entirely up to you to accept or reject him." O my soul! can this be the same God who created heaven and earth and all that in them is? Is this the same God that of him, and through him, and to him are all things to whom be glory for ever? Is this the same God who, when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost on the cross of calvary said, "It is finished?" Is this the same God of whom Paul said, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling?" or is this the God of the wicked world who must patiently wait until all of us grasshoppers and worms of the dust have died and returned to the dust to be brought before the judgment bar to see whether or not we have accepted or rejected him? What a helpless God who must wait, not knowing what we are going to do until after we have done it. Then there are those who fall from grace; he must wait until death claims them to see if they will accept him again and be saved.

Does it not seem strange that the

religious world, with the Bible before their eyes, will tell you that Christ died for the sins of the whole world? and that it is God's will that all would be saved, yet nearly all of them will tell you that his will shall never be done, thereby placing the stamp of failure on the all wise, holy and omnipotent God, and placing him entirely upon creature dependence. Can we put our trust in a God who cannot accomplish or carry out his will? If he fail in this he might fail in all other things, and if he fail in any of these things he would not be God, and died in vain on the cross, and our hope of eternal salvation is vain. Thanks be to God he has a remnant of people even to this day for Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "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." So our true and trustful Savior has said that he would not fail, and we who have that small hope are assured by his holy word that he will not fail. No, he has never failed, and brother, he will never fail. Sometimes we are left down in the valley when it seems as though our little flame of hope is almost gone, and we are made to wonder, when it seems that all the world and even God has turned against us, and we ask ourselves are we not mistaken, or were we deceived? Then we remember the words of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians when he said, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me," and for this thing Paul besought the Lord thrice, that he might depart from him, and the Lord said unto him, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Dear brother, is it not wonderful, that while we are being tossed about on the wild, raging seas, facing the sore trials and temptations of this sin cursed world, and being buffeted about by the messenger of Satan, that we can look to him whose grace is sufficient for us throughout all of this life's trials, troubles and tribulations, and it will be sufficient to raise us from the dead and bring us into that heavenly kingdom where we will meet all of the saints, and dwell in peace and glory forever throughout eternity. He has said he will do it and he shall not fail and in him I will put my trust.

Dear household of faith, let us rejoice in the hope and in the love of God which was shed abroad in our hearts by the one and only living God, who recorded our names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, where it will be kept until the book shall be opened by the Lamb of God; and the names of his people whom he hath called out of darkness into his marvelous light shall be drawn out, and they shall be set in that glorious kingdom which he hath before prepared for us. Jesus said, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." He said he would do it, and when he bowed his head on the cross of calvary and gave up the ghost with the never to be forgotten words "it is finished," then it was finished, praise his holy name, and he did not fail.

Brother Dodson, just a word about the dear old family paper, the *Signs of the Times*, before I close. I have been reading it about one year, and before that I did not know there was such a paper printed. When I discovered that Sister Olive Floyd had been taking it for many years I got papers from her

as far back as 1913. You see there is always a little flock to hear the word of God. I know that all of its readers feel the same as I do about the *Signs*. May God give you strength, courage and good health to enable you to carry on and continue to send forth the gospel to those (his sheep) who hunger and thirst after righteousness. I am a very poor writer, in fact I feel there is nothing good in me, just a weak miserable worm of the dust, but sometimes when I feel God's spirit I am made to do things which I feel I cannot within myself do. At this time I felt I must write you and if there is anything you feel the household of faith might care for you may use it as you see fit. Your brother in Christ I hope.

LOREN BARGER

Route 1, Galconda, Ill.

Route 1, Elora, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is time for me to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*. What a wonderful paper it is! I get so much comfort from reading it. If I am one of God's elect I feel to be the least of all. How well I remember the time when Christ spoke comfort to my weary soul. I felt such a heavy burden and was made to feel and realize what a vile sinner I was. I would try to pray for God to have mercy on me but could not utter a word. People told me to just accept the Lord and all would be well but that was not my case, I felt the Lord had to accept me. One night when I retired I felt such a heavy load on me I could not sleep. I tried to pray for the Lord to have mercy on me, feeling I could not live much longer. About two o'clock in the morning I spoke the words, Lord have mercy on me or I perish, and there was the brightest light shown all over the room, brighter than the noon-day sun. I hope the Lord spoke com-

fort to my weary soul. I was very happy, shouting praise to my dear Lord. I thought the next morning I would tell everybody what the Lord had done for me but my mouth was closed from telling any one.

Brother Dodson, for several years I wanted to unite with the Old Baptist church but felt too unworthy to ask a home with them, but on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in May 1948 I did ask for a home and was accepted. I still feel unworthy to have a home with God's dear saints and oh what a sweet home it is. These are some of the things I hope the Lord has done for me but the half has not been told. Your brother in Christ I hope.

R. O. SIMMONS

405½ East Pike St., Seattle 22, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: Just a few lines this time. I have had my seventy-third birthday and received enough money to send for the *Signs* for this year. It will be a very sweet birthday present for me as it will pay me up to next January. Thanks for sending the paper I do get so much good out of it and the Old Faith Contender. I received the latter Monday and read the notice about you being in the hospital. I do hope by the grace of God you will soon be able to be home and your health be much better.

Elder C. M. Fisher, our Pastor, has been ill with a bad heart attack. He could not stand long to preach at our last meeting. How I wish the good Lord would send more young preachers to be ready to take the places of these aged Elders. Elder Cameron in our church is in poor health too, and Elder I. F. Coleman of Riffe, Wash. is an aged Elder and health not good, but our all wise God knows best and does all things after the counsel of his own will. How precious he has been to me

the last few years, I have felt his presence so many times. Before our last meeting, fourth Sunday in Feb., I could feel him taking me through the deep waters and through the fiery furnace to purify my sinful body so I would be fit to meet with some of his chosen ones here below. On Saturday night we sat in Elder Fisher's home singing those sweet hymns, I was filled to overflowing. When we started to sing "How Firm a Foundation" and came to those two verses I had been through I could hardly sing for I had witnessed this just a few days before. Pray for me. Your sister in Christ.

(Mrs.) LILLIE BLYSTONE

Shirleysburg, Pa.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have been wanting to write you for six months or more. First, I noticed last June the improvement in the paper used in the dear old *Signs of the Times* which seemed to make reading easier. Then I want to humbly thank you for seeing fit to put in the good paper the little poem I had written so long ago. How I do love the letters and writings from the dear Old Baptist people. Some of them I read again and again. Last evening I received my *Signs of the Times* for February, and again I saw the little poem I sent you last spring. No credit to me, but I truly believe that a great and merciful God does give us these little thoughts and passages out of his bountiful supply of good things, else how could we go on. How I wish I could write and keep the many lovely thoughts that flash out like sunshine from behind the clouds, and then are gone just as quickly as they came.

I especially enjoyed in this February issue "The Clefts of the Rock." It was just what I needed, and it made me feel so thankful and humble. I also liked very much your views on the use of

instrumental music in the church. I have often wondered about that very thing. So many churches have young folks come in and play several pieces on a Sunday night, when the same persons had played music for a dance the night before. One can only say, like the Master, God (Father) forgive them for they know not what they do.

I get so lonely for a good talk with the dear humble saints of the Lord. I am sorry to say that most of our church folks here do not speak the language and I feel all out of place when with them. I do not care to take any part in their church activities, and I know they think I am careless or uninterested in the things of the church here. I find no comfort there and like the song—I think, Where can I go but to the Lord. Praise his dear name, I can go to him in spirit any time, any where, but I love to be alone with him. I like to shut my eyes to the world and step within the vale of his presence in the world of thought. But there is so much to hinder, and the duties of this worldly life take so much of my time. How I long for that sweet land of rest, when I shall lay my armor by and dwell with Christ at home. I would appreciate your prayers, and maybe a word of encouragement if you will be so obliging. Please excuse all mistakes and God forgive me if I have said anything wrong. I am enclosing several little things I have written. I wonder if others are ever as doubting and feel so lowly as I so many times do? May the dear Lord be with you always in the good work you are doing through him. Amen. Your hopeful but humble sister.

(Mrs.) FLORA BOOKER

Last fall while sitting in church one beautiful Sunday morning, listening to the minister expounding on the sins of the world—drinking, smoking, dancing, and all such of which we all see and

know too much—my mind wandered to other things. Outside the window I could see a massive oak tree. Sturdy strong branches laden with lovely leaves fluttering in the autumn sunshine. I thought how marvelous the works of the Lord; how like God it seemed, shedding beauty, shelter from the storms; rest for the weary traveler underneath its branches; even food for the little squirrels to store away for winter. How wise is God who made it so, placed it there that the world might see and enjoy that beauty and splendor. Then I thought of the mighty roots down under the ground, in the darkness of the earth, hidden away from the sight of man; the smaller roots and the tiny tendrils reaching out into the soil, drawing moisture and nutrition from the ground, sucking life from beneath the sod that those branches might flourish and bring forth strength and beauty. No one ever paused to admire the roots or marvel at the life giving sap that continually coursed upward into that tree. All unseen by the world, but so vitally important to the life of the oak. God using the unseen to glorify that which is seen. He has placed many, many roots down into the dark places of this world, and as he will that they shall, they are reaching out drawing life from within the deep places, (the holy word) feeding on the Holy Spirit, nourishing the tree (or life) which in turn radiates beauty of soul, glorifying God which he has so purposed in the very beginning.

Dear Elder Dodson, shame on me, I forgot I was sitting in church, but God gave me a more beautiful sermon through that old oak tree than I had heard from the pulpit (sorry to say) for many Sundays. Do you not think that a divine Savior can and does work in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform even in the lowly, humble, little,

unnoticed roots, The light of his countenance penetrates even into the bowels of the earth (the dark places) which he also made for he made the earth and everything therein. He will not forsake his own. Oh how I hope that I am one of his, and that his guiding hand will lead me all the way. If there is any good in these lines pass it on to the household of faith. Written by a sister in the hope of that life beyond the vale.

(Mrs.) FLORA BOOKER

313 E. Barrett St., Tyler, Texas

DEAR BROTHER LAMBERT: I will, God willing, write you hoping you and your wife are well and enjoying the goodness and mercy of God. As for wife and me we should feel thankful to the Giver of all good although I almost have the flu.

Regarding my refusing to open service at Good Hope Church last meeting day, I did not feel that it would have been expedient for I am a man of unclean lips. I am ignorant, cannot speak; sinful, I cannot be reconciled to the thought that God in his goodness and wisdom would choose one as sinful and unclean as I know myself to be to speak of his glory, of the unsearchable riches of Christ to the comfort of Zion. Yet our ways are not God's ways, our thoughts are not his thoughts, for he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" "All things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist," There was not anything created nor made without him; all things are subject unto him; he is the disposer of all things. He chose his people in Christ before the

foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. He manifests this in them and makes it known in this time world by quickening them by his spirit while they are dead in sins; makes known unto them his goodness, love and mercy, that it is not by works of righteousness which they have done, but according to his mercy he has saved them; that it is by grace and not of themselves that he has raised them up and established their goings. He puts a new song in their mouth, even praises unto the Lamb. "Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace of a soul in its earliest love." They wonder and adore until he hides his smiling face, withholds his tender mercy so that they see themselves again. Now their sins appear exceeding sinful, they see them as never before; their sins have a new meaning to them; they wonder if anything can blot them out; they feel their case is hopeless, they try to cry for mercy but it seems there is none, death and destruction seems the only way; (But God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.) they are strangers in a strange land; they are working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, not according to their own will and satisfaction for it is God working in them both to will and do of his good pleasure. They are a mystery unto themselves, the good they would they do not, the evil they would not that they do; they have a desire to do good but how to perform it they find not. In their mixture of joy and sorrow they are made to cry out, "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!" They are taught that it is not according to their own works, for their works are evil, but that it is by the grace, love and mercy of God

that they are saved; so they grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him; they are given the assurance that he is their righteousness, their sanctification, their redemption; he is their all, in him they live, move and have their being.

Paul tells us in the 12th chapter of Romans, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice" unto God. A living sacrifice, because they have been quickened by the Spirit and made alive; holy, because they were chosen in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world that they should be holy, called with a holy calling; acceptable, because it is to the praise and to the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.

I believe at the time appointed, and by the goodness and mercy of the Father they will present their bodies all prepared, qualified and fit to fill the place prepared for them in the church. I believe a man should not go forward until he can go nowhere else, or as long as he can keep from it for I believe Jonah got there at just the right time. I believe the church should announce that if there is any one present desiring to speak now is the time, and by the manifestation of some brother that he has such desire, the church should consider whether the spirit be of God or of a natural desire.

My brother, I may be deceived in all my thoughts and if so I do not want to deceive my brethren. This is a fearful thought. "Stand ye in the ways." "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," I hope is my desire. Write me when you feel like it, and pray when you have the mind in the Spirit, that God will lead, guide and direct me in the

way of all truth. Your brother in Christ
I hope. J. H. HAMRICK

“And Jesus said, Who touched me?”
—Luke 8:45.

I have given considerable thought to the above language of our blessed Lord, and have at times been made to wonder if I have ever been blessed to touch even the hem of his garment. This woman had faith to believe that if she could just touch his clothes she would be made whole. She was sore afflicted with an issue of blood, and had spent all of her living with physicians, doctors of the law, but only to grow worse; so, “When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be whole.”

Dear reader, is not this your experience when you had exhausted all your means, tried all the works of your own hands, took all the medicine the doctor of self-righteousness could give you and it did you no good, but your condition only seemed to grow worse and worse, you gave up to die. Then you heard of this blessed Jesus and something within told you if you could only get close enough to him to touch his clothes you would be made whole. “And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?” (Read Mark 5:25-31.) His disciples no doubt thought it strange why he would say “who touched me” when the multitude was pressing him on every side; why he would think just one had touched him, but no, this touch

of the afflicted and suffering woman was deeper than just his material clothes. The apostle Paul says, “For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Heb. 4:15. “And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.” Luke 8:46. Yea, this poor, sin sick, afflicted and dying woman was the only one that touched him; all his virtue and life’s blood went out for her because she is my love, my dove, my undefiled; she is the choice one of her that bare her. Our neighbor’s wife may be sick and dying near us, which may not give us much concern, but let that loving bride of ours become sick, suffering and dying then it is quite different. She is the one that touches our heart strings, and the natural love may be great enough that we would be willing to give our natural life if we knew it would make her whole; but how much greater is the love of our blessed Savior for his bride which is boundless and everlasting. “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” Jer. 31:3. For this reason have I drawn thee, it is because my love is everlasting. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

Dear reader, have you not experienced this fear and trembling, and falling before him, telling him the whole truth; that you are wretched, that you are helpless, and wholly dependent on him, praising and adoring his holy name for his goodness, his kindness, his forgiveness in saving our lives. No doubt the multitude thought it strange indeed that he should say “who touched me” when they were pressing him from every side,

yet he said, in effect, that only one touched him. We have preached the gospel, have won souls to thee, have cast out devils in thy name and have done many wonderful works in thy name, has not all this touched thee? No, none touch him except those that are drawn by the Father, and those that are thus drawn he will in no wise cast out. They are sealed with a seal that cannot be broken, and their names are written in the palm of his hand by the indelible blood of his blessed Son and cannot be erased. He keeps them as the apple of his eye which is the most tender organ of the body. Our blessed Lord said, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." Eph. 5:25-33. The apostle says this is a great mystery, and indeed it is in nature, but he says, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." Notice he says, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," and Christ says, I in you, and you in me, and I in the Father and the Father in me. I and the Father

are one. How firmly they are all compacted in one body, not one member could be destroyed without destroying the whole unity, the whole godhead.

The apostle takes up the subject of husband and wife, by way of comparison or illustration, to set forth the connection between Christ and the church, his bride. Notice what the apostle says again in the last verse of the above chapter, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband;" not committing fornication with the harlots of the world, the daughters of Babylon, the worldly religionists, but ever looking unto our blessed heavenly Father who is the author and finisher of our faith if so be we have such. This glorious church, or bride, which he said he would present unto himself without spot or blemish, was, according to the holy scriptures, created in him before the foundation of the world or before the world was, and therefore in a spiritual sense is as old as he. Adam is said, in the scriptures, to be the figure of him that was to come. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Eve was just as old as Adam for she was created in him when he was created. They being a figure of Christ and the church must have been in like manner, so this is the one that touched him; this is the bride that touched his clothes of righteousness and brought virtue out of him; that healed her and clothed her nakedness with his own clothing of righteousness.

John says, "I,*****was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus

Christ." "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Rev. 12:1. She was clothed with the righteousness of the blessed Son of God, and the moon under her feet, the law, with the reflected light of the sun for she was redeemed from under its curse and condemnation; and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; she was crowned with the doctrine of the twelve apostles of the lamb; she has but one husband and owes all her allegiance to Him. The apostle Paul says, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Cor. 11:2. "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman," (Jer. 6:2.) and thou art the one and only one that touched me and brought virtue out of me.

Dear brethren, I submit this to your judgment. If it is not according to scriptural truth do not publish it. I have written with much fear, realizing my weakness and ignorance, and fear it is like myself, very imperfect. I know of a surety that if God has not blessed me in the writing it will be of no value to his dear saints. Any doctrine that does not ascribe all honor, glory and praise to God cannot be true, but the doctrine ascribing all honor, glory and praise for all things both in heaven and earth ascribe him an absolute sovereign over all his creation, and cannot be wrong for the knowledge of this doctrine cannot come from human nature, nor from any human machinery. As our blessed Savior said to Peter, "flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Your unworthy brother in Christ I hope.

H. L. ROGERS

Denton, Ky.

223½ South 10th St., Mount Vernon, Ill.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I wish to thank you for filling my request with an editorial in the *Signs*. It was wonderful and I read it over several times. I got so much light as to the love of the church. When I had read the paper and laid it down this dear old hymn came to my mind and I had to sit down and sing it:

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Savior and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven."

Oh no, Elder Dodson, I, like you, do not believe that God will ever leave himself without witnesses, nor that the half can ever be told of the beauties or of the great wonders of God. He is a wonderful God. The head of the body, the church, who is the beginning of all things. His ways are higher than ours and past finding out; his great mysteries are too deep for my understanding, but I hope there is a little token of the oneness of mind and feeling existing between us that may strengthen my little hope that I may be blessed in that redeemed family that Jesus died

on the cross to redeem; that we may enter into the joys of his kingdom at the right hand of his Majesty on high. I am made to study and ponder of the greatness of God, of his wisdom, of the wonderful plan of salvation he laid down to save his people from their sins. It seems I see myself so black within, I am made to weep and cry and wonder if I can deem myself a child of God, if I have ever been born again. I doubt and fear, become so low in spirit and cast down in darkness I almost give up in despair; then it seems God's strong arm lifts me up and my little hope is renewed and I am made to sing praises to his adorable name. The sweetest of all names is Jesus. He has bought us with his precious blood, a ransom provided to bring us to God, and I hope to reign with him in glory, be as he is and be satisfied.

If my pen is not directed the same as God directs my steps I cannot direct it. I find my mind blank and I cannot help it as I can do nothing of myself. The things I would I do not. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins." Jer. 17:9-10. He knows our mind, gives us our thought, without his help we can do nothing. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14:24. If it is his purpose and will for us to hear, see and understand, he gives us an ear to hear and a heart to understand; he gives us our portion in measures as he sees fit. As you can see mine has been given in a very small measure, but if so his ways are just and what he does is right. I am depending on him for all I am or have. I am helpless and very poor, but if he will cheer me on my way and guide my doubting footsteps, be my strength and

stay, my precious Jesus is all I want or need. I am glad I have been made to see my sinfulness and helplessness, and brought down to cry unto Abba, Father.

Elder Dodson I only intended to let you know I enjoyed your editorial. I have also enjoyed all the good letters and editor's writings. I think the dear *Signs* is a wonderful paper, and hope you can be blessed to carry it on. It is really a great message to me. When the *Signs* comes I lay everything aside until I have read it. I enjoy it and feast on the good writings. My writing is like myself very unprofitable. A little sister if one. In hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) S. S. KERLEY

227 -- 19th St., Dunbar, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: For some time I have felt impressed to write what I hope has been the Lord's way with me, but have hesitated since I fear others might not find it interesting reading. It means so much to me as it gives me the little hope which is so precious to me, even though it seems so small. At times I am only made to hope that I have a hope. I enjoy reading the experiences of others in the *Signs*. It seems they describe my goings in and coming out better than I can myself.

If I know my mind I believe I have always loved the Old Baptists. My parents home was always open to them and many visited there frequently. When a child I used to sit around in some inconspicuous place listening to them talk on the scriptures. After I learned to read I would slip the *Signs of the Times* out and read the experiences which I found written in them. For some reason I did not want any one to see me read them, perhaps because I generally shed tears. About this time I began to have short seasons of worry over my own sinful self. I would often

slip off and cry and try to pray which was only to ask God to have mercy on my poor, wicked, weak self. This continued off and on until I had been married quite some time, then I began to realize in truth that I was a lost, undone sinner. I would often steal off to myself and try to pray; I would awaken from sleep and cry and try to pray. The Bible became just so much jumbled type to me. I talked to my sister who is a member of the Missionary Baptist church. She would tell me I was letting the devil get the upper hand of me. I tried uniting with her church—just anything for relief—but this made me feel as if I had committed a terrible crime. One night while on my bed I was pondering this Missionary idea when I suddenly had the urge to read my Bible. I arose, picked up the book and opened it. The first scripture that appeared to me, as if it covered the whole page, was, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." This ended all my connection with the Missionary Baptists.

I continued on several years in this awful state. I got to the place where I was afraid to say the word Jesus. I felt one so wicked as I should not repeat this sweet, sacred word. During this time I had a very sweet dream which has remained with me as vividly today as when I dreamed it. I dreamed the world was coming to an end. Mother and I were standing on the porch of our old home, clasped in each others arms so very frightened. Suddenly, out of the terrible confusion and darkness, a great light shone from the sky, and the blessed Savior appeared with outstretched arms and said, "Fear not, I have come for you." This seemed to give me peace for a short while, then my troubles came back with more force than ever. I had a burning desire to unite

with the Primitive Baptist church, and many times at meetings when they announced the open door I desired to go forward but was held back. On the first Sunday in July 1939 I went home to the church and was baptized the first Saturday in August of that year by Elder J. C. Hammond. I never knew why I went to the church that Sunday, but the first thing I knew I was up there trying to tell what the gracious Lord had done for me. I felt so terribly unworthy and still do. The song, "I am a stranger here below, And what I am 'tis hard to know," seems to fit my case so well. However, I would not exchange this little hope within my breast for the world.

(Mrs.) NANNA M. CARNEY

Arrangements have been made for the printing of another edition of the Durand-Lester Hymn Books providing we get orders in advance for the most of them. One thousand must be printed at one time. Send orders at once to

F. D. LONG
Box 496, Roxboro, N. C.

Black Rock Church meets every second Sunday at 11 a. m., Butler, Md. on Falls Road about 20 miles North of Baltimore.

J. D. WOOD, Pastor

The Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at Baltimore, Md. meets every 3rd Sunday 11:00 A.M., in stone church at 210 E. Madison St. near Calvert St. For information contact Quincy A. Gladding, 5 Hill Top Road, Baltimore 2, Md. Phone Cato. 5317.

An all-day meeting of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church will be held at New Vernon, Sullivan Co., N. Y. on Saturday, Oct. 14th. All members and friends are cordially invited. Lunch will be served to all who attend the same as was done last year.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

A. C. Morton, N. C., \$1; Eld. O. W. Perkins, Ky., \$2; S. Buckner, Mo., \$1; J. A. Owen, Ala., \$2; Miss G. Secor, N. Y., \$5; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., \$7.

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

OCTOBER, 1950

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Rutherford, N. J.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23.

This text is the culmination of the greatest dissertation on sin, which unatoned for, would forever ruin the whole of the Adamic race, and righteousness, which, by the life of Christ, and its imputation to them, forever frees all the children of the promise from the devastation thus wrought through Adam. This Arminian world has a lot to say about the first part of the text, but very little about the latter part. Could we take a Scriptural examination of false doctrine we would find that that would be all that could be expected of them. They cannot preach that salvation that is of the Lord; for in nature, as well, and even more so in the spirit, none of us can do anything that we do not know anything about. It is a plain declaration, but profusely borne out in the Scriptures, that this world is not preaching salvation at all. But to the contrary they are preaching a doctrine that would forever be the eternal death-

knell of (not as they accuse us, a few, but) all the human family.

I do not have a desire to pass lightly by the first part. I would not be faithful to the charge given me, if I glossed over or sidetracked some portion of the truth because of its somberness, and I feel that I would be just as unfaithful if I tried to alleviate the guilt of the man by placing sin as coming from the same fountain as the eternal life. If sin came from the Lord Jesus Christ through the man, then Christ got the wages for sin. I cannot find anything to lead me to think that the Lord ever paid himself for what he did while here in the world. But if God is the author of sin, then he paid wages to himself, and although he is reckoned as being the source of all life, we would find that he paid off in death to himself.

There is such a thing as getting paid for what you do. Unless we have been more fortunate than the most of our fellowmen, we all are interested in our wages. When pay day comes around the most of us feel different about it to other days. The Lord told Adam what to do. I may be mistaken, but I do not believe that any reward was offered to him for doing what the Lord said do. But when he told him *not* to do something, he (God) told Adam what his wages would be. This payoff was not to be for doing something good, but it carried an inflexible promise of pay if he did something wrong. When our foreparents sinned in the garden of Eden, the payment was immediately then and there put into effect. It was not to be a prolonged payment, but went into effect that day. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. This man Adam is thus credited with sin, and death by sinning. The death passed upon all men, in that all

sinned. Although it was a long, long time before God gave the law to Moses, it did not prevent death from reigning from Adam right on down the centuries until the giving of it.

The sin was one man, Adam. He did not need any help or influence from God. He did not wait until there was a world full of people to help him. It was a one man affair that brought wages to all men. The gift of eternal life, which Paul calls the grace of God and the gift by grace (Rom. 5:15), is by the one man, Jesus Christ. He did not need any help, nor would all the influence of all men been worth anything in the redemption price. One was to bring the wages, death; one was to bring the gift, eternal life. This condemnation is passed upon all men. It is now in effect on all living men, and it is so far reaching, so inclusive and exclusive and conclusively fixed, and its bounds so illimitably set that each and every offspring of Adam is born under that condemnation, death.

This text has sin and righteousness, death and eternal life, set in array before us. They are not set before us for us to take our choice. The choice is not ours. The election to eternal life was made in Christ before the world ever was, and Adam, the first created man, brought death upon all his posterity. We often hear our Arminian friends talking to the unregenerate about getting ready to die, or preparing to die. They are too late at getting ready to die. Adam brought death to us all in the beginning, and out of, and as a direct result of, that death in trespasses and in sin, flows the natural or corporeal death of this body. If I may be allowed to say it this way, there is a sense in which Adam's doing wrong brought a triple death. It brought us all to a state of separation from God; this separation or death is complete.

There is not anything about a man, any man, that this death has not had a deathly effect. The Ephesian brethren were reckoned as being dead before they were quickened into life. Then these wages of sin included our natural dying. As the first is universal, having dominated through the abounding of sin, to bring all to this first state of death, so, also, is it with the second. We all must go the way of the earth and lay this body down. All the claims of false religionists to the contrary notwithstanding, these wages have been collected by all the human family so far. It would be the height of absurdity to claim that the stream could change its course at this late day and bring forth one in the future that was not contaminated with sin and condemnation. And, nominally, these wages brought eternal death. I am not trying to separate and divide this death that sin brought, in all these steps, it is death: it is a separation from something else.

Now let us look at the gift of God. The gift is opposite to the wages. It is from our creator to us. The gift does not cover or remove the wages from all that collected them. The gift does not run parallel with the wages. By one man's offence all died, it is true, but the gift is restricted to those that receive an abundance of grace. In Adam all of his people died, but in Christ all of his people are made alive. The world makes the gift of God applicable to all that died in Adam, but the church of Jesus Christ preaches the gift of God to all the elect of God.

Let us remember that the gift of God is without repentance. (Rom. 11:29). The literal meaning of this word repentance is that God is not concerned about changing. This was settled in the council held in eternity. God gave the gift in promise and verified it in time. There cannot be any change in the gift

of God. Our God does not bestow this gift today and take it away tomorrow. In that eternal choice and bestowal of eternal life, it was not based upon what a man could do. All that transpired in the garden, and from then until now, was naked and open before this Eternal Giver. The fall of man, as well as all the consequences of that fall, being in the eternal mind and purpose of the Giver, he laid help on one that was with him; one that could not be bought with any price of wages; one that would not be caught in the grip of death; one that would not be discouraged when his soul was made an offering for sin; one that was willing to lay aside his coat of glory, resting assured that when the gift of eternal life and perfection had been wrought out for bestowal on his bride, that His Father would glorify him with the glory that he had before the world was.

Dear child of God, here is that doctrine that the little ones rejoice in. The gift of God to them holds their enraptured attention. One of the first texts that I enjoyed speaking to my brethren about, when I first began speaking in a public way, is found in Paul's letter to Titus: In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. I sometimes hope that I am still hoping in that promise. I feel sometimes that my life is varied so much that I do not show any stability at all. I seem at times to be near enough to embrace this promise and call it my own, and then again, if I am persuaded at all, I am afar off from them all, and must confess that I am a stranger and pilgrim on the earth. But the dear Savior declared that his sheep hear his voice, and that they know him, and that they do follow him. He further declares to them that "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any

man pluck them out of my hand."

This gift of God is first manifested by his quickening them into divine or eternal life (2 Pet. I:4). This manifestation of this gift is through Jesus Christ. He ministers that life to whomsoever he will. He came to do that ministering. That giving of this eternal life was not entrusted to any fallen creatures that were in the throes of this wage-bought death. No sir, not that. He came from his Father to do his Father's will. That will was, and is, and will be through all the surging tides of time, that not the least of all the given of God to his Son should fail to receive that gift of eternal life. He did not come a participant in that death that sin brought. He was not dead in sin, but came into the world alive unto righteousness. He was subjected to the law, but being equal to the law, he lived it for all the ones entrusted to him. Being God manifested in the flesh, he became obedient unto death. This gift of God is through or by way of Christ. He subjected himself to death, that through him—through his having died—they might live forever. This gift lasts and lasts. It is from the Lord, and by way of the Lord, to his own. He gives this gift with no intention—not even concerned about—taking it away from them. He did not give it to them to keep—never, oh no, poor stumbling sinner. But he gave it to you to keep you; to keep you ready to be delivered up for any persecution that is allotted you here in the world; to keep you ready by supplies of grace for any duties in the kingdom; to keep you ready for the call of instant or lingering death of this mortal body; to keep you from the evil of this present world. And dear brethren, it will do just that.

While in the power of this wage-bought death, there is not any desire to render unto God for all his benefits;

there is not any ability to really and truly serve God; there is not a meditation of the heart but what is downward (serving for more wages). But when this gift of eternal life is given to the heirs of promise, they cannot lose this gift; they cannot become negligent and have it taken away; they cannot sin and thus sell it for wages. But it is there to stay and to be finished; to prosper and to grow; to be your anchor to hold you in place and to lift you up to the mountain top. In conclusion, this gift of eternal life is followed up with more of the same quality gifts. They are the same quality; they are from the same source; they are through the same medium; they are to the same poor sinful character; they have the same effect. Rom. 8:32; 2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:8.

W. D. G.

“Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and, have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind; Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter.”

—Jer. 19:4-6.

A subscriber in Roanoke, Va. has asked that we give our explanation, or understanding, of the fifth verse of the nineteenth chapter of Jeremiah. We have quoted the fourth and sixth verses also, believing they will throw some light on the fifth verse.

Not all scripture is soothing or placating to Israel, for there are times when she needs to be chastised and rebuked. We wish to emphasize this by quoting the great apostle, who said “All scripture is given by inspiration of God,

and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Tim. 3:16. Let us not, therefore, shun those scriptures which reprove, rebuke and instruct us, and which may seemingly be against us, but remember that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Also, it is said, “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.” David said, “Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” We like that scripture which says, “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

We have no doubt that God’s dealings with Israel of old as a nation was in many respects typical of his dealings with spiritual Israel here in this gospel dispensation. The church here in this age passes through different stages of experience and needs to be taught, corrected and instructed in righteousness. This is clearly attested to by the various messages to the seven churches of Asia. None is perfect while here in the flesh. At the time the prophet Jeremiah was raised up, Israel was in a particularly deplorable and corrupt state, or condition, and the burden of his prophecy seems to have dealt with God’s cutting off or casting away of his people among the Jews. (There are times when the good husbandman must needs prune his vineyard.) The first few verses of this chapter shows that under the type of breaking a potter’s vessel is foreshadowed the desolation of the Jews for their sins. Jeremiah’s prophecy, therefore, was

not to be such as would popularize him with the people, because the word which he was to proclaim unto them would often penetrate deep down into their conscience and cut as a sharp sword. He keenly felt and earnestly pleaded his insufficiency before God for the task before him, by saying, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." God answered by saying, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." The Lord also said unto him, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." We believe these declarations of God apply to those of his servants whom he calls and qualifies and sends forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to-day. Our ministers in this age should endeavor, as much as in them is, to be faithful to their high and holy calling, and have the courage to stand in their lot and fearlessly declare whatsoever God has commanded. Let us remember that he said to Jeremiah, "Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord." It was this prophet who told Israel, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Isaiah had well described their condition in the following language: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." This was a terrible indictment, indeed, for the Lord to bring against his people, but how true, nevertheless! The Lord commanded Jeremiah to say on his behalf, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls," but they replied by defying God and saying, "We will not walk therein." Instead of giving heed to the words of the prophet, they said, "Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor the counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words." Thereupon Jeremiah appealed to the Lord his God by saying, "Give heed to me, O Lord, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them. Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour their blood by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and be widows; and let their men be put to death; let their young men be slain by the sword in battle." It is good, indeed, when God's servants can trust him sufficiently to stand at their posts and firmly declare whatsoever he hath commanded. The opposition may at times be strong and the odds seemingly overwhelmingly against them, but there are times when they can

cut off. And they also if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." How we need to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth! In looking about us we find individuals and churches calling themselves Old School Baptists who are doing what seems to us to be the most outlandish things imaginable, both as to doctrine and order. We are often amazed and ask ourself the question, how can they with the written word of God before them, and the love of God in their hearts, depart so far into forbidden paths. While we are not very much given to pointing out the faults and shortcomings of our brethren, we do advocate most strongly that those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus should earnestly strive not to bring reproach and shame upon his cause. It truly behooves the ministering brethren, particularly, to take heed both unto themselves and unto the doctrine, lest having preached to others they themselves become castaways. Let us be assured that God cannot be deceived nor mocked, "for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" and that he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.

In conclusion, we repeat that the things which have been written of old by men inspired of God, were written

for our benefit and learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. We should, therefore, search the scriptures constantly, diligently and prayerfully, in the hope of being more perfectly instructed in the way of God and his righteousness.

We trust something has been said which will be used by the Holy Spirit to stir up the pure minds of our readers, causing them to strive to live according to the profession which they have made, and that they may be built up in their most holy faith. Realizing that we have not been purchased with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God, may we endeavor with all our might to glorify God in our bodies, as well as our spirits, both of which are God's. R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

The death angel removed from life's activity and usefulness Sister ALICE M. HALL, June 12, 1950 at her home at North Berwick, Me. Her illness was brief, being confined to her bed about one week. She was 80 years old. She is survived by one brother, Alfred Ford, Springvale, Me., and a large number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Hall was born in 1870 and educated in the schools in the community where she resided. In 1911 she was united in marriage to Joseph Hall to whom she proved a loyal, capable and faithful helpmeet until his death in 1933. She was much exercised in mind spiritually and in 1883 united with the Oak Woods Church, near North Berwick, and was baptized by the late Elder Quint. During her long church life of sixty-seven years she manifested the fruits of the Spirit in her upright walk, her godly conversation, her faithfulness to her meetings, and showed her zeal for Zion by contributing liberally in a material way, not only to the church of her membership, but for the support of other meetings of her faith. She was a woman of many noble qualities, and the purity of her life is an invisible monument to her memory. She often went far from home to attend the meetings of the Primitive Baptist church and firmly believed in the doctrine of salvation by grace, the effectual preservation of the saints, and the resurrection of the body changed

say with Jeremiah, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

Coming now more particularly to our text we see, from the fourth and fifth verses especially, some of the things of which Israel was guilty. Among their offenses they forsook the Lord their God, they estranged their sacred places of worship by burning incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers had known, "nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents." Worse, still, they had also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which God commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into his mind. These high places of Baal were undoubtedly the idolatrous temples in which they worshipped their images, wherein were to be found the altars upon which they offered their sacrifices. Israel went to the absurdly cruel and barbarous extremes of burning their own sons with fire as burnt offerings unto Baal, which was a terrible thing to do. They could hardly have conceived of a greater mockery before their God than this. We know from observation in our own and other lands to-day that it is absolutely unbelievable what some human beings will do after they have thoroughly imbibed certain devilish doctrines. Apparently, they lose all sense of reason and loyalty to everything under the sun, and give themselves over freely and wholly to the influences and machinations of their masters. Some of the things which have been uncovered in our own fair and wonderful country have been unbelievably shocking, and, alas! all the corruption is not in the outside world. The flesh of national Israel was full of it in Jeremiah's day, and the flesh

of spiritual Israel is full of it in this our day. The flesh of those who are born of God is not changed, but remains vile, and it can only be kept under by the grace of God which is given unto us. God commanded the prophet to say unto them, "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter." According to Smith's Bible Dictionary, Tophet was once "The royal music-grove, where Solomon's singers, with voice and instrument, regaled the king, the court, and the city; when it became the temple of Baal, the high place of Moloch, resounding with the cries of burning infants; then (in symbol) the place where there is the wailing and gnashing of teeth. Once prepared for Israel's king, as one of his choicest villas; then degraded and defiled," etc. The comment is made, "Strange contrast between Tophet's first and last!" What a description is given us here by the prophet when the Lord would pour out his wrath upon them, that he would change that place from Tophet, meaning musical-grove, to "The valley of slaughter!" While our God is merciful and longsuffering, he will eventually take vengeance on his enemies and on all who oppose him, "And he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." The apostle Paul, in the eleventh chapter of Romans, presents to the Gentile church one of the strongest admonitions to be found in the Bible, it seems to us, where he says, "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be

into a glorious and immortal body when Christ comes for his church.

Her home was noted for its hospitality and the warm welcome extended to neighbors, friends and to those of her faith. During her last illness she was tenderly cared for by Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Hanscom, who had made their home with her for the last eight years, and who ministered to her with as much devotion and affection as if they were her own children. The funeral services were conducted by the writer at her late home. Interment was in the Berwick Cemetery. The floral tributes reflected, by their beauty and profusion, the love and esteem in which she was held.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

SISTER ELLA WILSON COBB was born July 25, 1884 in Alabama, and died Dec. 25, 1949, making her stay on earth 65 years, and 5 months. She moved from Alabama to Texas at the age of two and spent the rest of her life in that state. She was married to Robert H. Cobb, Oct. 1, 1899. To this union were born five children, two girls and three boys. She united with the Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in 1910. As long as her health permitted she was faithful in attendance. She leaves to mourn her death her husband, two sons, Wiley and Vernest; one daughter, Mrs. Annie Mae McElyea; five sisters, one brother, ten grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Two children preceded her in death, Mrs. Clyster McKinney in 1930 and Virgil Cobb in 1948.

A Letter from Mother

Children dear come lay me away,
And write your Dad a letter;
Tell him how we used to pray,
But now my prayers have ended.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Pastor of the Church, officiated at the last rites at the Hopewell Baptist meeting-house. Interment in Hopewell Cemetery.

R. H. COBB

ELDER CHARLES DENSMORE was born Nov. 24, 1869, and departed this life April 18, 1950, making his stay here 80 years and almost 5 months. He was married to Lucy Collins in 1897 and to this union five children were born. His wife and three daughters, Mrs. Bessie Wilburn, Lou and Molly preceded him in death. He leaves to mourn their loss, two daughters, Mrs. Sarah Thompson and Mrs. Eva Howell; two half-brothers, T. C. and Dave Densmore; six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

He was an ordained minister of the Primitive Baptist faith for about fifty-six years, a sound and faithful Old Baptist until death. He lived the

doctrine he preached. He will be missed not only by his children and kindred, but by friends and more especially his brethren. His church loved him beyond expression. A large company attended his funeral service at his home church, Liberty Grove.

The unworthy writer, who has tried to serve as his moderator for nearly three years was called to conduct the service together with Elders H. M. Brock, A. T. Randolph and W. C. Barnes. Many good hymns were sung, and after the preaching of salvation by grace of a sovereign God his body was laid beneath the sod to await the glorious resurrection morn. Written by request of the church.

((Elder) J. W. McCool, Moderator
GARNSEY McGOUGH, Church Clerk

MRS. NANCY ALICE (BEENE) SMITH was born near Fort Smith, Ark., March 19, 1887, and departed this life Nov. 10, 1949 near Norman, Okla., aged 62 years, 7 months, 21 days. She was married to J. H. Smith, July 12, 1904. To this union were born five girls and seven boys: Mrs. Otis G. Smith, Shawnee, Okla., Mrs. Paul Burgess, Lorene Smith and Mrs. Clifford Kittler, Oklahoma City, Okla., Billy Ruth Smith at the home address; Homer, Tecumseh, Okla., Clarence, Moor, Okla., Allen, Oklahoma City, Okla., George, Norman, Okla., Melton, Corpus Christi, Texas, Ernest and Glen of the home address. There were three sisters and two brothers, one sister preceded her in death one day, besides a host of relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

She never united with the church, but always attended Old Baptist meetings when she could, and we think she gave every evidence of being a child of God. She was a loving wife, kind mother and always ready to help any one in need. Her door was always open to Old Baptists and she did all possible to make their visits enjoyable to which I am sure they would all readily assent. We feel her loss keenly, and while we wonder she should have been taken, we believe she had finished her work here and is resting from her labors. Her sickness was of short duration. Elder C. U. Landers of Coleman, Texas conducted the funeral service and she was laid to rest in the Norman Cemetery. Written by her sister-in-law.

NANCY MILLER

MARION NEWTON WHITTINGTON was born March 4, 1859 near Waldron, Ark., and died Jan. 24, 1950 at his home near Glen Cove, Coleman Co., Texas, aged 90 years, 10 months, 20 days. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife, ten children, 18 grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. Six sons: C. G., St. Helena, Ore., S. C., S. G., C. T., and M. D., of Glen Cove and Glen of Cutler, Cal. Four daughters: Mrs. Annie Fite, Visalia, Cal., Mrs.

Cleo Smith, Pleasonton, Tex., Mrs. George Rinehart, Cutler, Cal., and Mrs. W. F. Mittle, Glen Cove, Tex.

Brother Whittington united with the Predestinarian Baptist Church about sixty-five years ago, but due to failing health he has not been able to attend meetings for several years. In the presence of a large company of relatives, friends and neighbors he was laid to rest in the Glen Cove Cemetery. Thus he has fulfilled God's command to man, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Being given a long and useful life, he was also gifted with the greatest gift of God to man, a hope of life beyond the grave, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." As long as we remain on earth we are natural, corruptible mortal beings, and thus it is written, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." It is the same "it." That was our brother's hope, that he would be raised in the likeness of our Savior, see him, be like him, and be satisfied. May our heavenly Father comfort Sister Whittington and the children. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. U. LANDERS

MRS. ELIZABETH RODGERS, (nee MATTHEWS) daughter of the late Joseph Burton Matthews and Mary Francis Cook Matthews, was born April 4, 1872, departed this life Jan. 4, 1950, making her stay on earth 77 years and 9 months. Her father being a minister of the Old School or Primitive Baptist faith, also her maternal grandfather, Elder Joab Cook, she was raised in a home where all true Primitive Baptist people were shown a warm welcome and made to feel at home. There was much singing and rejoicing when they were gathered together for their meetings. She was united in marriage to John Henry Rodgers, Jan. 25, 1894. To this union one daughter was born. She is survived by her daughter, Mrs. Artous Meeks, three step-grandchildren, four great-step-grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Martha Ann Wilkes, one sister-in-law, Mrs. Maggie Matthews, and a host of nephews, nieces, and other relatives and friends. She will be greatly missed in her home and among the brethren in the church. She was a good tenor singer, and it was one of her greatest pleasures when she was endowed with the spirit of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence, near Star City, Lincoln Co., Ark., in October 1914. Being in bad health most all her life she did not have the privilege of attending meetings as much as she would have liked to do, but went when she was blessed with health and a hearty welcome was extended to all Predestinarian Baptists who visited in her home. Her dear husband passed away in Feb. of 1933. Her pastor, Elder H. H. Philips, conducted the service

in the meeting-house at Providence. A large company of relatives, brethren and friends filled the house, and many beautiful floral offerings were given in love and sympathy, showing the high esteem they felt for a dear sister of the church who so ably defended the cause.

During her last years she lived with her daughter who gave her as good care as she was able to do. The daughter spent most of her time the last year ministering to her mother and her husband who had a serious head injury. All was done that doctors and loving hands could do but to no avail. When her Savior Jesus Christ called she went home to be with him on that glorious resurrection morning when all his beloved children shall obey their Father's call, and arise with him and be like him forevermore in that beautiful home called heaven, while we, who loved her dearly, mourn her passing, we hope she is at home with her Savior Jesus Christ. We feel great sympathy for her loved ones left behind. Written by a niece.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church, Loudon Co., Va., Wed., Thurs. and Fri., Oct. 11, 12 and 13, 1950. Ministers and other brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to meet with us. The meeting-house is 8 miles north of Leesburg and 4 miles from Point of Rocks, Md. half a mile from Lucketts on Highway Route 15. Those coming Tues., 10th will come to Leesburg and inquire for Bruce McIntosh or call C. R. Hollandsworth. Greyhound buses leave 12th and N. Y. Aves., Washington, D. C. A local train leaves Rosslyn, Va. near the end of Key Bridge at 2:25 p.m. Those coming Wed. by bus to Leesburg too late to be met will find taxi service near bus stop. Those coming Wed. by private conveyance will go directly to the meeting-house. For further information write

M. W. HOWSER, Church Clerk
Purcellville, Va.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Nassaongo Church located about six miles from Salisbury on the Snow Hill Road, Wed. and Thurs. Oct. 18 and 19. An invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth and especially to ministering brethren. Provision will be made for all present. Those coming by train or bus on Tuesday will go to the homes of the following all living in Salisbury: Mrs. Raymond Parsons, 545 Jackson St., Mrs. Harold Powell, Lincoln Ave., or Mollie E. Fooks, 710 S. Division St. (Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

M. E. FOOKS, Clerk

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118

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No. 11

CORRESPONDENCE

Williamstown, Kansas

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER
IN CHRIST:

If it will not tax your patience too much I feel that I would like to give expression to my thoughts in regard to the scriptures recorded in 2 Peter 2:4, also Rev. 12:9. That in 2 Peter reads, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved into judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness," etc. That in Revelation reads, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Rev. 12:7-9. These two parts of Holy Writ, while they may bear no relationship to each other, are equally confusing to some of the Lord's little ones. Sometimes we find it less difficult to tell what these things do not mean than what they really do mean. So if God will guide my mind and pen I would like to present my version of this for the consideration of our dear brethren who read the *Signs*: "*The angels that sinned and were cast down to hell.*" It would be dreadful to anticipate even

the possibility of any of the angels of the paradise of God sinning and thus forfeit their home in those regions of bliss. This thought really deserves to be dismissed without comment. Firstly, because they must be born of God or they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, and whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God. Secondly, sin is condemned in the flesh and those disembodied spirits are not encumbered with a body of sinful flesh as we who are yet thus encumbered. Thirdly, Jesus has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." I can see no advantage in a good hope through grace if, after we may have attained to that glorious state we are still in jeopardy of being cast down to hell. The Catholic clergy claim their ability to pray a soul out of purgatory which claim is, to say the least, fantastic, but it is no less absurd and incredible than to suppose that God would cast one of his holy angels down to hell after having received him in glory. So we will dismiss this theory as being altogether unfounded. But the apostle's words are not idle words, so we must look for a better solution than this. He is referring to the old world as will be seen by reading this chapter. God's people, Israel, are the angels under consideration here and the old world, of course, is that old or legal dispensation wherein the people were under the law of carnal commandments. His people did sin most flagrantly. They trampled un-

der foot the holy law of God until they "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and God did cast them down to hell. Not into an imaginary abyss burning with fire and brimstone but delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. As a recompense for their sin he sent that wicked king Nebuchadnezzar who razed and destroyed and carried the people into exile seventy years. Briefly stated, these are the angels that sinned and this is the hell into which they were cast. We notice that "Noah, the eighth person" is brought to our view in this connection. Noah, the only one whom God saw righteous in that generation. All the rest were counted as exceedingly wicked and this would necessarily include the family of Noah with the rest. As it applies to God's people now so it applied to them. They were by nature the children of wrath even as others. They did nothing to merit the favor so abundantly bestowed upon them. "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.)"

Perhaps no clearer demonstration of God's election can be found in the Bible than this. Noah, a preacher of righteousness, a type of Christ, was commanded to build an ark, a type of the church. This he did alone. He sought no help from any source only from God, and no help was provided him. Thus Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." Likewise he went forth in this work alone. He asked for no human aid and any or all who pretend to be helping God must be accounted imposters. "Noah, the eighth person." Besides him, in his family there were seven souls which seven represents a full or whole number. God said, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Thus we see the whole

family gathered into the ark with Noah, their head and husband. Looking now at the antitype we see the whole family of God gathered into the church with Christ, our exalted head and husband. As before stated, the family of Noah was among that wicked generation hence they did not enter the ark on account of their righteousness or good works but by the virtue of the righteousness of Noah, their head. And likewise God's people are gathered into the church, not on account of their righteousness or good works, but by virtue of the righteousness of Christ, our exalted head. "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."

In Revelation it is said, "And there was war in heaven." I hope no one will be presumptuous enough to suppose this chaos existed in those regions of eternal bliss. This cannot be, although there be some who refer to this scripture to prove the devil was once an angel in heaven but he sinned and thus became a devil. How absurd and incredible, I have not words to express. How could any one suppose that God Almighty is so lax in his government as to allow one of his holy angels to sin and sink so low in infamy as to become his adversary. Who would suppose there are temptations in heaven that are more alluring than the shining courts of glory? This war in heaven was the culmination of one of the things of which John came to bear witness which it was said must shortly come to pass. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And this is the heaven in which this war was waged and not in heaven above where all is love. This war, no doubt represents the early persecution which the saints of the Lord were called to endure when the Pope ruled high hand-

ed and supreme, having both secular and religious authority and many of the saints who had the courage to withstand his tyrannical rule suffered martyrdom at his pleasure. Blood flowed to the horse's bridle. Let not our brethren be misled by this. This does not mean the blood was two feet deep or more which it must have been to reach the horses's mouth; but the bridle is that by which the beast is controlled. He is held in check, he is turned hither and thither. Says the apostle James, "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body." Thus the blood of the saints flowed unto the time when this beast, the dragon, was checked in his unholy holocaust. "Michael (Jesus) and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." John "saw an angel, (which no doubt represents the power of the Holy Spirit of God) come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nation no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." "Thus Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not." This was a bitter conflict but Michael prevailed. The dragon was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him. This perhaps, is the first element that split away from the true church and they remain separate

and apart from the true church to this day. They were cast out into the earth. They went out from us because they were not of us. This dragon is called the Devil and Satan. As John stood upon the sands of the sea, he saw a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns. The sea, no doubt is a symbol of the legal dispensation, his seven heads representing full or complete authority. His ten horns representing the ten commandments of the law by which he persecuted the saints who recognize the complete redemption from under the law by our Lord Jesus Christ. The ten crowns upon his ten horns representing his regal powers so it mattered not how or in what way the saints offended his satanic majesty they were tried and convicted according to the law of carnal commandments. No doubt their greatest offense was their zeal and desire to worship the true and living God. The dragon, or devil, gave this beast his power and authority. And even he had no power other than that what was given unto him, so hence this war in heaven, power was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Michael prevailed, Jesus died that through his death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. It was God's people who were all their lifetime subject to bondage under the law. It was God's people who were in constant fear of death because the death penalty hung heavily over their heads. But it is God's people who rejoice in a complete deliverance from the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberty of the children of God. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Satan is a vanquished foe. Jesus reigns. He reigns victorious, over heaven and

earth most glorious. Jesus reigns.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

Route 2, Box 4, Elkins, W. Va.

ELDER BRANCHE, MY DEAR AND PRECIOUS BROTHER IN GOSPEL LOVE: How good it was to see you again, and to be with you for a short time and hear you and Elder Martin preach. No, Elder Branche, we did not feel that it was wrong for you to go home at the time you did. On the contrary, under the circumstances, I believe that God gave you all a mind to return home just the same as he gave you a mind to come unto us declaring the "unsearchable riches of Christ." We felt thankful that we had you on Saturday and could hear you both preach twice.

We had our regular meeting on Sunday. Elder Poling was still with us. I felt that I was given liberty on Sunday, but realize I was left in the dark Saturday night. If you recall I read my text over a second time and there was nothing there for me. I know that any understanding must be sent from God Almighty and it is not in man. I felt that you explained my text and said many of the things that I wanted to say. I know that you were blessed that evening to be able to speak of such deep things. I have often read along there and desired to understand more about that, and was glad that you spoke on what you did. It was certainly food for me.

In reference to the eunuchs, I have often wondered as to the eunuchs that were so made of men, and some that have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. According to my understanding there is only one true eunuch, and that is he that was so born from his mother's womb. If you see it differently and have a mind to do so please put me straight on it.

Brother Branche, it is now March 22 and your letter has laid here unfinished

for some time. In regard to your welcome letter I received it with great satisfaction and find that we have traveled many roads together, even to the extent of living in the state of California, and being brought back to this home state, and I hope by the same power and for the same purpose. I will never forget the dream that I had the Sunday morning that I was called to the stand for the first time. I was greeting you and shaking hands with you when I awoke and said aloud, "Brother Branche." I believe we were at that time greeting one another with "an holy kiss." It was in joyful happiness and embraced with the spirit of God I am sure. Since that time I have desired that if there was a gift for me that it would be partly as good as the one that has been made manifest in you. Since I have read your last letter I feel much better over my own troubles because I am not alone. I only hope that in time God will, at his proper time, bring my wife and me together in spiritual belief. I would so much desire that we walk together in this life in every way, and especially in harmony when it comes to our spiritual thoughts, but I am sure tonight that there is only one that has this power. I am convinced more than ever that it is not in man to do this. On one occasion Jesus straitly charged his apostles, commanded them to tell no man that thing, that he was "The Christ of God." (Luke 9:20-21.) They were never given the power to tell any man this thing, but it must be revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. Then with the same weight the command is given to "feed my sheep" and "feed my lambs," as much as to say this is what you are to do— feed those that are already taught that thing that he was "The Christ of God." It is written "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," but only at God's time according to the good pleasure of his will and

not ours, having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

Elder Branche, I cannot write a good letter like you can so please answer when you can and do not wait for an answer to write, but write when you have a mind to do so. Give my kindest regards to your wife and all that I know down there. Elder Murphy has been worse for a few days, but oh how he rejoiced at seeing you precious ones again. I believe that the God that controls all things sent you to us for his good as much as ours. He still talks of you all much of the time, and how he enjoyed hearing you preach again. I believe that you came and anointed his head once again.

I hope the weather clears up for our next meeting date. I look forward to it most of the time with fear and trembling. I know it would be asking too much to ask you to come, but how I would like for you to be here. God willing, Elder Priddy will be here and Elders Bird and Hammond have promised to come if all is well and it is the will of Him.

I saw my oldest brother for the first time in several years in Baltimore the week after you were up here. We were there for a visit and how changed he was since I last saw him. He spent most of the time questioning me and asking many things about myself. He said that he was coming to my ordination. It has been in the past year that he has been brought by the way that he knew not. How wonderful his words were to me when he expressed his feelings to me with tears in his eyes. He told me how he was out of a job and the whole world was against him etc. He got in such a place that he did not know which way to turn. He started for the first time trying to read the Bible. Then he wrote home to see if there was

an old Baptist church in Baltimore, and how after finding it and hearing Elders Ashworth from Virginia and Wood from Baltimore that things began changing for him. He never misses a meeting now and seems to be confused in so many ways. Although he grew up in this doctrine it is just as new to him as it was to me. I believe that God is dealing with him. He never ceased talking of this doctrine while I was there two days, and wrote, when I came home, that we never finished our conversation, and that if he could he was coming for the ordination. Yours in tribulation and in love.

(Elder) V. B. LINN

319 Mankin Ave., Beckley, W. Va.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed is a money-order for another year's subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. This is a little late but I have just neglected it. I have intended to write you informing you of my change of address. We are now permanently located.

We understood you had been sick and hope you are better now and will soon recover entirely. There is much sickness and afflictions among the Baptist people, as well as with other people, and it seems there are so many of the Baptists being taken from the earth, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. I am made to wonder if the words of Elias will be repeated? "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life," and on down it reads, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." It is understood that their blood was shed like water in and after the days of this prophecy for the testimony of God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; we are bound to realize that those who martyred Jesus were killed for believing and teaching that salva-

tion is by grace from the start to the finish of their housing in the eternal heavens, for we realize that the nature of all things is the same as from the beginning of God's creation, the leopard is the same leopard, and the Ethiopian is the same Ethiopian. We have to-day just another generation of what God made in the beginning, their nature has not changed from the beginning. So it is to-day, the unregenerate are paying big money for a lie (and they are welcome to it) and saying away with the truth and grant to us a murderer, you know what I mean. We know what we believed before we were (manifestly) redeemed "from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." That principle was already in us from our mother's womb, since we were conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity from our mother's womb speaking lies. We could be and were taught that we were free moral agents and believed and loved it, which doctrine is of man and proceeds from man and is not the doctrine that drops as the rain. We were not a free agent even at that time for a man cannot be free and yet be a servant in bondage at the same time. At that time we were servants unto sin, and were free from righteousness, but not out of the control and rule of the great I AM. The apostle says, "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

This verse of scripture teaches many good things of which I cannot do justice. From the beginning of God's creation man could never rise any higher than the dust of the earth outside of the work of his blessed Son. It says "when we were children" (when we

were dead in sins) they were children of promise, and this promise was in his Son from all eternity. It could not have been in the first man Adam for dust will not produce, it is a non-productive substance and cannot produce salvation for there is no seed to start from. Therefore, salvation, which is the fruit of righteousness, is by Jesus Christ, and man could not possibly be an heir to an incorruptible inheritance for he is corruptible. Therefore, adoption must take place before he can be an heir of God's immortal glory. So when the fulness of the time was come, (that the adoption should be confirmed) God sent forth his Son (the promised seed) made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, and fulfilled his earthly ministry without spot, and without blemish, and perfect before God and man, fulfilling the righteous demands of the holy law of God which no man could keep. The law is holy, therefore it took one that was equal in holiness which was not in any other man save Jesus Christ, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," and served under the law and kept it for his people; and bore their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, being judged by Pontius Pilate and the people of Israel with the Gentiles and Herod to be worthy of death of whom guile was never found in his mouth, and of whom Pilate himself said, "I find no fault in this man," but the fault was in his people, but for his love for them and he being the perfect sacrifice "he opened not his mouth." So they nailed that holy body, that was of a heavenly parent and also of an earthly parent, to the cross and buried it, and God raised it (Jesus's body) up again "that we might receive the adoption of sons," for we could not inherit jointly with

him of the heavenly inheritance without this work. Here it is manifested that he is our seed, promised from all eternity. Paul says, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. No, it cannot because it is of corruptible seed; this is why it must be *adopted*, this is why this mortal *must* put on immortality, and this corruptible *must* put on incorruption, so that it can inherit immortal glory which takes place with us in the change, (as is seen in the resurrection of Jesus) for the adoption is understood to be our body, taken out of one family of another parent, or parents, and adopted into another family of another parent which is God. We now have the spirit of adoption, as he said, because ye are sons. God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts whereby we cry Abba, Father which is the first fruits of the spirit, and the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory, thus he is our *seed* as God promised. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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. Was he not speaking of himself? A natural illustration no doubt would say this teaches reproduction, but if that would be so I would fail to see where that would profit us since we have tried to prove that we in and of ourselves have no seed outside of Christ. I am persuaded that it was speaking of the increase of his resurrection, for he said except it (the seed) fall into the ground and die it abideth alone. Since this corn of wheat (the promised seed) fell into the ground and died, and was raised again, there is ground and foundation for a hope of the resurrection of the dead which will be the final increase of that seed. The first fruits is Christ in you, the hope of glory, and the apostle says, "We ourselves groan within our-

selves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," which we have not yet witnessed, and shall be brought to pass when this vile body is changed and fashioned like unto his own glorious body, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

Brother Dodson, this is not meant for strife or vain glory, but if it is sound doctrine it came from heaven, but if unsound it proceeds from man. I am enclosing a good letter from Brother Lynn, who is a young minister of the Tygarts River Valley Association. He was ordained recently. I am here at home to-day alone. One of my legs was broken the 21st of March and I have been staying in close hoping to recover soon. Yours in Christ Jesus.

(Elder) ERNEST BRANCHE

332 American Ave., Long Beach 12, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find money-order for renewal of my subscription, also for the books, "Fragments" by Elder S. H. Durand, and "Two Worlds" by Elder Milford Hall. I am sorry and ashamed that I have let my renewal go so long although I have not received a paper from your office in months. My mother, Mrs. Rhoda Champion, has passed her papers on to me. Constantly moving and changing my address, in my line of work, I did not want to bother you with making changes all the time.

I love the paper and it is a comfort to me. I never want to be without it. The doctrine of this beloved paper is the doctrine that I love; it is the truth and the light. What a firm foundation to have, believe and have faith in this doctrine of salvation by grace, and not of or by works. I was raised by parents belonging to the Primitive Baptist church, and have a long list on each side of my family tree that were Old Baptists. My grandfather, Elder J. C. Champion, of Winfield, Ala. was or-

dained by the Primitive Baptist church and preached the glad tidings of peace and salvation by grace for thirty odd years before leaving this world, but being dead in the carnal flesh and spiritual discernment I hated the Primitive Baptists, and am sorry to say that I was ashamed that my father and mother were "Hardshells." How blind I was, how great was my darkness until, if not deceived or deceiving myself, the effectual working power and mighty hand of God took effect to give me this little hope in my heart, and to love this Old Primitive Baptist doctrine that the natural world hates. What a wonderful God! What a blessed doctrine to the children of God!

I want to thank, very kindly, Elder C. H. Byrd and the *Signs of the Times* for writing and printing the obituary of my father, William Henry Champion. Yours in hope.

J. P. CHAMPION

Goldonna, La.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It is with fear and trembling I undertake to write on this beautiful picture of the sun-clothed woman. Fear of what I do not know, unless it is that I may say something that will turn my brethren against me if I be worthy to call the Old Baptists my brethren. Unless God takes this carnal mind and places it on the divine things, I will certainly not be able to write on this subject, for it is by him we live, move and have our being. I feel to be the chief of sinners, but God and God alone only knows what I am. I am not good on scripture but will say in starting I believe the sun-clothed woman to be the true church, the Lamb's bride, and his dove that is preserved and kept by the power of God that worships God in spirit and in truth for she is clothed with the sun. God gave her wings to fly into the wilderness where the red dragon could

not harm her. No, my beloved brother, the kings and lords of this earth cannot touch her. Why? Because she is kept by the power of God. We can hardly find the house of worship ourselves by asking people because the Arminian world is not interested enough to know where the meeting-house is. Why? Because God's chosen people are a peculiar people despised by the world. They care nothing about the world because they are not of this world, neither does the world care for them because the people of the world have not the love of God in their hearts. There is a fixed gulf between them and the child of God, therefore, the red dragon cannot harm one of God's little, peculiar and despised people.

Let us go back to the birth of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To my mind the king of the earth tried to do away with him soon after he was born of the virgin Mary, but he could not with all the power he thought he had. Why? Because God forbid that it should happen. Neither had he accomplished what he came to do or was sent to do, which was to save as many as the Father had given him to save, to die in their stead, and that was and still is his bride. I do not believe there is a creature on the face of the earth that can pluck one out of the Blessed Hand or ever will. Why? Because his bride was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and is kept by the power of God. To my mind that is the sun-clothed woman. If you can understand what I have tried to say do as you please with this and there will be no hard feelings. If I have a home with God's humble poor it was given me before the world was formed. May the good Lord keep us as the apple of his eye, and under the shadow of his blessed wing until we meet in a better world to come. Your brother I hope, if I have a hope. W. D. GODWIN

"For by him were all things created."

Colossians 1:16.

Then is he not by creation the author of all things? And surely he had a reason for creating them, and his reason must have been a good one; as all he does is for good, surely he had an object of good in view as a reason for all his works, and the object must be attained or he must suffer loss; but he is to lose nothing, and in all of his undertakings he shall never fail. He also works and none can hinder, moreover his work is perfect, and that which is perfect cannot be improved upon. The object moving him in this work of creation must have been a noble one, one of superior greatness; great, grand, sublime, high and lofty must have been the object of such a wonderful display of wisdom, love and power as was manifested in this great and stupendous work. The great aim, the wonderful design above all others, was his own glory. Lesser objects are admitted, but this is the prime one, and that the object be attained everything created is so united, coupled, linked and knit together in its several parts, and is so skillfully arranged that perfect harmony of action pervades the whole. Hence the absolute certainty of the accomplishment of the design intended by the Contriver; creation and predestination must be equal in extent, or co-extensive with each other; that is, everything created must be predestinated to the end that it is sure to accomplish the design in creation, and why may the wrong not be as great in the creation of all things as in the predestination of all things? All things only are predestinated, and they only to the glory of God, or at least that is the prime end to which they are predestinated. Other ends, as before said, are admitted, such as are for the good of his creatures in general, and for his people in particular. The "all things" pre-

destinated are the all things created; and the all things created are the all things that God pronounced very good, so in his estimation he only predestinated things that were very good, nothing bad. Man's estimation of many of the "all things" which in God's estimation are very good are miserably bad. Sin is the transgression of the law. The transgression of the law is sin, and Adam by the transgression of law brought sin into the world. So Adam by transgression is the author of sin, by which transgression he and all his posterity became sinners, dead sinners. Now let us divide the "all things" about which I have been writing into three classes of things for the better understanding of how God has predestinated all things. The first class of the "all things" are such things as he will do himself. The second class of the "all things" are such things as he will have done, and the third class of the "all things" are such things as he will allow or suffer wicked men to do, being let, or given up, or over to Satau, from whom they get their influence to do wickedly, who unknowingly take the way of God's predestination, as did the murderers of our blessed Lord, the brethren of Joseph in his abduction, or Cyrus in his war against Israel. God does not in any sense of the word prompt, lead or incline man to sin in any way, form or manner; man has only to be left to himself, left without the restraining power of God, and at once he falls, like Adam, into sin; he needs no influence from any other source than his own depravity, by which he drinketh down iniquity as the ox drinketh down water. That God allowed sin to enter the world is evident, and it is equally evident that he yet allows man to sin. He does not, no, not in the slightest degree approve it, sanction it, command it or lead to it, but right the reverse, he disapproves of it, he gives no

sanction to it, leads from it, hates and abhors it, and will punish it, yet in some way and for some reason he suffers us to sin every day of our lives, yet his suffering it is no excuse behind which we may retreat or hide. Though I thus write, I know of no one who has done so. O that the dear Lord would gather his people from the four winds of the earth to Zion with songs of joy and gladness of heart and soul, that peace, love and fellowship of all our kindred in Christ might be restored.

Dear brother Lefferts, I will send this letter, but by no means for its value, for it is like me, imperfect. You may or may not give it place in the *Signs*, just as you think best, and all will be right. May the Lord be yours to sustain in every need, is my prayer.

W. M. LITTLE

Gap, Texas, Sept. 24, 1915.

(Re-published by request)

3452 E. McDowell, Phoenix, Ariz.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I received the issues of the *Signs*. To me the writings are so precious, and such an amazing flow of love and grace seems to be in nearly all of the articles written, that I can hardly understand any one not wanting to receive the paper more often than it is written even. In the February issue "The Cleft of the Rock" is a wonderful sermon to me. I have read it over and over. How often I have been in this place. When I read it I had to cry as it so described my experience, and now at this time I feel it is such a safe place—a precious refuge.

Brother Dodson, I would like to relate two experiences I have had in recent months. I am so amazed and humbled, even a little afraid and confused. Why should the great and glorious God of heaven be so good and mindful of such as I? If after reading this you or any other can offer me reasons other than I think, please be free to write

to me. On Jan. 6, 1950, to be exact, I was restless at night since I was worried and longed to find a Baptist church to attend. I had been thinking and hoping for a letter or the opportunity to meet other Baptist people here. Being upset in mind it took me some time to fall asleep, but finally I did. I must have immediately dreamed I was on a beach or shore with a great many of my family when suddenly we saw a dark storm cloud. I thought I cried out to run to shelter quickly. It seemed we ran into a strange and large house, but all got inside and I felt so happy that all were in the shelter. Then being anxious as to the severity of the storm I went to a window and looked out. As I looked the dark cloud began to change into a hue of very beautiful colors, finally ending in a bright blaze. Then from the center of the brightness it seemed a number of people in a brilliant shining light and one greater than the rest which seemed to me to be Christ. Such beauty and brightness could not be described or written. I trembled and shook but was also delighted. I looked forward from the window and cried "how beautiful?" As I said these words I awakened I was trembling all over. The first thing I thought of was, I must be going to die, I could not see this and live, so I lay waiting but became calm and normal in my thinking. After several hours I fell asleep and slept well the rest of the night. I never mentioned the dream to any one but waited and have come to the conclusion it was for strength and help in my life. The next week I received two letters, also a visit from a Baptist here, and I found the church that I had wanted to attend for so long.

The second dream was on a Saturday night. This time it followed after I had lain awake thinking on spiritual things, praising God and repeating verses I have read and remembered on the beau-

ties and loveliness of Christ. It seemed I wished I was able to show to every one, as I experienced and understood it, how beautiful and lovely was our Savior. We should talk it more, sing it more and tell it more. Finally it was so strong in my mind to do these things I said, "Lord if I should do this give me a sign" and after awhile I fell asleep. I dreamed I was in a beautiful house, very, very large with many stairs and I was descending or going down, when I heard a voice say, "follow the star." I looked up and everything above me was a white brilliance. On the ceiling was a large star and an arrow pointing toward it. I turned to start up and it seemed I was carried so swiftly, I could hardly breathe, toward the top and to the star. Then I awakened and I was trembling as before. This time I was not frightened, but I am so humbled I feel my unworthiness as I am nothing. We are poor, our home is humble, we are very ordinary people. I only know I had three dreams and to me they are an answer to prayer for faith and hope. Not only to me but to all the dear brothers and sisters of like faith, who walk in doubt and in darkness so much; who are miserable, weak and poor. I hope that in following the star it meant to express to others what I have felt, seen and experienced; that all may read and rejoice on the goodness and greatness of God.

Brother T. J. Robinson and Brother and Sister Day of Tucson visited us the fifth Sunday in January. They spent only a few hours in our home. We had never met before but it seemed when they left tears were in our eyes and we felt we had always known them. How unworthy I felt to have them talking to me and treating me so kindly. These are the precious things of the Spirit, given to us to enjoy amid the troubles and afflictions of this world. "That the trial of your faith, being much more

precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now we 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."

I can hardly write this for tears flowing, even the writing of the words cause my heart to rejoice and a desire to give God the glory. May God richly bless you and the writers of the *Signs*. So many letters and other articles are sent to it which helps all of those who read it to press on a little longer.

Brother Dodson I am writing this as an experience to you. I am not asking you to publish it, but it seemed I must tell some one who would understand. Believe me I am not thinking of myself as an example, on the contrary I feel very unworthy. I hope you are much stronger and have recovered from your recent illness. I visited Brother and Sister Bartlett to-day as I had a day off from my work. I know he is one of your subscribers. Just a dear old man. He can hardly talk of his church and people without tears. He is past eighty years of age. His wife is a lovely lady too. It is indeed a pleasure to be in their home and talk with them. I have met several Baptists since I wrote you before. The Lord has surely blessed us in this way. My husband is not a member but he is very kind to me about my church. Remember us in your prayers. Your very unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) MARY SMITH

Granite, Okla.
DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please pardon me for waiting so long to send in my remittance. I do appreciate your continuing to send the paper. You do not know how much I enjoy reading those

good articles set forth in the *Signs*. If I believe anything I hope I believe what the Primitive Baptists advocate. I have had a name with them for ten years. I do not know whether this is the experience of all of God's people but I feel so cast down at times. I wonder if the Lord has had any dealings with me, then things brighten up for a little season and I rejoice in what I hope the Lord has done for me. I know it is by his grace and mercy that he looks down on sinful creatures like myself. I think the good Book says that in this world we shall have trials and tribulations, speaking of his people of which number I do hope I am one. May the Lord bless you in the publishing of the dear old *Signs* is my prayer. Your brother in hope.

C. F. HATCHETT

DEAR ELDER HARVEY BIRD: I received your letter a few weeks ago and was glad to hear from you. It was a comfort to me and the poetry was beautiful. You said you might feel to send me more of your poems. I hope you do. I would enjoy reading them. I went to Hopewell the first Saturday and Sunday and heard more good preaching. Elders Bell and Lane were there. Elder Hammond preached a beautiful sermon. I was sorry you were ill and hope you are well now as well as your wife. We are all very well. I do not object to your sending my letter to the *Signs* if you feel it is worthy to be published. As for myself I feel very unworthy. If I am one of God's chosen people I am the least of them all. I would do good if I could but know that I cannot. I am enclosing a poem I wrote not long ago. It expresses my thoughts most of the time.

Am I lost or am I found?
Am I free or am I bound?
Am I His or am I not?
Oft I wonder what is my lot.

Oft I wish that I could pray,
But find I know not what to say;
I feel so lost, so out of place,
If I be found then 'tis by grace.

If I be lost, oh anxious thought,
Then all my hopes will come to naught;
If I be found then 'tis by grace,
Then heaven will be my resting place.

I will close hoping again that you and your wife are well. Your sister in hope, if at all.

(Mrs.) HELEN STICKLER

Yawkey, W. Va.

DEAR ELDER HARVEY BIRD: Many times I have felt a great need to write to you, and have written letters and never mailed them because I did not have your address at that time. All week I have felt an urge to write some of my doubts and fears. This morning I feel like that dear hymn:

"I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again."

Oh, how I did enjoy the preaching Saturday and Sunday at Hopewell. It brought to mind the week after the Association at Camp Creek, when I seemed to hear a great rejoicing. I heard wonderful preaching that week, and the voices I seemed to hear were Elders Ben Martin, Wingfield and England. Sometimes I can still hear them as I go about my work. I feel alone and yet not alone. I wonder if there is any one like me. Sometimes all seems hopeless and I fear that I am deceived. Elder Harvey, the day you baptized me I was troubled. I felt so alone but I felt I must go out in the water, I could not turn back. When we walked to the

river bank and I saw the dear ones standing there such sweet peace filled my being. Oh, how dear and beautiful they seemed to me. I had a dream not long ago of being in the most beautiful place and it was spring there. The trees were in full bloom, but suddenly it was winter and everything was white with snow. That is the way I feel at times, suddenly it is spring within me, and then all is cold and still. Elder Harvey, I do not want to worry you with a long letter so will close. I hope you and your wife are well. Your sister in hope, if at all.

(Mrs.) HELEN STICKLER

Riffe, Wash.

ELDER DODSON, VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST OUR BLESSED LORD: Your good letter came a few days ago and was much appreciated. We are very sorry you have been ill, my heart goes out in sympathy to those who have to undergo major surgery, yet sometimes we have sweet experiences come out of those times of trial. I have a vivid memory of a time like this in my past life. One time I was taken to a distant hospital for surgery. I left seven little children at home who needed a mother. I had to wait six days to try to gain a little strength. Those were the blackest six days I ever experienced. So many times I thought of "the darkness which may be felt." I thought of my cares at home, but what was far worse it seemed my dear Lord had turned his face from me. The one thing I desired most was spiritual comfort which must come from him and him alone. Needless to say I tried to pray. My very breathing seemed to be groaning to him for mercy and comfort. I felt I could never go for surgery in that darkness. This continued until the ward carriage was brought to my bedside and I was placed on it. I was indeed in despair. I was to have no light, no comfort. My mind

was filled with that thought, but we had only passed the door of the ward when the light came in great beauty, and angels voices sang a little known but beautiful hymn, and so all was well as it always is when the all wise ruler, and loving heavenly Father, who knows when to give and when to withhold, is present with us. I was strengthened and some to spare, no darkness only the cry, "It is I; be not afraid." "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." Again and again we are made to say, "Without thy sweet mercy I could not live here, sin soon would reduce me to utter despair." And again, "Grace all thy work shall crown, through everlasting days: it lays in heaven the topmost stone, and well deserves the praise." The dear old hymn, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord" seems to tell it so well and so all honor and glory belongs to Him, who knoweth all things and doeth all things well.

Dear brother, forgive me for personal mention of my own cares. I wish to push self away and praise Him, if possible, what few days I have left here, but I cannot of myself do anything that is well pleasing in his holy sight. A few things we have learned along the way are that he can lift up, cast down and can shut us in the darkest dungeon; he can give us light to see that we are vile, so much so that we, must like the poor leper of old cry unclean! unclean! On the other hand he opens the dungeon doors and the brightness of his countenance displaces all gloom, "and makes all within us rejoice." He can and does come to the unclean and say I have paid it all be ye clean. Oh, what pay when we are ten thousand talents in debt and nothing with which to pay. May he give us the spirit of humility which is so often needed by us poor weak ones for there is often a spirit of carnal exaltation which is dangerous

and brings much sorrow.

Brother Dodson, I have thought so often of late about the word *security*. We hear so much of it in our economic and national life. It is not of this kind I think, but when I hear the word it leads me to think of our security in Him who is our all in all. If we are His, how secure we are, having been given grace in Christ before the foundation of the world. This grace never wears out, never needs renewing. We only need eyes to see and feel it, and when He cried on the cross "It is finished" all his dear children were made secure in him. None can pluck them out of his hand, blessed thought. We cannot get so far away his all seeing eye is not on us. David said, "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." Jonah said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." He is always near though we may not be able to see him for, like he did the servant of the old prophet, he must open our eyes if we see. I wish I could write as some do but that is a vain wish since it is *my* desire. God, if he saw fit, could give me thoughts and ability to pen them as others. May his name have the praise and glory as it most certainly will through all eternity.

We have lost another of our dear old Elders, Elder Jeffreys of Weiser, Idaho. He was dearly loved as a faithful, peace loving man able in the scriptures. We need laborers in the vineyard here. The little churches are small and so far between. Elder Fisher who was ordained last Nov. is in very poor health now with a heart condition, but his faith is strong. May God grant that you will soon be strong again, able to preach and edit the dear old *Signs* which is so loved by us who live in far distant lonely places where there are few of our faith. In Christian love. Humbly,

(Mrs.) ROSA COLEMAN

Box 7, Enterprise, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have had a longing desire for some time to write you by way of expressing my heartfelt endorsement and appreciation of the blessed truths set forth in your writings in the *Signs of the Times*, but a feeling sense of my inability to express myself has so far deterred me. With much timidity I now throw myself upon your charity and once more make the attempt. I believe God is a sovereign and works his will in heaven, earth and all deep places, and none dare say what doest thou. Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Paul seals the fact that all spiritual blessings to the saints are in Christ, and the apostle does not leave us to guess why this is so. It is according to God's election, according as he has chosen us in Christ before the sun ever lighted the universe, and I am happy to know I do not even as much as bat an eye in order to receive a blessing my God has in store for me. God did not bless us with spiritual life and then leave us to get our blessings here in time or eternity or by our obedience. Paul says all spiritual blessings which complete our salvation—time and eternity. Well might the apostle say, there is nothing able to separate us from the love of God which we have in Christ Jesus our Lord. I firmly believe that every one who was chosen in him shall enjoy the fulness of all spiritual blessings treasured up in Christ our Lord; that they are elected or chosen too, and there is no space between election and salvation to perform conditions. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," then elected to salvation for the blood of Jesus saves. It cleanses us from sin. All

spiritual blessings come according to God's choice of them. Then if their election is sure and unconditional, even so are all their blessings sure and unconditional. If all their blessings come according to their election, or according to God's choice of them before the foundation of the world, then it is certain they do not get one blessing in payment for what they do.

All the salvation the child of God ever receives is alone through the grace of God in Christ our Lord. Whether we save ourselves from this untoward generation; whether we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; whether we save ourselves by taking heed to ourselves and to the doctrine; whether we are saved from error by the foolishness of preaching; all these things are God's mercies to us, and are, by the grace of God, coming to us through the merit and sufficiency of the blessed Christ. If any of the Lord's people are saved from delusions and false doctrine through the work of the ministry, it is grace that does the saving. I did not intend to write so much so will sign off. Yours in hope.

W. T. PITTMAN

233 Monroe St., Camden, Ark.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL: I realize I have neglected to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, which I should not have done. I ask your pardon and thank you kindly for continuing to send it to me. I do love the dear old paper so much for what its editors and writers have stood for so many years. I have had the privilege of reading it as far back as I can remember, and I have now passed my three score and ten years. I hope to be able to continue reading it while I live.

I have written but little for publication as it seems I can but poorly express the truth in its rapturous glory,

but I do love to read after the gifted writers who have written all along from its first publication. They are still bringing the same glad tidings that our fathers of old loved and cherished, and we feel to hope we are given to rejoice in the same way they rejoiced, and that we may continue in the same faith and be given to hear the joyful sound, and that the trumpet may give no uncertain sound. Oh, may God arm us with sword, shield and helmet, preparing us to be bold, fearless soldiers of the cross of Christ; acknowledging him as our Captain who has gone before us and fought all our battles, winning the victory for us, and that it is in him we live, move and have our being. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Then not unto us, but unto his dear name be all the glory and majesty here in time and in the ages to come.

Dear brother, I do know I am not worthy of the least of God's mercies, but I hope that it is the glorious light of God's holy Spirit that shows us our vileness and imperfections, and that we are really and truly as weak and unworthy as we can feel to be; and that all we ever receive from our heavenly Master is a free gift, and for this reason he deserves all the praise. Bless his dear name, he will not give his glory to another, nor suffer his praises unto graven images. In mercy may he forgive us of all sin and transgression and save us in the realms of eternal bliss for his dear name's sake. Your little brother.

(Elder) J. T. EVERITT

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NOVEMBER, 1950

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Rutherford, N. J.

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship 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.

The great and glorious revolution which should introduce this change: "the hour cometh, and now is," the fixed stated time, concerning which it was of old determined when it should come. The blessed change has come. In gospel times the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Now the change shall be in the nature of the worship. Believers shall worship God, not in ceremonial observances of the Mosaic institution, but in spiritual ordinances, consisting less in bodily exercise, and animated and invigorated more with divine power and grace.

The very fact that the Father seeketh such to worship him that do worship in spirit and in truth, intimates that such worshippers are very few. But I am glad that he came to seek and to save that which was lost. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot

of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." "So the Lord alone did lead him, (Jacob) and there was no strange god with him."

Believers desire to be right, not only in the object of their worship, but the manner in which they worship. God is a spirit: a spirit has not flesh and bones, but who knows the way of a spirit? If God were not a spirit, he could not be perfect, nor infinite, nor eternal, nor the Father of spirits. God is a spirit and must be worshipped in spirit. Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill and said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Jesus said to the woman of Samaria; "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews."

Worship is a particular disposition, and inclination of man. They will worship something, just so it is called god. But God is not worshipped in temples made with hands; "Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." Jesus said to his disciples, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." I would not spend much time seeking one whom I did not know; neither would I knock on many doors

trying to find one, in whom, I had no feeling interest. One must be brought to the place that he feels that he is nothing, has nothing, all confidence in self taken away, and that that prop on which he is leaning is rotten, before he feels to call for help. But when one is brought to this place, and begins to seek, he finds that He has "not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of his infirmities." These infirmities read about, and seen in others, will not bring us to the foot of the cross. These infirmities are within, and must be felt before there is any seeking. Paul declares that the kingdom of God is not 'eating and drinking.' It is not to be determined by one or two external acts, in which we participate or from which we abstain. The kingdom of God is erected not in the land works and turmoil, but in our innermost being. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." It is not primarily a matter of clean hands but of clean hearts. It is not a matter of coming to this mountain or going up to Jerusalem to worship the Father, but it is a place where two meet together. It is that inner sanctuary where God and we come face to face. We would not know his kingdom or church on earth, if the fundamental principals of his kingdom were not first established within us. The fundamental change is the overthrow or renunciation of one covenant, and the establishing of another on better promises.

The great change has come, for Jesus said to the woman at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." Yes, so long as we are tugging to draw from the earth that which is produced by the earth, we will never be satisfied. The people under *law* went up to Jerusalem to worship, or to some place designated

for that purpose, but again, there was a remembrance of sin. The offering today would not suffice for tomorrow. But Jesus said to the woman, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." This living water is eternal life; for Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." It is not only necessary to know the only true God, but also Jesus Christ, whom he hast sent. If this woman, had known these two, she would have asked of the one that was conversing with her, and he would have given her living water. The water which would have been in her a well of water, springing up into everlasting life, and for the lack of it she would never thirst. This knowledge, this water, or life, is indispensable to the worship of him who is a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

There are no discrepencies or contradictions in the scriptures, but there are paradoxical expressions. For instance, Paul said to the Corinthians; "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." So Jesus meant when he said to the woman, that he that drank of the water that he should give would never thirst again, that there would never be any lack of supply. He didn't mean that they would never thirst, because he said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." This well may seem almost dry at times, but there will always be a sufficiency. It may be only a drop, but a drop will be enough to renew the hope, and to strengthen the faith.

This woman learned one thing of him who talked with her; that he

knew that she had five husbands. I have heard it said that these five husbands represented the law, or the five books of Moses, whether this woman had five living husbands, or these husbands represented the five rulers that had ruled over Samaria, I am not in position to say. But one thing is sure that they did not represent the law, for the Samaritans represent the whole of the Gentile nation; and the law was not given to the Gentiles, but to the Jews. The rites and ceremonies, the different kinds of clean and unclean animals which were used, or forbidden to be used, immersions, sprinklings and washing of the body, or things which had respect merely to the body, but which had no influence upon the soul, all these rites and ceremonies were given to the Jew, but were not enjoined on the Gentile.

"There was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches." These five porches could represent the law, because this pool was at Jerusalem where they carried on their washings of the body. But a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years, and which did not go into the pool. "When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am going, another steppeth down before me." The impotent man evidently was a Jew, and Jesus showed on this occasion that it was no longer necessary to go through with rites, ceremonies and bodily exercises at Jerusalem. Although these rites and ceremonies were the similitude, or figures of the things under the gospel dispensation, they have

been fulfilled and nullified by an authoritative act. Therefore, we do not have to go up to Jerusalem to receive the substance of which the rites and ceremonies were the proper representations. And when we think of the relief of the burden of the ceremonial observances, we feel to say with the woman of Samaria, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." The duration of the infirmity of the man at the pool corresponds with the thirty and eight years journey of the children of Israel, from Kadesh-barnea to the brook Zered; see Deuteronomy 2-14. The impotent man was at the pool when Jesus arrived; and by his long suffering and experience he had found that further observance of the Mosaic law was not necessary, because it could not reach his case. We may justly say that the worship of the law was spiritual in its substance, but, in respect to its form, it was what Paul calls the flesh and beggarly elements of the world. This man found that he was too weak to put himself into the pool, and that there was no man to put him in; the power of all flesh has failed in this case. This failure causes the power of Christ to be more strikingly displayed, for Jesus said to the man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." "The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." There was a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, lying around on the five porches, waiting for the moving of the water. Yes, waiting as this man did, for the hour to arrive, when they would not have to go up to Jerusalem to worship, when the true worshipper could worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Yes waiting as this man did, to hear

the voice of the Son of God say to them, "rise, take up thy bed, and walk," without any further ceremony.

Jesus said, "I am not come to destroy (the law), but to fulfill" and his answer to them who complained of the man carrying his bed on the sabbath day; "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The law is not fulfilled with any one until Jesus comes to that one, as he came to the woman at the well; and the man at the pool. Jesus first said to the woman, "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." But when that hour did arrive, He said the hour "now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

"When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." But Thomas one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. "The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." The hour had come to the other disciples, but had not come to Thomas. Thomas wanted to see what the others had seen. He wanted the voice that said unto the others, to say unto him, "Peace be unto you." Jesus granted to Thomas the desire of his heart, and said unto him, be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto him, "My Lord and my God." If the other disciples could have caused Thomas to know that Jesus had risen from the dead, I suppose I would believe as many others do, that by sending out men to preach, that many would

find the Lord, who, otherwise would never know him.

The time of this change of worship must not only come in history, but it must come in the experience of God's people. There has not been any change made in time or place for those who are not true worshippers to worship. The change is for them who know God in the pardon of their sins, and in whom the spirit of worship has been infused. The spirit of worship, must come from him who is to be worshipped; just as the branch must receive from the true vine its life, before it can produce fruit. The branch must have its union in the vine, just so, the true worshipper must be in communion with the true God before he can worship him in spirit and in truth. There are those who profess to be branches of the vine, who do not possess within them the life of the vine, and therefore, can not produce the fruit of the vine. Many there be who profess to worship God, but who do not possess the spirit of him who is to be worshipped, therefore, they worship they know not what. The branch does not come from some other source and connect itself to the vine, but comes from the inside of the vine, and the sap of the vine causes the bud to shoot forth, expand into blossom, and ripen into fruit. It is necessary for one to have the spirit of him who is a spirit, before they can worship him in spirit and in truth. The worship of God is somewhat like prayer, without any set time or place.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast."

Worship comes from the same source, but there must be a knowledge of God before one would have a desire to worship him; before one would have any respect, or reverence toward him.

May God keep us by his power and

grace, and lead us in such a way that we may show forth the praise of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. H. O. N.

SINAI

A young sister who has recently come into the church in North Carolina has asked that we "write something of the meaning of Sinai." She says that "Huntington in his writings mentions the storms of Sinai as God's fiery law when he chastens and judges us that we should not be condemned with the world."

Perhaps one of the best methods of explaining or presenting a subject is to make a comparison or contrast it with its opposite. We find the apostle Paul employing this method in writing to his Hebrew brethren where this particular subject is under consideration. He says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come into mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Here we have, first, Sinai presented in all of its terror and fierceness. Reference is

made to the mount which could be touched, "and that burned with fire unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest," upon which God descended and spake as "the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words: which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." We are further told that they could not endure that which was commanded, and if so much as a beast touched the mountain, it should be stoned or thrust through with a dart, and also that so terrible was the sight that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." In the twentieth chapter of Exodus we have presented the law which God gave unto those he had brought up "out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." These were his chosen people, and the law which was given unto them was most exacting. The very first command was, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." We venture the assertion that every one of the Lord's people, at one time or another, from that day unto this, have broken that commandment, and we are informed of the fact that when we have broken the law in one point we have failed and become guilty of all. It would appear that *idolatry*, or worshipping false gods, was one of the worst pits into which God's children would fall, as in addition to saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," he continued by saying immediately, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." This would seem to be very far-reaching in its effects and to cut at

the very roots of a great deal that purports to be of a religious nature in the world to-day. Our young sister also says, "We often hear God spoken of as a God of justice, wisdom and mercy, but not many speak of a jealous God and a wrathful God. Would a jealous and a wrathful God be placed under the Father or the Holy Ghost in the Trinity?" We have seen from the foregoing that Israel's God is, indeed, a jealous God, even to "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." It would seem to us that it is through his fiery law that God's infinite justice is revealed: it is the scale in which all are weighed and found to be wanting. Therefore we stand justly condemned before God and without excuse, and can bear witness to the testimony which has well been given that, If my soul were sent to hell, His righteous law would approve it well. This is the basis upon which God's wrath is manifested against sin. The prisoner must first be made to feel and plead his own guilt. We would say that this wrath would emanate from God the Father, from him who created the heaven and the earth, and all that in them is. His wisdom is revealed in providing through love and mercy a Mediator, in the person of his Son, to come and redeem his helpless people from their sins, and this redemption, or salvation, is made known unto us by the workings of the Holy Spirit. In this manner, God in the Trinity is made known unto us.

The burden of the apostle's message to the Hebrews is to present to them the new and living way as contrasted to what had been spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, and he was emphasizing to them the fact that in the *gospel dispensation* they are not come unto the mount that burned with fire, which could not be endured, and which was so terrible that the very

sight of it caused Moses, their mouth-piece before God, to fear and quake exceedingly. All of this typified the terror and hopelessness of the *legal dispensation*, with which the believing Jews were familiar. They were all well acquainted with the law and the legal covenant and its just demands, and Paul was stressing the fact that he had something far better and superior to that which was contained in the old covenant. Much could and perhaps should be said here on the superiority of the new covenant over the old, of gospel over law, of mount Sion over mount Sinai. Paul in writing to the Galatian church presents the matter in the form of an allegory. He says, "It is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

In our experience we are made to know that the law is our school-master unto Christ, that by it we are brought to a knowledge of sin and are taught our vile and wretched condition according to nature, without the power to even think one good thought, much less to perform a deed that would be well-pleasing in God's sight. Therefore, without Christ, we find ourselves without hope and without God in the world. Sinai pours forth the wrath of a just and holy God, One who is jealous of his honor and his glory and will not divide it with another. The law is as a flaming sword, turning every way to protect the Tree of Life, and we find

ourselves completely cut off, ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing with which to pay. But the law serves its purpose in bringing us to feel our need of Him who is able to save unto the uttermost.

Having presented what they were *not* come unto, the apostle proceeds to tell what they were come unto by saying, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Here we have presented the *gospel church*, the spiritual house of God, established in the top of the legal mountains, or above the law. It is referred to as "the city of the living God," as it is built of lively stones, living characters, and as the heavenly Jerusalem, to distinguish it from the earthly Jerusalem. It is here that God's people worship with saintly or heavenly characters and get a fortaste or glimpse of immortal glory. By the term "general assembly and church of the firstborn" is undoubtedly intended to include both Jews and Gentiles, or those who were chosen of God among every nation kindred and tribe, whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life. King Jesus, Judge of both the quick and the dead, is head over all things to them, for it was prophesied that the government would be upon his shoulder. It is he who in the twenty-fourth verse is referred to as "the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." It is wonderful, indeed, for those who have been stripped of all they possess, and

have been taught that their own righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of a just and holy God to discover this Mediator of the new covenant. Unlike Moses, who feared and quaked exceedingly before God, Jesus, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Elsewhere in his epistle to the Hebrews the apostle emphasizes the utter failure of the sacrifices of birds and beasts, which had no efficacy in the blood poured out on Jewish altars—no power to put away sin. The blood of these sacrifices, at best, only reminded the people of their sins, but at the same time it pointed to the one offering which hath perfected forever them that are sanctified thereby. The sprinkling of the blood upon the door posts of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egyptian bondage was but a dim type of the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God which, when applied to the hearts of his people, cleanses them from all sin of every hue and type. The shedding of his blood was efficacious, in that it put away, for all time, the sins of those for whom it was shed; therefore it "speaketh better things than that of Abel."

We believe God's people must all experience these things before they can

worship God in spirit and in truth. They must first be made to witness to the quickening power of God which raises them from their state of death in nature to a state of life in Christ Jesus. When the light of God's glorious truth first shines into their hearts and they have a knowledge of the glory of God as it appears in his Son, Jesus Christ, they may feel, as Martha did, to be cumbered with much serving, but after they have spent their full six days of labor and used up all their material in trying to do that which is well-pleasing in God's sight, they will come to see Christ as the only door by which they may enter into gospel rest, and then they will cease from their labors and desire to be found at the feet of their Lord, giving all praise and honor to his adorable name. Then they can bring forth the Royal Diadem and crown King Jesus Lord of all; then they can look upon the solemnities of mount Sion, the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem, and behold that "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion***** the city of the great King," and that "God is known in her palaces for a refuge."

We hope our young sister and readers can bear testimony to the truth of these precious things. R. L. D.

Written by Elizabeth L. Fetter

WHEREAS, by the purpose of God, our beloved brother, Elder Horace H. LEFFERTS, has been taken from the midst of his brethren to the fulfillment of his hope in eternal life, we have left to us the memory of a soldier of the cross, who manifested brotherly love, patience in tribulation, was instant in prayer, always serving the Lord in the strength given from above, in meekness and humility, contending for the truth as taught by the Holy Spirit. Having been called in grace while yet a boy, and set apart to preach the gospel while still a young man, he always remained faithful to that calling. Therefore be it RESOLVED, that we by the strength of God may be able to say and feel that it was God's will, let him do whatsoever

he may. We extend our sympathy to his widow and family and to the churches that he served so faithfully, knowing that he fought the good fight, and kept the faith and has entered into rest. Further be it

RESOLVED, that this memoriam be published with the minutes of this Association, and copies sent to his widow and for publication in the **Signs of the Times**.

Done by order of the Delaware River Association in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J., May 31 and June 1, 1950.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT, Moderator
CASPER G. FETTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

MRS. LUCINDY DAVIS was born May 23, 1855, and died May 11, 1950. She was married to John Walter Davis, March 7, 1872, who departed this life Jan. 10, 1940. To this union the following children were born: Mrs. Minnie Lee Pumphrey and Mrs. Dora Pledger, Panama City, Fla., C. T. and C. C. Davis, Pensacola, Fla., J. F. Davis, Tallahassee, Fla., Mrs. Mary Phillips, Mrs. Laura Bell Grant, Mrs. W. J. Mitchel, Mrs. H. M. Porter, and W. F. Davis, Marianna, Fla., Mrs. Pearl Thurman, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. Hattie B. Blitch, Miami, Fla., and Mrs. Pallie Coulette, Marianna, Fla. are deceased. There are thirty grandchildren and forty-two great-grandchildren.

I do not have the exact dates when Brother and Sister Davis united with the church. About 1890 she united with the Old Mt. Paron Church in Jackson Co., Fla., and was baptized by the late Elder Noah Lambert. Brother Davis united with the same church early in life. They settled at the old home place in January 1884 where they both died. This is about six miles south of Marianna and is a beautiful place. Our church (Salem, in Panama City) was constituted in 1842, and since it is nearer than to Mt. Paron, and having two daughters here whom she could visit, she moved her membership to Panama City.

She was faithful in her attendance and loved her church. I have never known a more devoted Old School Baptist. It was my happy privilege to attend one of the family reunions which were held at the old home place the fourth Sunday in May each year. I became personally acquainted with all the family and they are indeed fine people. This coming together in a happy reunion reminded me of only a fortaste of the reunion in the glory of glories where Sister Davis is now sweetly resting. She was familiarly called "Aunt Cindy." Everybody loved her. She had wonderful vitality.

The writer conducted the services at the old home place using Eccl. 12: 6-7. Mr. Chester Pelt,

a great nephew, made a few very fitting closing remarks. Mr. W. F. Burns spoke in prayer which was very timely and impressive. Her remains were tenderly and lovingly borne to Marvin Chapel about a mile from the old home, and laid to rest by the side of her husband to await the glad resurrection morn. Written by request of the family.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

In memory of Sister ALLIE B. HEDNALL, born in Benton Co., Tenn., March 14, 1870, and passed away May 30, 1950 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. W. G. Lewallen, Route 3, El Dorado, Ark. She is survived by three daughters and three sons: Mrs. W. G. Lewallen, El Dorado, Ark., Mrs. Cecil Harrison, Strong, Ark., Mrs. V. E. White, Lima, Ohio, A. A. Hednall, Snyder, Texas, Ed. Hednall, Watson, Ark., and F. J. Hednall, Kermit, Texas. Also 20 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

Sister Hednall was a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church near El Dorado, Ark., uniting in May 1895. She was the wife of a Primitive Baptist preacher, Elder Josiah Hednall, who preceded her in death some years ago. She was not known to the writer until recent years, but she seemed very meek and humble, and greatly to enjoy the meetings and the presence of the brethren. She was deeply interested in the preaching and the good old songs. It is always with sadness we give up our loved ones, but knowing that she expressed great evidence of a sweet hope in Christ we feel she is better off until the Lord will come and call his saints from the tomb and clothe them with that great and glorious immortality that Jesus and all the prophets and apostles have written and spoken of for these many thousand years. We feel that it will not be long until this most glorious event will take place. Then all the sleeping millions will come forth, those having done good to the resurrection of life, and those having done evil to the resurrection of damnation.

To the dear family and relatives I would say, while it is sad to miss her there is great hope and consolation in the Lord that she is free from suffering, toil, pain and sickness which we are still subject to. May God give us a sweet spirit of reconciliation, and comfort us with his blessed presence is my prayer and desire for Jesus sake.

The unworthy writer and Elder W. A. Speer conducted the services in the funeral home in El Dorado with a large attendance. Interment in a cemetery near Strong, Ark.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

MRS. ANNIE E. (SIRMAN) POWELL, our beloved sister in Christ, departed this life July 30, 1949 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ethel Covington, in Salisbury, Md., aged 82 years. Sister Powell was the daughter of the late Isaac and Martha Tilghman, Sirman of near Salisbury. At the age of seventeen she was married to Joshua T. Powell and to this union four sons and four daughters were born, six of whom survive. Her husband departed this life June 27, 1915.

She united with the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church, Dec. 23, 1895, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Poulson. She was devoted to the church and loved the doctrine of saving grace. Sister Powell was a devoted wife and mother with a loving kindness for all. Her funeral was conducted by Elder David V. Spangler at the Salisbury Old School Baptist meeting-house. May the Lord bless those that mourn and enable us all to say, Thy will, O Lord, be done.

(Mrs.) ETHEL COVINGTON

W. M. SEXTON, a Deacon of Providence Church, Greenville, Ala., died from drowning at Nine Mile Branch, nine miles east of Greenville, Ala. about Jan. 1, 1939. Three months before his death he had a premonition to make all things ready. On Tuesday before he was drowned he asked Brother W. R. Vickery to go with him to see Mr. Stanfield. He put his hand on seven vaults and brought them at cost price. On Sunday after this Tuesday the drowning was as follows: W. M. Sexton and wife; three children, Mrs. Gertrude Thomas, Miss Gussie Sexton, Emmet Sexton, and two grandchildren, Mrs. Sarah Davison and Bruce Crews. The drowning was at 11 a.m. and they were taken from the water about sundown. The driver, Kendrick Thomas, was driving very fast and there were no banisters on the bridge. He escaped. There was a deep hole on the north side of the bridge and the car left the bridge on that side. Willie Stokes dived down and fastened wrenches so they could be pulled out.

Brother Sexton visioned he was going in a gulf, that a light would go in with him and come out with him. When brought out the car light was burning. He also visioned his funeral procession with Elder E. D. Gofford in lead. He said the most folks ever at a funeral would be at his. It was estimated there were three thousand. As per his premonition, Elder E. D. Gofford conducted the funerals. Six were buried at Old Cool Springs Church. Mrs. Davison was buried at Ebenezer Church, Elder Gofford officiating. There was a wonderful display of floral offerings attesting love and esteem. Dictated by W. R. Vickery and written by

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 118

RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1950

No. 12

CORRESPONDENCE

1330 Mt. Holley St, El Dorado, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON AND ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: I thank you very much for sending me the paper when the subscription was long overdue. I have had several brothers and sisters tell me at our Association how much they enjoyed the articles I had written that were published in the Old Baptist papers. I thank God if I have been able to write comforting letters to God's believing children. I am not able to think beforehand what to write but write what comes to my mind. What I will attempt to write this time, the Holy Spirit being my leader, will be comments on the scriptures in the book of Jonah.

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord." Did God know that Jonah would try not to go to the city of Nineveh, but would go another way? Surely he did for God had a big fish prepared to swallow him and hold him three days and nights. God knew, and I say according to the scriptures had determined, that he would be in that ship fast asleep, taking a good rest when he (God) would send a mighty wind to prevent him from going only so far, and then throw him overboard where the Lord's big fish would be to swallow him and carry him to dry land.

"But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his God, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep." Do you suppose the mariners thought by lighting their load they could go their own way? They could not go one inch further than the Lord meant for them to. "So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah." Could it have happened any other way, and that any one else could have gotten it but Jonah? If so the fish would have swallowed the wrong man, and God's purpose would have been defeated. "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land." Do we ever find in the scriptures where any of God's people are said to fear the devil? God made the devil for a purpose and the devil

has no power except what God allows him. By this time Jonah began to have wisdom, the scripture reads, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Jonah knew that God had all power if he made the sea and the dry land. This reminds me of the scripture speaking of God's power, and how he limits the power of Satan. "Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." John 19: 10-11. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2: 23. "Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." It seems that Jonah was not afraid to be thrown overboard the ship. He was not afraid to die for he says in his prayer, "It is better for me to die than to live." "Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them." They did not know that they could not go farther than God had purposed; they knew not that it was God's purpose for them to go just so far, and that unloading part of the ware had no effect against the storm. "Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee,

let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows." It seems they now knew it was all the work of the Lord; for Jonah had told them that when they threw him overboard the winds would cease, and be calm to them, and so it was. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God (he now calls God his God) out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord. (Jonah was made to cry, salvation is of the Lord) And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."

The big fish did not know that it was

doing what God had purposed it should do, and that it was swallowing something that would make it very sick, and it would have to take it to the dry land and vomit it. It must have thought it had found something good to eat, not knowing it was swallowing something that it could not digest into food. "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah rose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three day's journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." How come that Jonah made it to Nineveh so quickly? It was the power of God according to his purpose that the time had come that Jonah should be there. "So the people of Nineveh believed God, (this reminds me of the scriptures in another place, Christ speaking says, you are saved already if you believe on me whom the Lord hath sent. So the people of Nineveh were a saved people in God's purpose.) and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.***** And God saw their works (I say, did not God already know according as he had purposed what they would do, what their works would be.) that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." Did God change his mind, his purpose? I think not; God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; I think that when God said that he would go unto Nineveh that he had known that he would do it not, for he knew that Nineveh would repent. "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. (What caused Jonah to become angry do you suppose. This

causes thoughts to arise in my mind. What caused Jonah to become angry? Was it because God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them and he did it not?) And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry? So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. (It seems by this that Jonah did not know God's purpose, what he would do to the city of Nineveh.) And the Lord prepared a gourd, and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. (Did he thank God for the gourd?) But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live." This is the last record we have of Jonah. I believe his prayers were answered, and that he gave up the ghost and died. Do you suppose that if the shadow of the gourd had remained on Jonah's head he would have been more pleased and not wishing to die so soon? I have only written some of the thoughts that have come to my mind. God has a perfect right to give as he pleases, and the same right to take away. None have a right to say why

doeth thou, or why hast thou made me thus. God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Your brother in hope of eternal life.

F. L. COX

Route 1, Box 78, Smithfield, Tex.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have a few meditations I would like to mention. Nearly two thousand years ago there was born in Bethlehem of Judaea a baby. This birth was the most curious known to any one. He was born of poor parents and in a poor country. The birth of Jesus was on this wise, when as his mother, Mary, was espoused to Joseph before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost; but Joseph being a just man, and not willing to make a public example of her, was minded to put her away; "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus." "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." The king heard this and sent men to inquire as to where he was, and when they had gone they returned by another way to their own land. This made king Herod angry and he made a decree that all male children two years old and under should be put to death. The Lord directed Joseph in a dream to take the little babe and his mother and flee into Egypt where he was kept until Herod died.

When Joseph and Mary went up to Jerusalem, Jesus was but twelve years

old. When they were returning and had gone a whole day's journey they missed the child, and returning for him found him among the doctors asking and answering questions. His mother rebuked him, "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" When he had grown older he became greater in stature and wisdom. "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Jesus taught and preached the gospel to his disciples and the multitudes and suffered much persecution even to the end. When the evening was come he sat down with the twelve, and as they ate "Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I?" The great Lord of all glory knew which one it would be for he even said, "for this cause came I into the world." About the last words he uttered while on the rugged cross were, "It is finished."

Dear children of the living God, that finished the work that he was sent to do. He 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." Dear ones, if it is not of grace and grace alone, man is gone, world without end. He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for

his friends." Jesus laid down his life for his friends.

Dear Brother Dodson and all the dear ones in Christ, I trust, if not in vain, that bright star will still shine and guide us as it did the shepherds of old. My wish is that all of God's children will remember that notable time when the little babe was born who would bear our burdens. May God's richest blessings be with you this Christmas and all your remaining days. If saved at all, it is by grace only. Your sinful brother in Christ, I hope,

T. T. REID

1008 E. Allen Ave., Fort Worth 3, Tex.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: We were very much depressed to hear of your recent illness, but glad to learn of your health being restored to you. Truly hope it is the dear Lord's will to completely restore you back to your usual strength that you may carry on as editor of the dear paper that we love so well.

We have just passed through one of the loveliest meetings I was ever permitted to attend at our home church here. Our dear ministers were filled to the brim (so to speak). There was no lack. They were completely in union. As Paul said, "Not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," yet a risen Lord, one that has all power; that holds the keys of death, hell and the grave; and there is no other God but Israel's God, "who sits on no precarious throne nor borrows leave to be." I could write more but fear I may say something that would darken counsel. We were blessed, as we feel, to have a sister from Washington who has moved here recently, Sister Nancy Austin, whom we have all learned to love and enjoy. She has seen you and heard you preach.

Brother Dodson, it seems to me our dear people, the old Primitive Baptists are the loveliest people I ever knew. The

older I grow it seems my love for them increases, yet I know I am not worthy their least notice. I have been a member of the Fort Worth Church thirty years yet it seems but yesterday that I first united with them. I have never doubted the Primitive Baptist being the true bride, but I have doubted so much of myself being one of that sacred number that Jesus came to save. "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again."

Mr. Little's sister, Harriet Gray, whose experience was published some time back, is to be baptized soon. She united with our little church last December, but she is in delicate health and it was agreed that it would be best to defer her baptism until warmer weather.

I do wish our people could be more together and not let every little thing separate us. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains (the church) of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Oh, that we may see our dear brothers and sisters laboring for peace and unity, and not make our brother "an offender for a word." I fear I may be speaking or writing idle words. Again hoping your health will soon be back to your usual strength, yours in hope.

(Mrs.) MINNIE C. LITTLE

2085 East Broadway, Vancouver, B. C., Canada
SIGN S OF THE TIMES, DEAR ELDER DODSON: This morning as I read the good book I thought of comfortable truths with which to answer your very welcome letter. I hope the Great Physician ministers healing strength to you dur-

ing that weary time of convalescence. I was reading Solomon's beautiful prayer, "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us." 1 Kings 8:56-57. This was the last quotation I saw my mother rise and quote with such power after reading her Bible. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5. There are so very many places from which I heard her quote so often like Isa. 46:9-10. I have rested in Isa. 4:6 and Psalm 116:15 and all the other Psalms. The whole book flows with promises and comfort. In 2 Kings 8: I was reminded of Elisha and the Shulamite woman, a type of the church. She had that sweet resting place and dwelt among her own people. It is a nice experience to go to school in the early morning when some text has left a lingering sweet comfort as my portion.

I have had a desire to tell of some of the beauty which the late Elder Jeffrey of Weiser, Idaho left with us from time to time. Every listener remarked about the exquisitely sweet joy in his gift of preaching. We all loved to hear him tell of dropping the Bible to let it open at the right place, which proved to be Deut. 32: 9-12. He had dwelt sweetly under the shadow of His wings. Sometimes it was Proverbs 8 and 9 about wisdom. He explained that the portion of food was there on that table for each lamb. It must not be changed nor interfered with. His message was fraught with such sweetness and unction. He tried to tell, in a rather helpless way, the English language was inadequate, about a spiritual plane of consciousness at rare moments. Once he preached a soldier's funeral which was

an experience of joy. As the message came to him the listening congregation seemed to him to be just under an enclosed area of silver light, which reminds me of the watchmen in the Bible who stand on Zion's walls, viewing both ways and never hold their peace. Then Elder Jeffrey very humbly described a baptism in this way: an area of the water seemed to have them encircled with a wide ring of light, something like silver. People remarked the beauty of that baptism. One church member said, "Who am I to be privileged to witness these things." A stranger said, "I never before saw anything as beautiful as that." Truly God makes his servants humble. Like Jonah they have learned to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." The late Elder Vaughn preached about this text to us at Naches one happy Easter. Elder Jeffrey told us of a dream in which he was accompanied by a presence (like another person) up into a glorious place, a beautiful valley. He was led into a home, such a beautiful home of glory which he could not convey to us. His companion said, "This is all yours, but you must not touch anything." So he decided that his human mind must not interfere. Farther up was another lovely home, but he could not go there yet.

Solomon says, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth?" I believe I have read that he chose to dwell with men. Oh, how humble it makes a human being. Like all the men of God in the Bible, each is immediately undone. Elder Jeffrey wanted peace for Christ's sake, and enough humility to love each lamb. One day after three sermons he said, "Didn't they chime?" He liked to think of sheep bells, then contented sheep murmuring in conversation after being fed. Nothing can stop that conversation. At this church meeting, the second elder had no idea what the first sermon was, due to a certain deafness,

but his sermon dovetailed perfectly where it was intended to fit. This beautiful story is endless. The spiritual light reminds me of Mother Withers, a woman of God, who humbly tells of her dear Lord's felt presence both without and within, like something so very, very white and pure ministering so closely toward and beside her, then entering within where her tired heart needed help. She has been so close to death at times when she did not want to come back here. She has visioned that beautiful spiritual place. At her baptism this natural beauty suddenly changed into that other glorious perfection.

I must close with the memory of the late Elder Jeffrey preaching to us about the fundamental principles, and glorious freedom which Christ has given us. He was so glad to be able to tell it and have utterance to try to thank his blessed Lord for the great things he has already done and finished for his people. Elder Jeffrey's dying wife wanted him to travel and preach. Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

Route 1, Box 278, Atlanta, Ga.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, KIND FRIEND: Hope you will pardon me for my delay in replying to you for my paper, *Signs of the Times*, for which I am very thankful. I had read a few copies before getting mine. My dear son and daughter-in-law noticed me reading them over and over, time and again, and gave me a year's subscription for a Christmas present. I cannot begin to tell you how much it means to me. I will be seventy-six years old my next birthday. My hearing is almost gone. I love to go to meeting but cannot understand the preaching so that is why I enjoy reading the good letters and wonderful experiences of the dear saints of God.

I am not a member of any church but I do love the good old Primitive

Baptist doctrine, also the dear brethren who are faithful in the cause. I love the words, predestination of all things by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Oh, how I love to think that salvation is of the Lord. I love the good old songs, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord," and "Amazing grace how sweet the sound." If not asking too much write me a personal letter that will be consoling to a poor, hungry, thirsty soul that does not feel worthy to even call upon the name of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

W. W. HORNSBY

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: I am anxious to hear of your health, and have you returned to your home, but I hope and expect you are regaining your health and strength if it is in the all wise purpose of Almighty God for he is the strength of our life and our eternal inheritance. What an unspeakable mercy for us to be hid in the cleft of the Rock, if so be we are recipients of his everlasting love.

Dear brother, as you and I have spent a long time in the hospital, and have had many questionings, doubts and fears, we would not forget the sweet blessings and encouragements the Lord was pleased, in his great mercy, to enable us to say not my will but thine be done. So much of my time my prayer was make me submissive to thy holy will whether for life or for death. I feel you can say your soul's prayer was as mine. I am being restored very well to my former health and strength, but my fractured knee and torn ligaments of same limb is still sore and aches.

I was pleased to see dear Elder Nash has consented to write as your helper on the paper. In February *Signs Brother* A. D. Alston wrote an article on "The Cleft of the Rock" which was to me a sweet and heart melting mes-

sage I felt to write him. He answered and wrote so beautifully on Mary Magdalene. Ten of us spent a very profitable evening at Sister Beckie McLachlin's. I took Brother Alston's letter and it was read and enjoyed so much several agreed with me it was good reading for the *Signs*. I asked his permission and he replied he would be submissive to the wishes of the brethren. I leave it to your judgment and to publish when you have space.

I hope you have been quite restored to your former health and strength and sometime in your leisure moments write me a letter. I realize your leisure moments are few. May the Lord be your strength and your divine wisdom is the wish of your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) SARAH McPHAIL

Weiser, Idaho

DEAR SISTER DUFFUS: In reply to your good letter will try and visit with you on this subject. I am aware that you have the Spirit of our Lord in your heart. One could not enjoy this scripture that you speak of if they have not that life that gives them the understanding of the work of the Power that leads them. It was a pleasure to me to read your letter, but I am so unlearned in God's ways that I hesitate to comment on his blessed truths. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, and it is by the grace of God that we have some understanding of his goodness towards us; to seek to know more about his love and power which is evidence of that life that we inherit by the spiritual birth. No one can say that he is the Christ only by the Holy Ghost. To feel the scriptures you used is evidence of that life that no man can give or take. So it is of the Lord, a life of peace and rest. No more trials and sorrow, pain or grief, when we are called into the fulness of this eternal home of our salvation. Praise God the Father.

When this reading is sweet to you, as you spoke of when reading the blessed truths, it is food to your hungry soul and peace and comfort. I am glad that He remembers us in our weakness, and by his grace and love for us he lifts us up above our sorrows and griefs and causes us to love each other for Christ's sake; and leads us together to worship him in spirit and truth, and partake of that heavenly food that gives rest to the saints of his holy calling while we stay in this world of unrest.

I am thankful I can meet with those of his choice. I was very sick some time back and in the hospital most of two months. Now I feel that I will meet you dear children of God again some time soon. I love to tell the story of salvation by grace, and to defend the truth if I know it. I am gaining strength and weight and may be back to normal soon. I hope to meet you in person this summer if it is the Lord's will. May the God of love be with you and lead you in the way of peace. In hope of a better life,

(The late Elder) B .O. JEFFREY

Enterprise, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: For some time I have wanted to write to the *Signs of the Times*. I am one of its readers and have been blessed many times while reading the letters from the children of God. I would love to tell you of my little hope while it is the most precious thing in all the world to me. Peter says, "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 hardly know just when I realized myself a sinner before God. About twenty years ago I found myself down in darkness and despair. There was no rest for my weary mind but the thought of death and where I was going to spend eternity. I thought I was dying

and when my husband would come in from his workshop I would try to hide my face so he would not see me weeping my way to the cross where my Savior shed his precious blood. I would steal away to some lonely, forsaken place to call upon his holy name to lift my burden which had me down to the lowest part of the earth. Oh, the anguish of my soul when I realized that all my efforts were in vain. One evening after having spent the day bowed down in unspeakable grief I knew that I was perished before God in sin, lost and undone before him. How long I traveled in this state I cannot tell but the longer I lived the worse I grew and the more I wished to die. At last the end came, the worst of all. By this time I had given up for the more I prayed the worse I became. I felt that God and all his glory had gone and I saw myself a poor sinner without God and without hope in the world.

It was now getting dark and I did my evening work and began to prepare for retiring which I dreaded most of all times. By the help of God I got my four children tucked in bed. I went to my room then turned and went to my children's room door to look at their sweet faces for the last time on earth as I thought. As I went to my room it seemed as if I was going to my own tomb. I dropped on the bed and said, "Lord save my soul, but take my life." It seemed as if it was all over with me. Finally I went to sleep and the sweetest sleep I ever had. I dreamed that my sister and I were traveling that narrow path that every one of God's creatures travel. It was so high I could not go over it, so low I could not go under it and so wide I could not go around it. I had to go through it with all the fire and smoke that was around me, and I had to leave my sister standing there as I thought it was my travel not hers. It was I and I alone. So I

went on until the great God appeared to me in great glory, and there was where I saw the light. It was then I came from my bed praying the great King of Honor. I then thought my troubles were over. I hated sin and would do good if I could, but the good I would I do not, and the evil I would not that I do. I have a season of rejoicing then will be down in the valley away from the light of God's love, held captive in doubting castle when I see nothing but my poor sinful self there. I remained groping and crying for light until my blessed Lord and Master leads me forth in his glorious light where all is joy and peace.

Forgive me if I have worried you, and please cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections. I fear you will draw but little comfort from this. If there is room and you see fit you may publish it. I ask all to pray that I might at all times be willing to follow the footsteps of my blessed Lord and Savior. For some time after I was converted I was in the church of God so they called themselves. I was like a drowning child holding to every straw, thinking that was the only church on earth, but when I began reading my Bible I found a great difference in it from the way they preached. We do not read in the holy scriptures of two ways, but we do read of one way—Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life. By one Spirit we are saved and baptized into one body. "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." I am an Old School Baptist believer who believes God foreknew all things before the foundations of the earth were laid. I believe I had nothing to do with my birth either natural or spiritual. I believe God rules both heaven and earth. I am a Baptist believer, believing in grace and grace alone. I think so much

of Rev. 21:4, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Your sister in hope if one at all.

(Mrs.) JENNIE EVANS

Georgia Military District, Box 1736,
Atlanta, Ga.

DEAR SISTER MCPHAIL IN A PRECIOUS HOPE: We were so glad to hear from you, and hope that you have regained your strength to a degree at least. The Lord is merciful, let us praise him in all things and for all things. We would have appreciated a word as to the health of dear sister Ruston.

Our little family, Carolyn, Mildred, Saralyn and myself are all enjoying good health and have so very much to be thankful for, but alas, He too must give the thankful heart. I have served several years in the service of U.S. and only lack about four more years to qualify me for retirement; thus I am trying to serve that other time. It is, however, a burden at times like the present. I have to work in Atlanta, Ga. while my dear ones live in Virginia. At best, I can only get home once a month to my meetings at Frying Pan. Still, there are dear Baptists here that I love and find much comfort in being among. You have heard our Elder Nash and there are several others within 100 miles radius.

Sister McPhail, I do not know that I shall be able to write you anything worthwhile in this letter, but in my heart I would speak of the blessed things of His kingdom, and if I could I would show a brother's love for you and for all of the little ones who have been given a hope in his salvation by grace. If the Lord will, I shall try to say a little about Mary Magdalene (John 20) as she stood at the tomb of

her crucified Savior. Have you and I stood in that place where Mary stood? Have we in all earnestness felt that all we had ever hoped on had been taken away from us, and lay dead and cold, indeed even the remains had been taken from us and we found ourselves with absolutely nothing to rest in, or to turn to, or to anchor our souls? And could we at that time, as did Mary, weep, cry, pray and beg of the Lord; even though it was in a manner that we could not understand or see what we were doing? It was a matter of just being lost, lost, lost, and we were weeping over the matter.

In great sorrow, doubts, questionings and fears, Mary Magdalene came to the sepulchre. "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre." It was early, it was yet dark. Not only was it early in the day, and before the sun had risen and driven away the natural darkness; but the word "early" carries a meaning of "surely" and with determined steadfastness and certainty coming out of an earnest necessity. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Psalm 46:5. And again, "Early will I seek thee," Psalm 63:1 and "Satisfy us early with thy mercy." Psalm 90:14, and "Let us get up early to the vineyards." S.S. 7:12. Dark may likewise have a spiritual meaning or lack of understanding, or being able to see the things that are before us, or in any wise, comprehend their meaning.

Let us go back for a moment and consider the Lord's dealings with Mary, while he was yet with her on earth. Mary was once a woman of the world filled with seven devils. The number seven, carries the idea of *completeness*, finished and all. In Proverbs 9:1 we read of the seven pillars of wisdom's house; in Judges 13:16-19 of the seven

locks of Samson's hair; God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; seven weeks was the interval between the Passover and the Pentecost, and on and on; in Revelation we read of the seven churches, the seven golden candlesticks, etc. *Sacredness* is also associated with seven; the seventh day, the seventh year of release (Deut. 15), the sacrifices of the seven victims to be offered, and so on. ~~Mary was taken, soul and body,~~ and controlled by the powers of the devil. In Luke 8:2 we read that Mary was healed of evil spirits and infirmities, and out of her went seven devils. Just as she was *completely* controlled by seven devils before, now she was relieved of seven devils, and made altogether clean; she was *completely* cleansed of her evil, and made to seek and to follow Jesus. So during all of her remaining days of His life on earth, Mary followed in his footsteps, listened to his ministry, and sought him on every occasion. Mary, as the other disciples, did fully expect Jesus to ascend to the throne of David, and become the ruler and deliverer of all the land of Judah.

Instead, Mary stood and saw her Lord and Master taken and crucified; she stood and saw the earth quake; she stood and saw the darkness upon the face of the earth between the sixth and the ninth hours; she stood and saw the veil of the temple rent in twain; she stood and saw the rocks rent. Indeed, she stood and saw many other chides and disgraceful humiliations cast at her Lord and Master. She *stood*, signifying that there was no rest, no peace, no Sabbath day in these things; instead they were disturbing, perplexing, tormenting to the very soul. What can these things mean? Mary had to see her Master crucified and laid in the tomb of Joseph, and a great stone put over the door. Now you will recall that this tomb was carved out of a rock by

the rich man Joseph; it was by the hands of man. Can this tomb hold the Son of man and the sovereign Savior?

Early in the first day of the week, Mary came with other women to the sepulchre to anoint the body of Jesus; all that they had left of their Lord and Master; all that was left of that upon which they had hoped; the very last thread they had to cling to. Now they came *early*, but even then he was not there and was not to be found as they had expected. Our earnest seekings of the Lord do not always find him; or even if he is present with us, we cannot perceive or recognize him. Indeed, Mary's hope must have given up in total despair.

Mary, in despair, went forth and told Peter and John, who ran to the sepulchre and saw for themselves. Finding the grave clothes, the napkin and the body gone, they gave up the matter and returned and went away again to their own homes; that is they turned away from the teachings of Jesus, and went again to the ways of life which they had followed before the Lord had come and called them to follow him—they returned to their own homes. But Mary could not turn away; she could not give up; her all was last seen there, and the very power of her Savior, who was with her, though she knew it not, would not let her go. She could not go on for she had nowhere to go; she could not live without her Lord and Master. When Jacob wrestled with the angel, he said I will not let thee go, until thou bless me; so did Mary say I cannot leave this place unless he bless me!

"Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre." Every child of grace, just as Mary, must *stand*: there is no sitting, no resting, no reclining and no ease at a time of such distress and despair. Standing also signifies a waiting for a command,

waiting at attention, ready to hear and to do His bidding. Again, every child must stand *without*: without the camp, without a full understanding, or being able to find the Master, or any way of escape. Thirdly, they must stand *at the sepulchre*: now the sepulchre is a place of death, or a place for the dead, and every child is brought to the very place of death, to the very end of the earth of self; he faces this sepulchre and he is made to weep and to cry. Yes, he is actually in the garden of life, but he looks upon the place of death; and he is seeking life in that place of death! Fourthly, every child must stand *weeping*, and praying and seeking. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." Psalm 91:15. Then every child, just as Mary, must *stoop down*; every knee shall bend and every head shall bow before they can find Him! All of self must be crushed, and we must be bent so low that we can no longer see the things of this world or its riches—we see only the *dust* of which we are made.

When Mary had stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, she saw the angels. They asked, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? Mary, who are you seeking for? Is it a stranger that you seek, have you known Him before? who told you to seek this man, and how did you learn of him? What makes you seek him so earnestly, and why do you cry unto him? Remember that the angel asked Jacob (Gen. 32:29) "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name," Also Judges 13:18, when Manoah had asked the angel of the Lord what is thy name the reply was "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" Wouldst thou know the name of the Lord, Wouldst thou know where to find him, and to come unto him when thou pleaseth? (O how beautiful this question is, but I would not completely leave my subject.) In this question, Mary had to admit that all

of her strength had departed from her; that she was helpless and undone; that all of her strength was in him and that she was seeking and weeping for the loss of her Lord and Master who was her all. So did Jacob in Gen. 32 have to admit that he was just a Jacob, just a supplanter, and a robber; that there was no good in him. So do we every one have to confess before our Savior what we are by nature.

Now having seen all of these things, her Master crucified, laid in the tomb; even the body was taken away and she could not find it; and no comfort or help being received from the angels (they did not tell her where to find him, they only brought the conviction in her heart); there seemed no possible way of escape, and Mary turned herself back, to retrace her steps, to give up in utter despair. Why had Mary failed? She was seeking the living among the dead; she was seeking at the tomb of the dead, instead of in the garden of the living where the reviving fruits of life and grace are to be found. She turned from the place of death to the place of the living; she expected to fall in death, but alas, Jesus stood before her! "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" These questions were not asked for information, but rather to draw out the prayer of Mary. They were given in love and in compassion and pity for Mary. They were to force Mary to pray for those very things that were to be given her. Neither did Mary answer these questions! Her heart now was so very full that she could think only of one, her Lord and Master; there was no other person or thing in the world but that one Lord and Master! "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Poor Mary; what could she do with the lifeless body of Jesus? But her heart was so drawn out and her plead-

ings were so earnest! This body was all that she knew of that was left, and she must cling to that last straw of hope. In this statement, and in this manner, Mary had now proved her love for her Master and was ready to receive the joy and the blessing that awaited her. It was only by the power and grace of God that she was enabled to stand and to plead and to hope when there seemed to be no hope! By the mercy of God, she waited instead of returning to her own home as did the other disciples at that time. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary." Jesus called her by her name, personally; He spoke only one word, but that word was to Mary, personally; The sheep hear the voice of their Master! and a blessed voice it is! Mary fell, and said Rabboni—Master! Mary reached forth to grasp him and to hold him with every fibre of strength in her body: she would have held him by her natural strength but "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not." Mary had to be restrained. She must be taught self-restraint; she had to be told that from this time henceforth, she must walk by faith, not by feeling; she must enjoy spiritual communion rather than natural communion as heretofore.

Let us not overlook the fact that Mary received a special mercy. Mary was the first to see Jesus; the first to whom he revealed himself after his resurrection. It was for this reason that Mary was enabled to wait and to pray and to continue to seek in spite of no grounds for hope, while Peter and John and the other disciples returned to their homes. Also, let us notice that Mary received a hundred fold more than she wept for, or dared to hope for. She was weeping and crying for the remains of the Son of man that she had known in this life. She was given that—all that she had sought for—in being given to see her Master as he came forth conqueror over death and the

grave. She had wept to find the lifeless Master, but indeed, she was given to see a living Master. The Lord always gives us an hundred fold more than we in our weakness are able to ask for! Mary reached to touch the Master she had known, but she was restrained and was to learn of a Master and a Savior of a kingdom that is not of this world, a kingdom which knows no bounds in love, power and eternity, even a kingdom inconceivable to the finite mind, eternal in the heavens. So Mary was allowed to see her Master, but not to touch him. She was instructed to "go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father."

Dear Sister, that statement alone makes us one with our Savior. He himself said, "My brethren, and your brethren," and "My Father and your Father." Is that not wonderful in the hearts of a poor sinful creature? Was it not wonderful in the broken and contrite heart of Mary? So with this strength and renewed hope, Mary in obedience, went from the presence of Jesus to the disciples with this message of mercy; telling them that He had risen; that he was alive and not dead; that he had conquered death and the grave; and that he was indeed their and our Lord and Master and Savior! O what a message of love and mercy and hope! and what a blessed privilege to be the one to bear such a message! Surely the Lord had prayed for Mary as he prayed for Peter "that thy faith fail not." Thus was Mary enabled to wait, to persevere, to remain in the garden, to pray and to weep, and to continually seek him. In his mercy, may he please to speak unto you and unto me, calling us by our personal name, and in such a manner as to cause us to turn away from the death of this nature unto the life that is in him and to fall at his feet, and to answer

Raboni! My Master! Lord what is thy will? What wilt thou have of me? Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? Have we been shown our sin defiled nature in which no good thing dwelleth? Are we weeping over that awful condition? Are we filled with godly sorrow for our sins? Are we seeking that pure and undefiled, that we hope we have been given a glimpse of? As we are enabled to see and perceive that Savior in all of his spotless perfection, in all of his infinite love and mercy, in all of his graces and fruits of the Spirit and in all of his infinite and sovereign power; and again as we are enabled to see the total depravity and the sin and the filth and the rags of our old nature, and our total inability to do one single thing to bring ourselves into the graces of our God; it is to that extent that we have knowledge of our Savior and of ourselves. To know our depravity is to know His purity; to know our weakness is to know something of his strength; to know our finiteness is to have an idea of his infinity, omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence; and to know of our selfish nature is to know of his love and mercy! Thus are we made to cry and to weep and to pray; above all things, for the salvation of our souls through the imputed righteousness of that Savior. "Why weepest thou?" Jesus taught, "Blessed are they that mourn." Blessed art thou, weeping Mary? "Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions," prays David in Psalm 132. It is a personal cry, and so with every little child of grace, Lord remember me!

I must beg your forgiveness for writing so much. The sweetness of it all cannot be completed. May the Lord sustain your body and give you a reasonable degree of health, but above all of that, may he please to sustain the life of your soul and in the souls of all of his little ones who do mourn and cry

after his righteousness. Please remember us to the dear Rustons and others that we have been privileged to know there. My dear wife, Carolyn, is with me in all that I say. Yours in brotherly love and a sweet hope of being embraced in his new covenant of grace.

A. D. ALSTON

Springwood, Va.

Miss Catherine A. Houchins,
Roanoke, Va.

DEAR CATHERINE: We received your letter and enjoyed it so much. No doubt you will be expecting a reply so I will quote 1 Thes. 4:9. "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." I hope I felt the love of God in my heart in Nov. 1895, and if the love of God also the love of the church of God or the brethren, and it was not anything that I did to bring it about. I hope I have felt that love from time to time from that time until now, but I must confess I do not love all their ways. This love is the gift of God and we need to be kept in that love and fear of God day by day, but we have many trials, temptations and persecutions. The thought with me is am I worthy to bear all the trials and persecutions that are laid on me? No, all my worthiness is in Christ. Do I suffer for his sake? If I love him I do. That suffering is not in the sickness or affliction of this body, but we must suffer in like manner as he did in spirit. We have no account of him having bodily affliction. If God has given us that love we suffer with him, are crucified with him, and are raised to a newness of life with him. All the true love we have for the church is that which is given us in Christ Jesus. There is a worldly love that may be cultivated by man, but that is nothing in the sight of God, and unless we are given that love and also kept in

that love of God we have no love, and if we love God we also love Jesus and his church.

I have been thinking of the meetings I attended last year, four Associations including the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, and five communion meetings. The most enjoyable was the Virginia Corresponding Meeting and the communion meeting at Gilliam Church. Their manner of conducting the meeting without any effort to stir up the passion of man much impressed me, as well as the sound, able preaching at both places. Of course I enjoyed the others also, and I trust it was the love for the church and the brethren, as well as the love of God, that enabled me to enjoy it. If there was no love in us for Christ and his church we would be miserable beings. I cannot cultivate that love and have never tried. If I have it it is the gift of God. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) M. A. THOMAS

Box 154, Woodward, Iowa

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I would like very much for you to give your views on the passage of scripture that reads, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" Elder Perkins of Mayfield, Ky. quoted that verse the first Sunday in May in Zion Church in Mayfield, but was just comparing it with something else and it has been on my mind ever since. You seem to make everything so plain I would like so much to have your views on it. It is quite a mystery to me, as was darkness before light until you gave your views on that passage at my request several months ago.

I am still very lonely since my wife passed away more than two years ago. I get much comfort from reading the *Signs*. There is nothing more in this time world to live for, and I long to go

and be with the Lord and my loved ones if so it be that I am a fit subject for that realm of paradise. Yours in hope and best wishes.

W. J. KIMBRO

(See Editorial Section)

REQUEST FOR COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

For some years Sister Wood and I have been collecting copies of the "Signs" with the view of securing a complete file if possible. Many brethren and friends have helped us in this until we now have more than 90 per cent of the issues between the years 1850 and the present date. We need all issues between the years 1832 and 1851 and the years 1854, 1857, 1861, 1864 and quite a few of various dates to 1895. If any of the brethren or friends have any of these dates which they are not particularly interested in keeping, we would be glad to hear from you. Also, if you are collecting them yourself, we have many duplicate copies which we will be glad to send you if you will let us know your needs. Will gladly send you a list of the numbers we need if you will drop us a card.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD

R.F.D. 5, Box 53,

Baltimore 7, Md.

TWO WORLDS

Having some copies left of the book entitled "Two Worlds" I will give them free to the "Poor of the Flock." To others I will send them to be read and if they like them they can send me \$1.

McDowell, Ky.

MILFORD HALL, Sr.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

C. A. Taylor, Okla., \$2; Eld. J. D. Wood, Md., \$2; G. W. Lawson, Ill., \$1.50; R. D. McGough, Ala., \$3; Mrs. R. H. Palmer, Ala., \$1; Mrs. J. H. Day, Ariz., \$1; Miss V. M. Jones, N. Y., \$2.

RADIO BROADCASTING

Commencing Nov. 5, 1950, the undersigned will speak over station KDMS, El Dorado, Ark. each Sunday morning at 7 o'clock.

Lillie, La.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

EDITORIALS

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

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BAPTISM

Many and various interpretations have been put on the word baptism. Some of these are to immerse, dip, cleanse, bury and sprinkle. There is a baptism essential to salvation. This is to be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. What I shall write about here is baptism with water in the way we do as a denomination.

The first Baptist we have record of was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness." "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." No doubt he received the name, John the Baptist, because he baptized. His requirements of candidates were the same that we expect to-day, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." The mode of baptism was immersion. Jesus himself came to him and demanded baptism at his hand, "But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when

he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."

After Philip had been sent into the desert to preach to the eunuch, and had preached unto him Jesus, "They came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" This is often true to-day as it was then. When Jesus is preached, and one is given to hear it with joy, and respond in their heart to the truth they hear, a desire is often there to follow the Lord in that service. "Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

The word of inspiration has left no question as to the manner or mode of this work. Both Philip and his candidate went down into the water. Nowhere in holy writ is there authorized any substitute for this kind of baptism, and those who embrace the truth, and truly want to follow the meek and lowly One certainly should not be satisfied with anything less. Immediately after Paul received his sight he arose and was baptized. On the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached unto the people Jesus and the resurrection, they that gladly received his word were baptized. When Lydia had heard the word of God, and her heart had been opened to attend to the things which were spoken by Paul, she and her household were baptized. This baptism does not put away the filth of the flesh, but brings

an answer of a good conscience. For one to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is professing a living faith in Jesus Christ, a hope in his mercy, and acknowledging to all that they are dead to the world. They manifest a desire to follow him through evil as well as good report. This is putting on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following of Jesus is in observing his teachings. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." There is a newness of life found in following the Lord. There is rest found for the weary. Paul said, you that are weary rest with us. It becomes those who believe in him, who love him, and love his people to go home to their friends telling them how great things the Lord has done for them. How good it is when we see those who are given a mind to do this coming home to his dear people. Often one says, I love the church and desire to be a member but I am unworthy. Do we find any worthiness of our own required by him? The only merit he requireth is to feel your need of him. All our worthiness that we have is in him, which of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness and sanctification. The question is, are we believers in him, for he who believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

The two things we look for in those who manifest a desire to follow the Lord in this service is love and faith. We baptize on a confession of faith in Jesus Christ, not to give them faith.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I think one will never have better evidence that they have been partakers of a heavenly life, than their love for the brethren. When we see those who love the truth, manifesting a love for the brethren and burdened with the desire to follow the Lord in baptism, should we hesitate to say to them, go home to thy friends?

It is true there are those outside of the church who are loyal to the church, and are as active in their interest in the church as the members, who do not seem to be burdened with a desire for church fellowship and baptism. We are thankful to the Lord for such friends, and are sure that God can stir up their minds to take up their cross when it is his will. Some years past a certain friend attended my services and appeared to have an interest in the truth, yet manifested no desire for church membership. One day I received a letter from his wife asking me to come to the next meeting. He later stated that he had never had a desire to be baptized until the time between the two meetings. Then the impression was so strong that he felt he could not wait until the regular meeting. At the next meeting he was received and baptized.

D. V. S.

SOLOMON'S SONG 8:8

Elsewhere in this issue of our paper will be found a letter from brother W. J. Kimbro, Woodward, Iowa, in which he asks that we give our views on the above portion of scripture. He says we have been helpful to him in the past, and for that we are very grateful to the Lord. We hope that such thoughts as we may offer in connection with this scripture may also prove to be interesting and instructive to our brother and the rest of our readers.

The writer began this book by saying, "The song of songs, which is Solo-

mon's." In other words, or so it would seem to us, it is the greatest of all songs. The reason for its being the greatest of all songs is that it portrays the love which exists between Christ and his bride, the church. Of all the love songs which have been penned by mortal man, nothing can compare with what Solomon wrote in this book concerning the relationship between Christ and the members of his mystical body, when we are given an understanding of its spiritual significance. Even when we take into account the fact it was written primarily to the Jews under the *legal dispensation*, we must remember that the *law* contained shadows of better things to come.

Bible students will no doubt agree that the Gentiles had very little to nourish and comfort them under the *law*, since it is declared that the oracles of God were committed unto the Jews. However there are a few instances in the Old Testament scriptures where it would appear that God was particularly mindful of the Gentile church. The verse under consideration is one of the comparatively few places in the Old Testament where God is singling out his people among the Gentile nations. Solomon was spokesman, so to speak, for God's people among the Jews in his day, and he was undoubtedly being moved by the Holy Spirit to prophecy concerning that which would most surely come to pass in the fulness of time, when Jesus would come and establish his kingdom on earth. He says, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts." He was here describing the pitiful plight of the Gentiles under the *law*. When Jesus came at the end of that dispensation, he came only as an high priest unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or the Jews, but he declared "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." The Great Shepherd of the sheep undoubtedly had reference here to his sheep among the Gentile fold. Likewise, Solomon, centuries before it came to pass, was foretelling of the time when the tame olive branch would be cut off and the wild olive branch would be grafted in. When Solomon was writing what he did, the "little sister" as he called her had no breasts, or in other words she was in an embryo state, so to speak; she was immature, undeveloped and not ready to be manifested as the church of God, with gospel ordinances, for the comfort and consolation of spiritual Israel. Beholding her in that pitiful condition, well might he ask, "What shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" It seems to us that there is real evidence here of that tie that binds the people of God together, whether they be Jew or Gentile. Way back there he was moved to set forth the love of God which was to exist between the believing Jew and the believing Gentile, notwithstanding the fact it was not to be manifested for many centuries later. Paul in writing to the church at Ephesus, describes the relationship of the Gentiles both before and after the coming of Jesus. He says, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordi-

nances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." He then proceeds to describe their situation under the dispensation of grace by saying, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." To us, it would seem utterly impossible for even Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, under the *law*, to adequately describe what should or would be done for this "little sister" in the day that she would be spoken for, but the apostle Paul, writing hundreds of years later, under the dispensation of grace, gives us a most wonderful presentation of what was done for her in the day of Jesus Christ. The love of God when it was shed abroad in the heart of the believing Jew broke down and removed completely all of the animosity which had existed between the Jew and Gentile for ages, and not a single barrier was left to remain between them, since they now could and did exclaim, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." The tie which Solomon had but dimly portrayed in type by referring to the Gentile church under the *law* as our "little sister" in Paul's day blossomed in full fruition and was revealed in a more glorious state than had ever been dreamed of before. Jesus by finishing the

work assigned him by the Father, has presented his spiritual bride before God in love, and there is no spot, wrinkle or any such thing about her, for she is declared to be the perfection of beauty.

The foregoing thoughts are submitted in the hope that they are in accord with the teaching of the holy scriptures, and we trust they will be of some comfort and satisfaction to our esteemed brother Kimbro, and pray that God's blessings may rest upon him in his lonely state and that he will find that God has promised grace sufficient for all his needs.

R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME 118

Of all the 150-odd millions of people there are in our country, we doubt if there is a single one as old as the *Signs of the Times*. This gives a little idea as to the age of our family paper. There is a complete set of papers—from 1832 to 1950—on file in the Congressional Library in Washington, D. C., and if any one cares to compare the doctrine set forth in the paper to-day with that which appeared over one hundred years ago, we believe they will find that it is substantially the same. If the paper stood for the truth in 1832 and it stands for the truth in 1950 there cannot be much difference for the real truth does not change with the passing of years.

So far as we personally are concerned the present year has not brought us all the good fortune we might have desired, as during the first five months of the year we were very much afflicted, but we humbly hope that God will sanctify said affliction to the good of our soul and cause us to see that it was none other than his omnipotent hand which held us up and sustained us to this very hour. His ways are always just, and his counsel wise. We have desired to be still and know that he is God, and that besides him there is no Saviour. We feel

to thank him for having spared our unprofitable life and humbly pray that he will direct our steps all through life's journey, and give us to know no will but his.

Our family paper was highly favored in having Elder H. O. Nash, of Atlanta, Ga., join our Editorial staff as of the first of the year. Our other Associate Editors have written very ably and acceptably to our readers. Our associate in getting out the paper has measured up nobly to the extra demands made upon him because of our several months illness and inability to carry our share of the load. Our subscribers have been considerate, charitable and encouraging in writing and sending in good letters for publication. Therefore we desire to extend to all who have aided us in any way our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for their kindness.

We hope that our subscribers will keep in mind the fact that they can help the paper materially by paying their subscriptions promptly when due and by telling others about the paper who might be interested in subscribing for it. At this time of the year it might be well to send some loved one, friend, brother or sister a year's subscription in order that they may become acquainted with what a messenger of glad tidings the *Signs* really is. All the help our subscribers can render is needed in enlarging the circle of readers, and we thank them in advance for whatever efforts they may put forth in behalf of the paper.

R. L. D.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J. May 31 and June 1, 1950 doth send greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN: In the kind mercy and lovingkindness of God we have been blessed with the privilege of meeting your messengers, and receiving your

correspondence in another session of this Association. It has been a pleasure to us to be able to dwell together in unity of the Spirit of Christ Jesus our Lord with you all. The preached word of the visiting brethren has been edifying to us in the gospel of salvation by grace alone. We hope for a continuance of your correspondence and meeting with us.

Our next session is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the Hopewell Church at Hopewell, Mercer Co., New Jersey. The time to be announced in the *Signs of the Times*, which we trust will be the regular time next year, when we again can greet our correspondents with this same love and fellowship.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT,
Moderator
CASPER G. FETTER,
Clerk

Written by Deacon Casper G. Fetter

The Delaware River Association in session with the Kingwood Church at Locktown, N. J. May 31 and June 1, 1950, to her sister churches composing this Association, and to the Associations, churches and meetings with whom we correspond, extend our loving greetings in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN: It has fallen to my lot to write a Circular Letter, but unless the Lord be my guide and help I know my effort will all be in vain. Since the last session of this Association, held with the Southampton Church in 1949, it has pleased the Lord to remove from the Southampton Church her beloved pastor, Elder Horace H. Lefferts, who we sorely miss and are greatly crushed under the blow of our loss. Only a few months previous the Hopewell Church met with the loss of their dear pastor, Elder Charles W. Vaughn. How we miss these dear brethren and pastors. None of the three churches composing this Association have a pastor to go in and out before

them, to guide, counsel and comfort them. Oh, that the Lord would send each one of the bereaved churches a pastor after his own heart, that would be a blessing and comfort to these churches, and to the praise and honor of his holy name.

The subject that has been much upon my mind lately and upon which I will try, the Lord willing, to present a few thoughts is that of—The Image of God.—“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Genesis 1-26. This image of the likeness of Christ who took upon himself flesh and blood will never be destroyed. If man has been formed in the image of Christ and the Father will he not carry that image home to glory? His fleshly corruptible body will go back to dust, but in the resurrection, it shall arise a changed incorruptible body in the image of Christ and the Father. This mortal shall put on immortality. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. In the apostle Paul’s time it was asked, “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” The apostle answered saying “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.”

So man in the resurrection shall not lose the image in which he was made. The same body that is sown in the grave will be brought forth in the resurrection; every seed will have his own body in the resurrection. Though the same body is raised that was sown, an important difference is manifest in the body as sown and as raised; as important as in the difference between corruption and incorruption,—between mortality and immortality,—between natural and spiritual,—between sin and holiness. The

body as sown is not that body as in the resurrection,—in beauty and glory,—in honor and excellence; for it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. The apostle in speaking of this asserts the identity of that which is sown and that which is raised, again and again, in his use of the personal pronoun *IT*. “It is sown in corruption, it (the same as is sown) 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.” He also asserts the difference, the vast superiority, in beauty and glory of the bodies of the saints as raised from the dead, to them as sown in the grave.—As incorruption, immortality, spirituality and glory excel—corruption, mortality and sin, so will the bodies of the saints, in the resurrection,—excel them as deposited in the earth. An important lesson is taught on this subject and much instruction given in the scriptures when speaking of the incarnation of Christ. That he possessed a body in substance and fashioned like our own is certain, for he was “found in fashion as a man,” and was made in all things like unto his brethren; a partaker of flesh and blood; verily and truly a man yet “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” And after he had risen from the dead he told his disciples to handle and feel him, “for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” The same body that lay in the tomb arose; it could not corrupt. God has said to his people that he would quicken their mortal bodies and raise them in the image of Christ.

They shall, therefore, be satisfied. “I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness,” says the Psalmist. “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the

trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first," and we (that are then living) shall be changed. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," so the bodies of the saints, whether asleep or awake, at the coming of the Lord, shall be made to possess the image of the heavenly. And thus the apostle asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ shall "change our vile body," "according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? Will not the same power that formed our bodies out of the dust of the ground and breathed into our nostrils the breath of life be sufficient to raise them up from the slumber of death? Shall not the voice that said "Let there be light, and there was light;" that voice that said "Lazarus, come forth," and he came—be heard and obeyed by all the dead? "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." If God has decreed and declared it who shall disannul it? "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His own power."

Dearly beloved in the Lord,—God will surely raise the dead, both the just and the unjust, for he has said it; and his saints have borne the image of the second man, the Lord from heaven, the

heavenly. Humbly submitted in love with much fear and trembling.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT,
Moderator.

CASPER G. FETTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. B. OVERBY was born April 8, 1864 and died June 5, 1950, aged 86 years, 1 month and 29 days. He was married on Oct. 6, 1886 to Rebecca Burkhart and to this union eleven children were born, four of them preceding him in death. Surviving are four daughters and three sons; Mrs. Oscar Derrington, Symsonia, Ky., Mrs. Willie Coursey and John Overby, Calvert City, Ky., Mrs. Albert D. Bouland and Willie C. Overby, Elva, Ky., Mrs. Rollie Collie and Frank Overby, Paducah, Ky. There are seven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and a host of friends.

He was given a hope in the summer of 1887 and was baptized into the fellowship of Pilgrims Rest Church by Elder J. F. Harrison. The date of his baptism and of his ordination to the work of the ministry we do not have. He preached for over fifty-three years and was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and the final perseverance of the saints through grace unto everlasting life by Jesus Christ. During a division in this country among the Baptists about forty years ago he stood firm without wavering, contending for the old landmarks unto the end. On June 5, 1950 the Lord gave him an humble discharge, and I feel he fell asleep in Jesus Christ to rest from all his labors. He reared a lovely family of children who are left to mourn his departure.

He traveled among the Baptists in Ky., Tenn., and Ill., but in his declining days his health became impaired so he could not travel, but that faith never faltered in him to the end which came in peace. In his last days he was often heard to say he wanted relief, did not want resting medicine, but wanted to be relieved from this world of tribulation. The writer was called to the Kennedy Funeral Parlor in Paducah, Ky. and tried to comfort his bereaved children by using as a text: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing." I feel this text was rightly applied to the old soldier of the cross.

His body was taken to the family cemetery near his home where a large number of his neighbors had gathered. The children requested me to make a few remarks and my mind was carried to the burden that a true servant of Christ has to bear here in this world. Doubtless his duty as a husband and father made him feel that he should stay at home and toil for their support, but there was a deeper impression than the duty of husband and father on him that probably his family and neighbors did not know about, but the Lord took care of them and he went on with his head bowed down, bearing the cross faithfully to the end. I feel that he is resting in that rest that awaits the children of God. May the Lord bless his children and reconcile them is my prayer.

(Elder) O. W. PERKINS

MRS. ELLA M. FOX, widow of the late Daniel S. Fox, passed away at her home in Clinton, N. J., June 9, 1950, aged 93 years. She was the only daughter of the late Cyrus and Sarah P. Risler. She was born at Locktown N. J., and resided in Clinton for the past 71 years. She and her husband lived to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. They were married Feb. 22, 1879 in Stockton, N. J. by Elder A. B. Francis, her family lived there at that time. Eight children were born to this union, seven of them surviving; Mrs. Warne S. Smith, Miss Bertha R. Fox, Mrs. Robert J. Van Orden, Mrs. Samuel B. Haver, Rhutson C. Fox, Cyrus R. Fox and Mrs. Sibley C. Kels. One brother, the writer and last member of the family survives. Two brothers passed away in recent years. There are seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Sister never united with the Old Baptist church but for many years was a faithful attendant. While deafness prevented her hearing the preaching for several years this did not deter her from attending the services and Associations. Her children always made it possible for her to be there. Likewise during her illness of several months they always arranged for the most tender care, and she passed away while sleeping.

Elder R. Lester Dodson was requested to conduct the services but his recent illness prevented him from accepting. Mr. Moran, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Clinton, was called and served very ably. Several portions of the Psalms were read and he spoke sweetly from the theme of grace and faith which from sister's walk we feel had been of vital interest to her. Hymns were used from Beebe's Collection; "Rock of Ages," "O thou in whose presence my soul takes delight," "Amazing grace how sweet the sound"

were three of them. Interment in the family plot in Riverside Cemetery in Clinton.

CYRUS RISLER

MRS. SARAH ELIZABETH FOOKS SHOCKLEY was born May 6, 1880, and departed this life Dec. 24, 1949. She was the daughter of the late Benjamin and Mary E. Fooks of Worcester Co., Md. On October 27, 1897 she was married to John M. Shockley. She is survived by her husband and eight children, five daughters and three sons; Mrs. Dorothy S. Morris, Salisbury, Md., Mrs. Pearl S. Bellison, Mt. Airy, Md., Mrs. Edna S. Hitch, Haddon Heights, N. J., Mrs. Lena S. Pusey, Eden, Md., Mrs. Elizabeth S. Wimmer, Baltimore, Md., Luther O., Snow Hill, Md., Bryan L., Baltimore, Md., and Henry B., Eden, Md. One son, Virgil R. Shockley, died in infancy.

It was the writers privilege to know Mrs. Shockley for several years prior to her death. She was a quiet woman, and though she never united with the visible church, she manifested an interest in the truth. She attended services at Nassaongo Church of which her husband is deacon and was loved by those who knew her.

It is a great blessing that we have such people in our midst who are faithful to the church though never uniting with it, and we desire to acknowledge such blessings from the Lord. The home, church and community have suffered a great loss yet we would say, the Lord's will be done.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer from Nassaongo Old School Baptist meeting-house, Dec. 26, 1949. Interment in Wicomico Memorial Park, Salisbury, Md.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER

ELDER W. M. HOLLEY of Samson, Ala. was called to his eternal home July 31, 1950 after having lived an eventful life in the development of Geneva County, Ala. as a pioneer citizen in business, schools and church life. For 64 years he had lived in the same community and had been an active Primitive Baptist for more than half a century, and a minister of his beloved Claybank Association for 40 years. He was a faithful member of Ebenezer Church and believed in the fundamental principles ever upheld by Primitive Baptists since the days when John the Baptist administered baptism to the immaculate Lamb in Jordan's placid and enchanting waters.

Elder Holley is survived by four daughters; Mrs. Mary Watson, DeFuniak Springs, Fla., Mrs. Saberd Yates, Panama City, Fla., Mrs. L. L. Wise, Samson, Ala., and a daughter, unmarried, lived with her father until he took his heavenly journey. Four sons; John of Samson, Ala., Dan

of Vernon, Fla., Homer of Selma, Ala., and Pink of Panama City, Fla. who died Sunday after his father's passing on Monday. Both of Elder Holley's wives preceded him in death.

Elder J. J. Collins of Geneva, Ala. officiated at Elder Holley's funeral at Mt. Gilead Church, using as a text 2 Cor. 5:17-21, and seemed blessed to speak to the comfort and edification of many relatives and an immense host of friends. His grandsons served as pallbearers and the beloved minister and pioneer was entombed beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the call from the heavenly choir. Evans Funeral Home of Florala, Ala. was in charge of arrangements. He was 85 years of age.

(Elder) J. J. COLLINS

MRS. AMY L. BUCKWALTER, departed this life at the Buckwalter homestead, southeast of Xenia, Ohio at the age of 81. She was the daughter of Aaron J. and Mary Wilson Mutchlar, and was born in Marion, Ohio, Jan. 13, 1869. She spent the greater part of her life in and near Delaware, Ohio. October 15, 1931 she was united in marriage to James K. Buckwalter. They moved to Green Co., Ohio in the spring of 1933. She leaves to mourn, her husband, one brother, R. D. Mutchlar, and one sister, Mrs. Edward Lyle of Delaware, Ohio. Funeral services were held July 6 in the Neeld Funeral Home, Xenia, Ohio, conducted by Elder Gale Hanover, Ashville, Ohio. Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in the cemetery at Jamestown, Ohio to await the summons from on high.

The above was sent to me signed her "Sorrowful husband" and asking me to add whatever I wanted as I was well acquainted with both families.

I have been acquainted with them for more than fifty years. The Mutchlar's lived near the Pleasant Hill Church. Her mother was a member and her father was a believer of the Old School Baptist doctrine, as was their daughter Amy. For twelve years of my pastorate of the Pleasant Hill Church their home was my regular stopping place. The mother, Sister Mary, died more than forty years ago which was the second funeral I was called to attend. Amy and her father kept house for several years and it always remained my home. I was called to preach the father's funeral some years later and married Amy to Brother James Buckwalter.

The Buckwalter family, about one hundred and twenty miles away, was another home for over fifty years where all Old School Baptists were entertained. There also I spoke the last sad words for three, father, mother and oldest daughter. There remain four children, James, Will, Frank

and Elizabeth, and it is still home.

Amy suffered a stroke about six years ago which left her an invalid. She suffered much, but her allotted time came and she has entered into the joy of her Lord. May he, the great Shepherd of the sheep, reconcile us all to our loss, believing it is her gain. Written by one that loved them both. Your brother in tribulation.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER

JOSEPHINE McLAUGHLIN FINCH was born near Trout Creek, Delaware Co., N. Y., Sept. 27, 1853, and passed away March 10, 1950 at the age of 96 years, 5 months and 11 days. She was the daughter of William and Sarahette (Southard) Jenkins. On Jan. 3, 1872 she was married to Robert McLaughlin and to this union two daughters were born, Mrs. Lavern Clark of Oneonta, and Mrs. Maynard Finch of Sidney Center, N. Y.

She united with the Old School Baptist church at Otego in 1896 and was baptized by Elder Balas Brundy. The earlier part of her life was spent near her birthplace, but in Sept. 1911 they moved to Sidney Center where on Sept. 25, 1923 her husband passed away. She continued to live in her home and in Nov. 1926 she married Zacheus Finch who died in March 1928. She kept her home until 1941 when she went to live with her son-in-law and daughter Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Finch. In 1946 she had two falls, first cracking the pelvis bone, and the next time breaking her hip so it could not be set. She was never able to walk alone again and gradually lost the use of her legs. This was a great cross to her as she had always been so active. Her home was always a welcome place to her many friends, and she did so enjoy having those of her faith visit her. When her first husband was living they often had meeting at their home when Elder D. M. Vail and others would come. Her first husband was also an Old Baptist, having united at Otego in 1920.

She leaves to mourn her passing the two daughters above mentioned, five grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren and eight great-great-grandchildren. We feel that our loss is her gain, that she is at rest from the pain and sorrows of this world, where by the grace of God she has passed from death unto life eternal. Elder C. E. Benson of Clark's Summit, Pa. spoke very comfortingly from the first chapter of 1 Peter. Interment was beside her first husband at Trout Creek, N. Y.

(Mrs.) MAYNARD FINCH